

“The most Difficult
Journey
in the World”

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A Pilgrimage to
TIBET AND BACK

By
CHRISTABEL BEVAN

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DEDICATION

This little diary
is most humbly and gratefully dedicated
to the beloved
MASTER JESUS
and to all HIS holy Companions
thanks to whom
we progress

Christabel

For the pilgrimage to Tibet I am
indebted to Sirdar Phurbu Tshering and
for writing this little diary to the help
of Mr. Cecil Morgenstern both of
Darjeeling.

"The most Difficult Journey in the World"

Ever higher must we go
Ever nobler should we aim.

Goethe

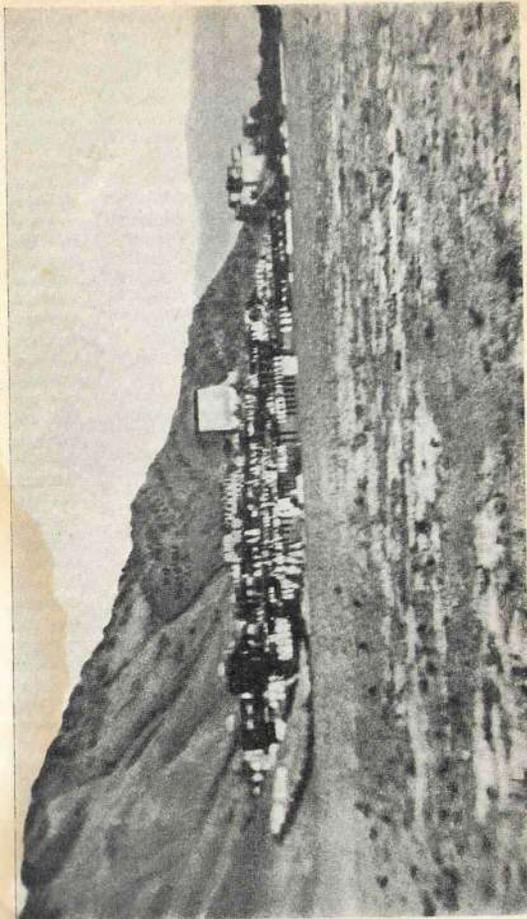
CHAPTER 1. FOREWORD.

India has been the cradle of the Aryan race and the birth place of Lord Krishna and of Lord Buddha. It is the abode of the Rishis, the home of the Vedas and we have always come to India for learning and spiritual attainment. The Master JESUS, after going to Egypt, went to India to prepare Himself for His great Mission.

The Spiritual Centre of the world, Shamballa, is situated North of India and the second most Holy Place is located somewhere in the Himalayas. This is a sort of "Shangri-La" for the great Mahatmas Who reside here keep Their physical bodies as long as They wish, it may be for two hundred years or more.

Here are given certain Initiations, generally in the subtle body of the aspirant when he or she is asleep and out of the physical body. Some of us remember these Initiations but many do not, however the effects of these beautiful experiences of the Soul are always visible in the every day life of the individual.

The life of our beloved Master Jesus marks the five great Initiations which lead from man to God. His Birth symbolises the first Initiation which is like a New Birth or Second Birth as the Protestants say. His Baptism indicates the Second Initiation wherein the Holy Spirit descends upon the Disciple. The Transfiguration of Our Lord is like unto the Third Initiation in which the bodies—the aura—of the disciple shine and he is transfigured. The Fourth Initiation is symbolised by the Calvary and The Crucifixion and always entails intense suffering. But as He conquered the world and tells us to do likewise, so do we at this stage leave all human and worldly



The Monastery at Shigatse

things behind and enter the Celestial Kingdom and the Resurrection takes place in the life of the aspirant making him truly holy, a perfect Saint or Master.

Those who have attained the resurrection or Fifth Solar Initiation,—Asoka,—are liberated from the cycles of so-called births and deaths. They are made one with the Father, have attained Nirvana, perfect BLISS.

Yet these Lords of Compassion always renounce the Beatitude of Nirvana and come back to earth to help suffering humanity. A few of these Mahatmas* reside in the Himalayas in seclusion, Their work being in the subtle planes. Others make the tremendous sacrifice of living in modern cities in order to further the evolution, of the inhabitants. Every country or region of the world has some or other great Master watching over it.

Some of these Teachers take disciples. The Path to Them is steep since it implies sacrifice of self. Nevertheless some of us have found Them and yet others will do so. It is well known that "when the disciple is ready—The Guru—Teacher—appears".

Last century two disciples of the Mahatmas, Helen Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott, came to India and the Theosophical Society was founded. Others continued the work and the Eastern doctrines have spread all over the world.

Now this year of 1950 is highly important as it marks the beginning of a New Era in the world as well as the beginning of tremendous cataclysms which will change the face of the Earth. The Age of Aquarius is dawning: it is the age of the Air, the Age of Brotherhood, the Age in which we shall see the establishment of the Reign of Love on Earth, some have called it the Golden Age.

It is for that reason that this disciple undertakes her pilgrimage at this particular time. Her friends the astrologers told her not to go this year as very dangerous influences were prevailing, especially in the months of April and May when she had planned to be in the desert. But this year it had to be, for so the pilgrim had "Seen". Now it is a fact that whenever we wish to do something of import, our dearest

* "Mahatma" is used here for one who has conquered the World, paid all his Karma and is on earth only to teach and help others.

friends and relatives will try to dissuade us from doing it for fear that something will happen to us. But this is a challenge to our will and we must not listen to them, but to the Inner Voice.

The Lord Buddha* was born in May, He received His Illumination in May and passed on in May, so He celebrates this beautiful occasion by appearing in Space with all the great Mahatmas or saints present, either physically or spiritually.

The Lord Maitreya-Buddha, Christ, who will be the future Buddha is always present and He speaks in the musical old Pali Language, but each one of the hundreds present in Spirit receives. His Message in their own particular language. The disciple has witnessed this beautiful phenomena. That she was not able to witness it in the physical body this year matters not. Greater humility always much needed is the result, as well as greater strength from her having made the effort, and greater imperturbability from her having endured so many hardships.

No effort is ever wasted, if we succeed or not is secondary the important thing is the effort we make. 'If we do not succeed to-day, we shall succeed later on, for time is nothing, we have all Eternity before us'.

It is significant that the holy Lamas are expecting the coming of Christ very soon. Another of His names is Lord Maitreya—meaning Lord of Love—and Buddhists call Him Lord Maitreya—Buddha for He will be the future Buddha of the 6th Race, His place as World Teacher being taken by the Master K. H. In the Temple of Ghoom near Darjeeling there is a statue dedicated to Him, and here the disciple not only felt His presence as seldom before but actually saw Him and received His exquisite blessing.

* "Buddha" is a grade of initiation the same as "Christ" is also a degree or title or condition.



The Scenery from
Yumtang.



Starting out

CHAPTER II

The Pilgrimage.

Where there is a Will, there is a Way.

Via Crucis.

After coming from the other side of the earth, taking three ships and three planes and spending quite a sum of money as well as enduring cold and sickness, it would be tragic indeed to be refused entrance to Tibet where the Holy Place is situated. Yet this is what actually happened as we were informed that we had to apply to Lhasa Foreign Bureau. So we sent a telegram saying that I was a devout Buddhist and requesting a telegraphic reply. The clerk at the court of Darjeeling said that it would take at least a month, and the horizon looked very gloomy.

At the thought of not being at the Valley of Wesak for the full moon, the pilgrim got quite ill, for such a thought was unbearable. We only just had time to get there as it is sixteen days on a mule. Permission from Lhasa did not come, and on the other hand no money came from England, so on Monday the 10th of April the pilgrim, our Interpreter and our cook, amid the kind wishes of our friends of Ashfield House went off by car. An hour of a hair-pin curving and dangerously slanting road took us to the Coronation bridge over the Teesta River. We decided to go up to Kalimpong to pay our respects to the Roerich family as through the books of Nicholas Roerich we see that he is true Mystic as well as a painter and a writer. We found his widow Mrs. Roerich extremely advanced spiritually. She seemed amazed to hear where we were going and said that only Helen Blavatsky had been there physically. However she and Mr. Roerich junior wished us the best of luck as we took our leave from them and their quaint garden—just one blaze of purple and pink flowers, and went up the winding road to Gangtok—the capital of Sikkim. Night fell upon us and when at last we arrived at the rest-bungalow we were quite weary. Gangtok is a very pretty and picturesque little town built on mountain slopes with the great Kanchenjunga visible opposite. There are charming gardens here with lawns and flower beds of roses, pansies and fox gloves—All the flowers were in bloom, the birds were singing and the cuckoo calling. We

took all these joyous outbursts of natural life as symbols of success, and as the days were passing by and no permission from Lhasa was forthcoming, the guide and the pilgrim made another plan. Instead of going by the broad pilgrim track that goes to Lhasa through Gyantsee which every body goes by we would go through Sikkim by mountain paths and across the desert straight North to Shigatsi. So we applied for permission to visit the Lake District that lies to the extreme North of Sikkim. We were told to obtain permission from the Dewan. As Sikkim is under the protection of India the Dewan is a Hindu and he and his pretty Hindu wife both speak perfect English and are charming. Mr. Lall, the Dewan was out this time, so we left him a note. Later on that evening a messenger brought us a letter from him in which he stated that while the Maharaja had no objection to our visiting the Lake District, he strongly advised us not to do so as the path had been swept away in several places by landslides and only last week a man had been killed. This was most discouraging, but we had been five days at Gangtok and if the pilgrim was to be in "Shangri-La" for the full moon, we must be off. So on the 16th of April we set off, our guide and Nepali cook on foot, a mule boy, three pack mules and our pilgrim mounted on another mule. How happy we were to be on the way at last! Unfortunately there was a thick mist and we never got a view at the snowy mountains. We climbed a seemingly never ending high hill and at last got into a gorge and crossed some stony, nerve racking waterfalls, and after six hours steady going arrived at Dikshu, at thirteen miles distance. Here is a charming rest-house with roses in the garden and hanging orchids and the roar of the rushing river Teesta and we had a good night's rest after our first day on a mule. How many more will be needed, to be at Thy feet, O glorious Masters of "Shangri-La"?

The second day was easier through verdant forest glades with bright green ferns, large leaved creepers up tall trees and birds calling like blackbirds and chattering parrots. Again we arrived early at the Dak Bungalow at Singhik situated on a height commanding a mountain view on either side. It rained all night but fortunately the next morning was bright and beautiful through thick, luxuriant Himalayan forests. But this third day on a mule was a truly terrible one. The pilgrim had to dismount and walk countless times, across suspension bridges and through rushing cataracts, then we had a lot of hard climbing to do owing to a landslide that had abolished the path. The mules seemed tired and the pilgrim was quite exhausted after eight strenuous hours.

We arrived at Chungtang, the meeting point of two mountain rivers. The rushing Lachung-Chu joined the roaring Teesta; between them were a few cottages at the foot of massive rocky mountains which appeared as if they might swallow up the village any moment. The people here have this apprehension for the police official said that nobody slept there since the week before as there had been a landslide two miles upstream killing one man. And for fear of the same fate coming to them they went up the mountain to pass the night. However we decided that nothing would happen to us that night so remained in the spacious bungalow.

Our dear guide said that the next day would be easier, and though it certainly proved to be less terrible than the previous one, it was by no means easy. Since the path along the river had been swept away in most parts, we had to climb up and around mountain after mountain.

"Does the road wind up hill all the way?"

Yes, to the very end."

In one particularly steep passage the rider had to cling on to the mule's mane in order not to fall off backwards, and the saddle slipped back almost to the animal's tail obliging the disciple to get off for it to be readjusted when we reached a flat spot. Since the pilgrim had not done any riding for twenty years, the reader can imagine what sort of condition the anatomy was in! The legs were so painful that getting on and off was quite a job!! It was thanks to the assistance of the capable guide and our cook that the pilgrim was always able to manage although not exactly with elegance! Our mule had an exasperating way of stopping, either just on the edge of a precipice or up a steep hill when the rider was in a most uncomfortable position. However our gratitude goes to the sturdy mules, for without them this terrific journey would be impossible.

The scenery became more austere: great rugged mountains on all sides, some of them topped with snow, others with torrents gushing out of them. It is a mystery to man whence this eternal water comes from. Nearly all Sikkim consists of high mountains and torrents rushing over huge rocks. A bright note in the bleak landscape was the red blossom of Rhododendron trees and there were patches of mauve primulas that made a lilac-coloured carpet for the pilgrim's delight.

At long last we arrived at Lachung spreading out on either side of the broad river-bed, strewn with colossal stones. Again it rained and we obtained the disheartening information that no body had been where we were going and that it had snowed hard only a week ago. There were some Tibetans here who were waiting for the snows to melt before going back to their country. But we had to go now, no matter how difficult it might be. O Mahatmas! this journey is not for our own pleasure but in order to serve you great Ones better after, so you surely will help us in all our difficulties, and make the body of Thy disciple strong so as to resist the fatigue and the cold of the high altitudes. How we shall manage we do not know but success, has been assured, so we shall continue our pilgrimage with confidence in the never failing Divine Protection.

The fifth day proved to be the most terrible imaginable. Our interpreter, bless him, had said that it would be easy and so it started amid imposing massive snow-tipped mountains. But it was five years since our guide had come this way and the people were right in saying that it was impassible at this time of the year.

Our first shock was after turning a corner to see to our horror that the way high above the river had been completely obliterated by a land-slide. It seemed impossible to pass this; a steep slope and then a precipice. But what could we do? We just had to go on, so our brave cook and tall mule boy set to work to remove rocks and make a sort of 'way'. The pilgrim clambered across the stones and walked on well past the precipice. Soon the gallant mules with difficulty came over the stones; so we had made a way where there was none, proving that "Where there is a will, there is a way".

Our next stop was where a plank bridge across a stream was unattainable as the path had been wiped out and a gigantic tree lay across the way a yard above the ground, thus making it impossible for a mule to pass. This looked very bad. But the disciple scrambled down to the stream and jumped over stones and fallen trees to the other side. The men started cutting branches and after some time were able to bring the mules through. Another way was made where there was none. We found more trees across the path but thanks to the good-will of our men we were always able to get past.

Then we came to a solitary region with broken trees lying everywhere: not a hut, not a soul around and even no bird's song to break the silence. And the worst was yet to come. The snow, the worst obstacle for horses and mules, lay thick in many parts and the poor mules had a terrible time getting through it for they would sink down to their bellies and often they were not able to get up without assistance. The pilgrim's mule leaped along nearly throwing her off, so she deemed it more prudent to dismount. This she did and with the utmost difficulty waded through the snow getting her feet soaking wet and icy cold. Our guide said that this was the most terrible track and that he had ever been on such a track in his life. O Masters of Compassion! invisible Helpers! angels! We beseech you to assist us to come through this terrible way without mishap.

At long last, in a broad expanse surrounded by snowy peaks, we beheld a solitary red-roofed cottage and a quantity of little huts around but all of them deserted. It seemed that not a soul lived here, the place looked forlorn and forsaken. But upon our arriving at the bungalow, an elderly, pleasant-faced man greeted us with the greatest astonishment as he never expected to see any visitors at this time of the year—saying that it was a very long time since anyone had arrived here. Upon our interpreter telling him that we were going to Shigatsi by the Donkya La-Pass he lifted up his hands in horror saying that it was quite impossible at this time, "that no one had come through for months", and that many had lost their lives in that pass. That we should surely die and that our mules would certainly expire. What to do? To turn back would be cowardly after conquering so many obstacles. Besides, the disciple was determined to go at any cost and she knew that our lives were not going to end so soon and that we were protected. The question was whether to continue with the mules or to go on foot with more men. The pilgrim was quite willing to walk if need be, as she had shown this day, but since we were to reach an altitude of 18,000 ft. she would scarcely be able to make rapid progress for lack of breath.

The next day the disciple was completely knocked out of action and felt so ill that she did not mind what happened. Let God's Will be done, and lo and behold our guide, after worrying all day about the snow and about our health, had a bright idea. In the evening with great Presences helping us he said he had another plan. Since the mules would



Sicdar Phurba Tshering—Our interpreter.



The pilgrim just over the Donkya-La Pass.

surely break their legs in the deep snow, he would send them back and he himself would return to Lachung to get some coolies and a strong man to carry the disciple in a chair. Eureka! He had found a method to get across that great mountain!

So the next morning he set back with the mule boy and the mules leaving the disciple alone with the Nepali cook who only understood a few words of English. She asked him for two boiled eggs and he brought a dish of porridge! So one just had to be adaptable! And the majesty and silence of this part certainly inclined the mind to peace. The sound of the rushing river reminded one of the sea. Now and again a bird would twitter and two crows came to the window, presumably in search of food. All round, steep slopes with pine trees: beyond them snowy, rocky mountains, dazzlingly white when the sun shone. It was a fitting place for rest and meditation before going on a great and difficult enterprise. And this was about the most terrific journey in the world! Nobody had travelled the way we were going and it seemed to be impossible. Indeed it proved to be a more than ordinary accomplishment!

The following day our guide returned with six strong, rather wild looking men, all with pigtails. So on Monday the 24th of April we started out on foot. The way lay up the valley of the Lachung Chu River. Fir trees on either side and rhododendron trees, and on the ground carpets of mauve primula. Birds sang, the sun shone, and it became more and more beautiful. After a while we came to a region of indiscribable majesty and beauty. From a bridge was seen the silver river winding through a verdant valley, enormous mountains flanking it and beyond, a lofty range of white giants dazzling in the sun. This is undoubtedly one of the most glorious views in the world.

The greatness and grandeur of the Himalayas causes all other mountains to sink into insignificance. The Alps seem like toy mountains in comparison, the Mexican Volcanos are meagre and even the South American mountains are not nearly so imposing as this awe inspiring mass of giant mountains.

All those who have seen something of the Himalayas have had this same impression words failing to describe them adequately. No wonder that the greatest spiritual Center of the earth, Shamballa, is situated behind their shelter and that

many of the great Masters or guides of humanity choose to reside in the inaccessibility of the Himalayas.

The Holy Lamas laugh at the attempts of Westerners to climb these great mountains. They know that the summits are protected by powerful Devas or spirits and only a truly holy man would be permitted to reach the top. But then a holy man would not need to make the effort of physical ascension when he can be on any mountain top in his astral, or subtle body whenever he chooses.

Anyway we admired this glorious view and after some light refreshment continued our journey. The scenery became more austere, the vegetation scarcer and the path steeper, the pilgrim became more and more puffed as we were at about 12,000 ft. The men tried to carry her in a chair, but the movement produced nausea and was not bearable at all. They then tried to carry her on their backs turn by turn, but this was such an uncomfortable position that it could not be borne for long at a time, so we walked and were carried turn by turn. Soon we had the disagreeable surprise of finding deep snow, and we kept sinking down in it to beyond our knees, getting our feet icy cold and wet. On and on we waded, weary and chilled: the clouds gathered on the rocky peaks, a bitter wind blew in our faces, it grew darker and darker and not a hut appeared. Yet the men said that there was one a little further on. We crossed a river and by this time it was almost dark and the pilgrim was so exhausted that she sat on a rock saying that she could go no further. Everything seemed gloomy and dark, cold and solitary. Our dear guide went ahead to see if there was any sign of an abode for the night, leaving the disciple alone in the semi-darkness. She cried and prayed aloud to the Great Ones for help and in one moment the whole atmosphere around was filled with shining blue lights, Spirits and angels which a certain great Guru—Master—had sent to assist His disciple. And soon four burly fellows appeared and carried the disciple turn by turn and in discomfort but safely to a primitive hut. This was Yume Samdong built by Americans in this solitary, icy cold, bleak region, almost always lost in the clouds.

After this there were no huts nor any sign of life. Snow fields and rocky snow-capped peaks composed the severe scenery. And there was nothing for it but to trudge through the snow. In the early morning it was hard and one could walk on the surface but as the day advanced it became softer



A Snow World.



A Tibetan Nun.

and we sat into it to well above our knees. I know of nothing more horrible and tiring than this, mile after mile. The men could not carry the pilgrim now, as the weight of two would cause the bearer to sink down into the snow more frequently, much to the discomfort to both the carrier and the carried. So there was no alternative but to wade and believe it or not, the disciple was able to trudge in this way about ten miles. Nobody thought that she could do it, but with divine help she was able to do this and much more seemingly impossible feats.

That night we had to pitch our tent as we were "Out of the World" and no such things as huts and sheds existed. The pilgrim had had no money to get a good tent as she had wished nor even a sleeping bag which she had been advised to buy. This tent proved to be so small that we had to creep in like animals and once in one could not move from a very uncomfortable position. It was so cold that the disciple passed the whole night with chattering teeth and in the utmost misery. And when dawn at last broke she was in a sad plight with a swollen face, a streaming cold and a splitting headache. But on we had to go so as not to perish in the intense cold.

It was a snow world, dazzlingly white, without any sign or sound of life. Thus we set out bravely on one of the most difficult enterprises undertaken by man. We were to cross the Donkya La-Pass at 18,000 ft. above sea level. It was deemed impassable at this time of the year and many had lost their lives here, getting lost in these vast snow fields with no human aid within many and many a mile. We were the first to pass this year and those in Yuntang, the last habitation, had said that we would have to return if we did not wish to lose our lives. Even trained mountaineers did not undertake this trip at this time of the year as it was believed impossible. However the disciple's faith in the beloved Masters and her devotion to Them was so great that she knew we should pass with success. Our thoughtful guide had worried much as to how the pilgrim would resist the altitude. when he had seen her get out of breath at 7,000 ft. after walking only 100 yards. He provided a strong man to carry her over the most difficult, parts and help her in the snow.

The very steepest bit stood just in front of us, or rather above us, and it looked almost vertical. Dauntless we set forth, but the pilgrim soon got so terribly puffed that she had to rest on a stone. The burly bearer took her on his back and carried her with steady feet over pointed rocks until he



Resting at Shigatsi



The two Governors of
Shigatsi with the pilgrim.

got out of breath. The steepest part was still in front of us. The pilgrim decided to climb it, and panting and puffing like a steam engine, pulled by a stick, with super-human effort got over the crest. Victory! A marvellous panorama lay in front of us; the steep descent was all snow, but beyond the valley spread stretch after stretch of sand-coloured desert, and in the horizon purple hills, with three white peaks, far, far away. It was beautiful and peaceful beyond words.

But we now had to tackle the descent which was quite dangerous as it was a steep, snow, bound slope with the valley far away below. Some men went away ahead to make a way with their feet and we followed in their foot-steps. The pilgrim's carrier holding her by the hand, with many a slip and a tumble we got down gradually. But the most dangerous part was yet to come. As we left the snowy region we came to small pointed stones which rolled downwards when trodden on. In one part that seemed a little flatter, the disciple rested on a rock, telling the men to go ahead. She left her umbrella open by her side: suddenly it was hurled down about ten yards; she went to its rescue, sitting down so as not to be carried forwards, and with her long stick managed to fish and pull up the umbrella, but when she tried to clamber back to the path, at each effort she slipped down and certainly would never have got back if it had not been for the carrier whom our guide had sent to the rescue.

After a long, stony and perilous descent, we at last reached the desert lands. A huge hill lay in front of us but we turned Westward in search of some hut but no habitation was visible, only a vast solitude and a cutting cold wind. The only thing we found after tramping sometime were some rough, low stone walls forming squares with yaks' and sheep dung on top of them and inside. It was in one of these smelly, dirty squares that the men fixed a draughty sort of tent where we passed another cold, miserable night in the acme of discomfort. To make matters worse, the men refused to go any further unless paid much more, so our interpreter thought it wise to despatch them. He himself as well as the cook wished to return, but the pilgrim persuaded them to continue. Anyway she was determined to go on alone, and they out of chivalry were sorry to leave her in the desert without her speaking a word of the language. Early next morning the guide set off with one trusty man in search of yaks. The cook and the pilgrim saw them disappear over the hill-top, and for many a weary bleak hour we gazed at that hill,

expecting to see them at any moment. It grew colder and colder and started snowing, and it was late afternoon when at long last they appeared from the West with three beasts. The yak is a very strong animal somewhat larger than a cow with long shaggy hair hanging round it like a skirt.

The yak that the pilgrim was put on seemed extremely frisky and kept jumping to one side, putting his head down and trying to throw the rider off. Now it is very dangerous to fall from a yak because he can trample one to death or gore one badly with its horns. As this was a very powerful animal that the man could scarcely hold, the disciple thought it more prudent to walk. After going a couple of hours we came to more stone walls with bleating sheep inside them, barking dogs and a pitched tent. The shepherds invited us inside to squat around their fire and in some time had fixed our tent after the same fashion as their own with a pole in front permitting the pilgrim to sit up inside with just a little less discomfort than in the preceding set-ups. Dawn found us with ice on our heads as usual, and the disciple with a terrible headache, but we had to make a move. We saw all the black and white sheep come out of the folds with their little ones bleating after them. When they were all out we sallied forth; fortunately the energies of our yak were somewhat spent in climbing the great hill in front of us and after that yet another big hill till we saw the endless desert stretching ahead, with purple-blue and rosy pink hills around the horizon, and behind us the snowy peaks gleaming.

This is Western Tibet, all desert land and brown rugged mountains, without a single tree or scrap of vegetation. The only living things that we saw were some red and white striped zebras and a few hares. This was solitude indeed, mile after mile, and hour after hour, only sun, dust and wind. How easy it would be to get lost here in this infinity of sand and stones, if one did not know the way.

After many weary hours of dreary going we beheld a rocky hill with some square grey huts on its summit which our guide said was a convent. The ascent was very steep indeed and studded with pointed rocks making the climb extremely arduous. When at last we reached the convent, we were greeted by barking dogs and scowling faces, as dark as their nigger brown tunics. After our interpreter explaining our case, some of the dark faces smiled and we were shown into a square stable with a square hole in the flat roof for

ventilation. The place was swept and a portable grate was brought with a basket of dung which is used as fuel.

Since in Tibet there are scarcely any trees—fire-wood and coal do not exist so animal manure is used as fuel. Nearly every household possesses some donkeys and a couple of yaks: the women collect the faeces when fresh and with their hands make cakes which they plaster on to their walls, and when the sun has baked this for some weeks, it makes an excellent fire. This is the dominant impression in all Tibetan houses. Cakes of animal dung on the walls, piles of it in the yards and also on their flat roofs. On a plentiful provision of this are good fires dependent. I do not know why housewives in other countries do not adopt this method when fuel is so difficult to obtain and so costly.

To return to our journey, the next day, Sunday the 30th April, held an unpleasant surprise for us. Ponies appeared early and the pilgrim was mounted on a frisky creature which shied at anything trying to throw one off. The worst of it was that the rider was not seated on a proper saddle but perched up on some bags with stirrups for too short, and felt that she had no control at all over her mount. The pony man led him across the dreary desert till we came to a river and the five persons of our group dispersed to cross it, each one separately. Suddenly the pony shied, the man somehow let go; the pilgrim cried that she was about to fall off and then she must have lost consciousness, for she can remember nothing, till painfully aware of sitting on the stony ground, with a sore bleeding face and the right arm in such agony that it was unmovable. This was a pretty state of affairs: out of action, and yet so far to go, and the full moon is to-morrow. Well, we can never be there physically. Utter failure.

Our guide thought that they would have to carry our pilgrim from now on. "But where there is a Will there is a Way," and after half an hours rest, the disciple was able to stand up and walk slowly, with much pain, and panting and many a rest, the remaining three miles, fortunately flat, to our destination, Langdon, which is quite a large village. The people here were simply charming and most sympathetic. They took us up to a little room and the pilgrim was placed on a sort of low couch which proved to be a restful bed. The chief of the community is a delightful man and kindness itself. There was also a doctor who said that the application of fire would cure the arm, but since the remedy seemed move

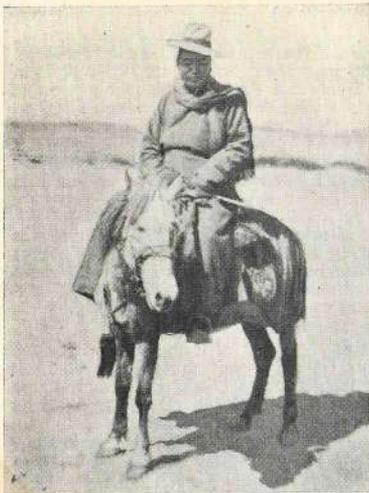
painful than the ill and since the arm could not be moved at all, they ended by giving us some grains which, dissolved in water would prove very beneficial. Never had a white woman been here and the dark sisters of all ages were ever so sympathetic and attentive, not leaving us alone for one moment. Next morning although we were ready at a very early hour it was quite a long time before we were allowed to depart and that not before the disciple had looked at several hands and told them encouraging things.

On a pony again the pilgrim was in acute pain but there was no remedy but to bear it, as silently as possible. After many an hour of bone-breaking riding we reached a village—Kongma and were lodged in a yard, this being a great contrast to our last stop.

The following day was a record of long-suffering for the pilgrim was eleven hours on very uncomfortable horse back and we covered no less than 30 miles, reaching a small village Yeko, where we were again put in a stable yard to freeze with cold. And then again across the never ending desert in sun and wind with the body always in agony. Constant endurance might be our motto. In Badu, the village where we arrived, there is a monastery with seventy monks, one of whom found us a small "room" off a stable yard. He and his companions had never seen a white woman and they did not leave us alone for a moment; every single thing of ours intrigued them immensely but most of all the hot water bottle! Another cold sleepless night which made the catarrh worse than it had been.

The next day we did at least two stages in one as the disciple was thirteen hours on a primitive bone-racking saddle. We arrived at Natan, a very holy place where it is said that the Lord Buddha left his stick and begging bowl before attaining illumination. May it be here that this humble disciple leaves her aches and pains before finding the great Mahatmas. Anyway it was here that she was given a hot foot bath in order to reduce the extreme swelling. The Zip-faster had so hurt the feet that the stockings had to be cut off so as not to reopen the wounds.

There is a big monastery here which possesses a most valuable collection of large prayer books with the letters written in gold on papyrus leaves. The monks who had certainly never seen a foreigner, used to come and gaze at us



The Tibetan Officer who
escorted us back.

On the homeward
journey near the
Donkya-La Pass.



by the hour out of curiosity, as did many a boy and girl, sometimes constituting quite a nuisance. We stayed here three days and as we had received no messages from the Mahatmas by Sunday the 7th of May, we decided to go on to Shigatsi on the following day.

CHAPTER III.

Shigatsi

Now the disciple had not really wished to go to Shigatsi but rather to some miles North of this holy town. However since the path Northwards commences from the other side of Shigatsi—it was necessary to go there. We had now been over a week in Tibet and the Authorities did not yet know of our existence, but alas, Shigatsi proved to be our undoing.

We travelled Eastwards and the impression upon nearing this holy place, of repute among Theosophists, is delightful. After so much desert it was refreshing to see, groups of bright green trees mostly poplars and willows and on the right hand side a lake. To the left, at the foot of the hill, a quantity of square grey buildings with red and gold spires constitute the monastery which is I think the largest in the world. Here there is the biggest statue of Lord Buddha in existence—it is nine storeys high and is painted gold and decorated with precious stones. They call it the Gyewa Zampa, the coming Lord Buddha. Nearly three thousand monks live in this monastery, the number having been more than double in the past. Further, on the other side of the hill there is a large fort where the Officers ruling the city reside, and below, the town spreading out in various sections, as it is very extensive with a civil population of 8,000.

Shigatsi has a large market, and merchants of many nations come here many being Mohammedans. Quantities of horses, donkeys, yaks, and even cows are seen in the streets and in these days that the Tibetans are fearing the Communists—there is a large recruiting depot training new soldiers for the army. Shigatsi is the most important place in Tibet after Lhasa, the third commercial centre being Gyantsi, but Shigatsi is also an important Spiritual protective centre. Here is the palace once inhabited by the Tashi Lama, whose whereabouts are actually unknown. It is said in a certain book that the Master M. and the Master K.H. reside in Shigatsi. But the disciple did not feel their presence here. Maybe the same thing applies to these two great Chohans as to another beloved Master Whom it is said lives somewhere in Syria. That He has resided there in the past is certain, but actually the fortunate disciple found Him in the American Continent.

Be this a day, we settled in humble quarters a couple of miles West of the town, and this was certainly prudent for the first time that the pilgrim took a walk in Shigatsi, she was accompanied and followed by a crowd of men, women and children some of them unpleasantly odiferous and making a dust just in front of us thus taking away all pleasure from our walk. What was worse, among the crowd were some officials who were spies of the Government, and two of them accompanied us to our abode and had to be entertained with cigarettes and barley water. When they left, their place was taken by others and from now on, we were never left alone and always under surveillance. Our Interpreter was naturally very anxious as we had no permits to show. The following day, after many conferences and much talking with the Officials, we were invited to take tea with the Governor of the City.

Another weary walk in the dust and the wind and a strenuous climb up to the fort from whence one had a wonderful view of the town and of the mountains near and far.

We were first shown into the chapel where a service was being held and here the disciple felt such powerful blessings that she fell into an ecstasy: the high priest looked at her sympathetically and we certainly mutually appreciated each other. He said that our journey must have been terrible indeed but that what remained of it would be far more agreeable. We were next taken into the court. The people were below and the Political Officer and the priest who worked with him were seated on an upper terrace. They immediately beckoned the officer with us to escort us to where they were.

In Tibet the clergy and the laymen work in close co-operation and one cannot do anything without the other. The stout priest wore the graceful reddish brown robes of his order and the Governor was clad in a handsome yellow brocade tunic with a red sash. These clothes are so much more graceful and more dignified, as well as being more comfortable, than men's clothes in Western countries. The Governor has a refined and intelligent face and his expressive brown eyes light up with a humorous twinkle when he smiles in his charming manner. The pilgrim watched his versatile countenance keenly and he was no less intent on scrutinising hers.

The two Officials sat cross legged on a low divan covered with handsome rugs. The disciple was offered a



The pilgrim being carried across a river.

cushioned chair in front of them and the interpreter took his place on a low stool to one side. Tea was served in beautiful china cups and the priest kept offering us sweets. Though we were entirely dependent on our interpreter for conversation, it is certain that the Governor and the pilgrim understood each other perfectly for we found him extremely sympathetic. He said that Tibet had just signed a treaty with the U.S.A. and since the disciple came from America, his pleasure was to protect her and escort her wherever she went, would we please advise him of anything we wanted, and why did we not take lodgement in the Palace which was far cleaner and more comfortable than our actual quarters. We thanked him very much but told him of our desire to go North of Shigatsi the next day, as far as the river. He promised us ponies at whatever time we wished and his best officer to accompany us. The interview was considerably prolonged and when at last we were allowed to take our leave it was not without having taken photographs of these two charming diplomats. To be truthful let us say that during the whole time of his interview there were great presences assisting the outcome to be beneficial. Thanks to the aid of these "Invisible Helpers" the meeting had been highly favourable to us, and henceforth we should be duly "protected". This day was Wednesday the 10th of May and it was one month exactly that we had left Darjeeling and the comfortable life: the event had been duly celebrated by this conference.

The following day our interpreter set out early for Gyantsi in order to send from there a telegram to the bank at Gangtok requesting them to cable us some money as we had come completely to the end of our funds. An hour later there appeared a tall well dressed officer with horses. He rode on his gallant steed, his aide-de-camp rode on another; the disciple was given a good pony and even the cook was mounted; a donkey carrying the few bags, and our landlord's son completed the party.

In order to take the path North we had to go all through the city around to the other side of the fortress. Everybody stared at us and effusively saluted the officer. It was a gorgeous morning and all the mountains were visible, some of them brown, others blue-purple and yet others scintillating snowy white.

After three hours of steady going we came to a most beautiful river with an impenetrable range of mountains on the

other side. This is the sacred Brahmaputra which they call here "Chang Chu" meaning clear water. The Governor had said that this is one of the holiest rivers because it had its source under a sacred mountain where a treasure had been hidden by a great Lama long ago. As a matter of fact it starts, under Mount Kailash which is said to be the earthly residence of the Gods. It certainly is lovely and peaceful beyond words. We followed the river up-stream till it divided into two and the valley broadened out to about a mile, dotted with white farms with fresh green trees and cattle and sheep grazing on the verdant patches. It was a charming sight of prosperous pastoral life.

Since we could not cross to the other side of the river as the disciple had wished, the officer chose one of the white farms for our abode. The landlord, a small spare man in a brown robe and cleaner than the rest of the family, proved to be a Lama and a most devout Buddhist. We were given a nice top room with a window. One of the sons, a tall amiable youth, stuck to the pilgrim like a leach, fetched and carried for her and was attention itself all the time that we were with this family which was five days. We can say that everywhere in Tibet we met with the utmost kindness and sympathy and although the pilgrim could not speak their language, it was always easy to feel who was especially sympathetic to one.

Tibetans are very healthy and long lived though there are scarcely any doctors. Their main food is whole flour which they mix with their hands with a little barley water or tea and eat as dough, an extra good meal is with an added piece of dried meat. They drink barley water at all times as well as tea of course, Tibetan tea being weaker and more refreshing than black tea, we found it a very healthy drink without lard. The people seem to thrive on this diet for the men are generally tall and well built and the women and children work very hard indeed. Girls often have rosy cheeks and many of them are really pretty and extremely charming. It is a mistake to think that all Tibetans are dirty: certainly most of them are but then so are the Central American Indians of the mountainous regions, mainly due to the intense cold, we suppose. It is amusing to see in Tibet the face a different colour from the arms and legs due to it having been washed more recently! Tibet is changing fast: many rich families send their children to schools at Gangtok, Capital of Sikkim, and Darjeeling and often themselves go to these places.

The disciple met some charming Tibetan families in Darjeeling. Many of the monks are perfectly clean and quite a few have very fine features. In this Western part of Tibet the race must have been extremely mixed, for we saw many types and colours, most of them not particularly Mongolian in character and a few with bluish, green and grey eyes.

To return to our story, after being five days by the beautiful Brahmaputra river, the Officer and his aide-de-camp appeared at six o'clock in the morning saying that the Governor wanted to see us and we must return to Shigatsi. Now the pilgrim had planned to go upstream this particular day of the new moon, but what could we do? The Governor's orders had to be obeyed.

After three hours' journey we were in Shigatsi again and then we had to ascend the hill to the fort and climb many a steep flight of steps to be at last in the private rooms of the all powerful. They were decorated with lovely pictures of the life of Lord Buddha and perfumed with incense.

After a short time the two Governors appeared and tea and biscuits were served; conversation proved to be difficult as they did not speak English and the disciple unfortunately had had no opportunity to learn Tibetan. The cook and the pilgrim ate all the biscuits that were offered as they were terribly hungry after the long ride. There were some rather awkward silences until they brought in a young man who spoke perfect English. Then the bad news was broken to us. A message had been received from Lhasa to the effect that a certain Miss B. was in Shigatsi without a passport. And on the other hand the Dewan of Sikkim had sent a telegram asking if a foreign lady had arrived here as she had disappeared from Sikkim and nobody knew where she was. We had to go, there was no remedy. The Governor was placed in a most difficult position for he personally wanted to be as nice as possible as the disciple came from America, but he explained to us that among the officers there were some who spied on him, and if he did not do his duty as ordained from Lhasa he would be a lost man. He assured us of his friendship at all times, promised us horses as far as the frontier and his best officer to escort us. The pilgrim was garlanded with ceremonial white gauze scarves and we sadly took our leave of these exquisitely courteous and kind Officials with mutual good wishes for all manner of blessings and the mutual hope that we should meet again sometime.

This day and the next, the disciple went through a crisis of complete despair and a sense of utter failure. To have covered such an immense distance, spent so much money, making debts to several friends, endured untold hardships and even lost the use of the right arm, and not to have reached "Shangri-La" and not to have found even one Master of Wisdom in the flesh. What a tragic fiasco! Yet, only a few days back the disciple had received the message to have patience and not to lose faith. Well, this certainly was a tremendous test for one's faith. If the great Mahatmas were expecting Their disciple as she had been told in America, why did They not help her to get to where They reside? Was it all a dream, an illusion of the personal self? Having seen herself there so clearly, the disciple thought she could be there physically. What presumption! As a certain Master had said, "You are very ambitious." May be, anyway if we did not get there, it is because we were not ready for such a glorious achievement. Perhaps it will be for some later date.

Here the disciple completely renounced the idea of physically reaching this holiest of places. "Thy will be done, O Father!" And you glorious Holy Ones, You are always watching over your disciple, so what is there to worry about? So the disciple came down to earth again, more humble than before.

After renunciation comes peace, as the Bhagavad Gita says. So long as we are attached to people, places and things, we suffer. But when we have renounced all personal wishes and let the Divine Will fulfil Itself in us, then we are serene and at peace. And this peace does not mean inaction: on the contrary, we are able to act more wisely when we are inwardly detached, for we can thus see better how to act.

CHAPTER IV.

The Return.

Sursam corda !
Rejoice in your hearts.

Since we could not be seen in Shigatsi our immediate departure was necessary. The interpreter had not yet returned from Gyantsi and we had no money at all. In fact the cook had borrowed from a friend of his in town in order to buy food all these days and we had not been able to buy a box of biscuits which we needed badly! But as horses were being provided by the Officers, we decided to leave on the following day. The disciple was given a very good horse and we reached Natan in three hours after an easy and enjoyable ride in gorgeous weather.

Here it was that the disciple fell into an ecstasy of joy and felt a glorious presence close at hand. Who said: "The tide has changed for you and your luck will be much better from now on". This brought great happiness and next day our interpreter showed up with funds, so at midday we were able to start off with the Officer, his aide-de-camp, and a police captain, the whole party mounted. How happy we were to be going back to the world to where there were bathrooms! We travelled five days in the charming company of this officer and were always given the best "Rooms" where we encamped. The officer had long talks with our interpreter and through him told us that he had always wished to make life more agreeable for the pilgrim but because we could not understand each other's language this had not been possible. For instance when staying near the river side, he had arranged for a "boat" to take us to the other side, but the cook (bless him), had said that the pilgrim had travelled in all manner of boats and even in planes and consequently this boat did not interest her! Also upon our return to Shigatsi he had wanted us to stay in his house which was clean and well equipped but he had been told that the pilgrim preferred to go to our old lodgings. Now the truth is that upon arrival in the city the pilgrim had told the cook that she did not want to go back to the old place but wished for a cleaner one in town. What misunderstanding for lack of speaking their language! Again the Officer had wished to present the pilgrim with a pair of Tibetan shoes seeing that her boots hurt her, but the

cook had said that she did not like them! As it is we always admired their coloured woollen boots saying how comfortable they must be. In spite of these seeming stupidities, our cook proved to be a very good servant, absolutely honest and always willing. It seemed that during these ten days that our interpreter was away, the disciple was destined to be cut off from all human intercourse. So it is that she was alone in a foreign country without being able to converse with anyone, without one cent or penny or pie of her own and even without sufficient food to eat! Yet she met with only kindness and sympathy everywhere.

And so the days and evenings went by agreeably, exchanging ideas with the officer who proved to be a real spiritual brother for we were bound by the same faith in the ever present divine guidance. Among other things he told us that Tibet was protected on all sides by very holy mountains the most sacred of them being called "Chumal-Hari" the most beautiful mountain in the world. They call the mountains the palaces of the Gods because they say that great spirits-Devas-inhabit them and protect them from impure influences.

Entering Tibet is no joke for one finds nothing but desert and rocky mountains; it is easy to get lost and unless well provided with provisions and clothing, hunger and cold will assuredly come upon one. In Tibet there are a great number of Lamas and monks who meditate and pray all day long. Some of them are real Magicians, both white and black and their thoughts can heal or destroy. In Mexico and Central America we also find amongst the Indians White and Black Magicians and witchcraft is rampant. The officer told us that if any foreign power would enter Tibet, it would certainly go ill with them and hundreds of their men would become sick and die. Certainly mental power is stronger than any other force and we can either kill or cure by our manner of thinking. Many people continually hurt themselves as well as others with their negative minds and some few have learnt to help themselves and others in this manner. The thoughts of a truly holy man or Master affect the multitude and inspire receptive souls so that there will be more love, more beauty and more joy in the world. To know how to think is to know how to live, for everything is mental before becoming physical.

To return to our journey, after five days from Natan we reached Langdon where they had been so kind to this

disciple after her accident. This was the limit of Tibet, so the Officer as well as the police captain had to return to Shigatsi and render accounts to the Governor. The Officer was sad at leaving us and we were sorry to part with him and we both hoped to see each other again on another occasion. We parted with the most sincere well wishing on both sides. We experienced some hours of delay here as it was extremely difficult to find anyone to accompany us for they all thought it was far too dangerous. At last, thanks to the officer's influence, two men and two horses were procured and we were off amidst many a "Salam!"

This was a particularly hard day as after three hours of solid journeying in the desert with a cold wind in our faces, we saw in front of us the snow peaks over which we had to go. The Donkya-La Pass of 18,000 ft. appeared to be harder from this side than from Sikkim. No wonder people were frightened of it. As the "Way" was over huge rocks and stones, the pilgrim dismounted and the baggage was distributed between the two horses. The pilgrim doesn't know how the poor animals climbed such a steep vertical slope consisting of large stones that gave way under one's very feet. It looked quite impossible. However the gallant horses were over well before the pilgrim who had a headache, earache and a sore throat and was puffed for breath after every two steps. Our faithful guide stayed by our side till the end. This slope seemed never ending. We had our last view of the immense expanse of desert and the distant snow peaks of Tibet, as also over the violet—blue lakes of Sikkim—which we had not seen on our way to Tibet as everything had been covered with snow then. The panorama was marvellously peaceful and beautiful and we gazed our last gaze, physically speaking, for of course these lovely views can be admired mentally at any time:

"They flash upon that inward eye.

Which is the bliss of solitude", as Wordsworth says.

At long last we did get over the peak, and then we had to go down, which was less strenuous but by no means easy as it was all rocks and stones. In fact the way back was stony all the way. Our sturdy horse had a habit of jumping down from one rock to another which was very hard on his legs and the anatomy of the rider! We had one bad snow patch where the disciple's horse took such jumps that she

instinctively stretched out the right arm to catch hold of the man walking close by, thus causing terrible pain in the shoulder and serious damage to the broken arm. The disciple must be paying off some bad Karma which this arm probably she put someone else's arm out when she was a soldier in a past incarnation, and is now paying off this old debt! We always have to pay compensation for our errors and is it not said that we shall pay the last farthing before we can be free?

As we went down, the ground between the stones was strewn with deep purple primulas which were enchanting. A little lower the whole mountain-side flanking the river valley was a blaze of yellow, mauve and shades of pink rhododendron, a glorious and unforgettable sight.

"Im wunder schönen Monat Mai,
Als alle Knospen sprangen"
"In the wonderful month of May
When all the buds blossom"

As we got nearer to Yumtang it started raining and we as well as our things were quite wet when we reached the dak bungalow at nightfall. The huts that were abandoned last month were now occupied and dogs barked and yaks were sleeping. How nice it was to have a fire and a grate by which to warm one's feet and dry ones boots! And how very thankful we were to sleep in a bed again after spending so many nights on the hard stony ground, in the dirt with the animals!

From Yumtang the way to Lachung was relatively easy as it had been cleaned up since last month, and it was flowers, flowers all the way. On the ground a purple carpet in the open spaces, and in the forest rhododendrons and azaleas of nearly all colours. The pilgrim counted twelve different shades in many types including a lovely salmon pink and orange variety she had never seen elsewhere. Further down we met the Dewan of Sikkim coming up with coolies and horses. He said that he took off his hat to the pilgrim for having accomplished such a difficult enterprise. He and his wife had thought the pilgrim had been arrested in Tibet. On our assuring him that we had met with nothing but kindness, he said that we should probably meet with some trouble in Darjeeling, and he proved to be right.

At Lachung the old guardian was surprised and pleased to see us and more than astonished to hear where we had been as he had thought that it was quite impossible. Here the head man of the village the Post Master and one of the chief monks from the monastery came to see us and marvelled at our story, assuring us that if ever we went again they would be happy to accompany us.

We were more than pleased thinking that within a couple of days we should be in Gangtok and the next day in Darjeeling, the men in their homes with their families and the disciple with dear friends and lots of nice letters to answer! They told us that at Chungtang the bridge was in danger of being washed away and that further down the river there had occurred a serious landslide making it impossible for beasts of burden to pass. As it turned out we crossed the bridge safely, but further on we saw that the path had been completely obliterated and an enormous rock lay in the water rendering our further progress out of the question. What could we do? To turn back was not to be thought of. We just had to go on. Soon our brave men (the cook and the mule man) cut a "Way" up the mountain-side, through the thick jungle growth; the mules followed them with difficulty and then we scrambled up with the help of a stick. It was very tiring but little by little we were able to advance, being stung by all manner of insects, chiefly horse flies and leaches. When at last we were down on the path again, our legs were all bleeding and we had to take off our boots and shake them clean. The poor mules' legs were also bloody for the leach is the worst of blood-suckers.

We reached Toong early where we were very comfortable in the charming guest-house beautifully situated on a height.

The next day, through verdant forests and countless waterfalls, we reached Dikchu where the bungalow was full of English people but still there was room for us. We were all happy, for this last day of May saw us back in Gangtok after a forty-five days pilgrimage, which had been quite the hardest imaginable, in the snow and through the desert, without proper equipment, without a tent and almost without money!

It had not been easy to come to Gangtok as we had waited ten days for a permit and now it was not easy to leave it, as the Political Officer was away and he only could sign the pass for the bridge. Here in Sikkim they congratulated us on our

wonderful achievement of having passed in April, and now with horses, the Donkya-La Pass which they had thought quite impassible, The second political officer, a highly spiritual man, told us that he, a hill man would never be coaxed to undertake such a journey. He took note of all the stages and the mileages and said that with some huts in the solitary regions, this opened up a short way to Shigatsi for merchants and pilgrims.

When at last we were permitted to leave Gangtok, we were stopped at the bridge over the Teesta and told that we were to go up to Kalimpong. This would delay us quite a bit, but there was no remedy for it. At the Police Station there, the young police officers announced to the pilgrim that she was under arrest by the Indian Government for having transgressed frontiers without holding necessary passports. They kept us here two hours thinking of what to do about the matter during which we had a bite of something to eat as we were all ravenously hungry, having arisen at 5 a.m. as usual. At last they decided to let the pilgrim out on bail under custody of our interpreter. Marvelous! This was all very humorous. On the way down we had some beautiful views of the terrible Teesta river which was swollen with the recent rain and the colour of clay from all the land that had fallen into it. It rushed in all directions furiously, and some waves would angrily move against the current. Our guide said that when a river flows in all directions it is a very bad omen indeed which we may well believe for it was really terrible to behold. We had been so detained that when we at last reached Darjeeling it was dark and there was such a thick fog that and we had to drive very slowly.

We had come to the end of our pilgrimage but not of our quest, maybe the reader thinks that the disciple was sad at not having been at the Wesak Ceremony for the Full Moon, which was the motive of her setting out from her home country—Mexico, on the other side of the world. But no, she was not sad but on the contrary serene and humble because she had renounced and recognised that if she was not there the time had not yet come for such an honour. Had she not been told to have patience, and not to lose her faith?

After a few days the disciple received another message to the effect that the next month, July, would bring her great happiness as the negative influence of Saturn would have lifted.

Endeavour is never wasted. The qualities developed in any effort we carry from one incarnation to the next. On such a difficult trip as this one now accomplished, great virtues are developed if not already possessed; unflinching courage, limitless perseverance, an iron will, complete adaptability and an inextinguishable faith are requisite, and actually the health of the disciple is far better now than before the journey. It seems that the fact of deciding to vanquish every obstacle, enabled her also to defeat ill-health, but of course this could not have been effected if it had not been for the assistance of certain great Masters who had promised to always protect her and Whose presence she had felt daily.

It is significant to note that the disciple appeared to be destined to have unpleasant impressions everywhere! For instance she had no sooner arrived in New York when it commenced snowing and continued throughout her stay; this was a fine preparation for Tibet! Although she crossed the ocean in a big ship, since it was in February, the boat pitched all the way and it was as cold as an ice-box; mind you she had lived for the last fifteen years in the sunny tropics. In England, apart from the bleak weather, she found London so dreadfully gloomy, that her one desire was to get out of it as soon as possible.

Returning from the most difficult trip imaginable, a few days after her arrival in Darjeeling, the monsoon broke and there was an earthquake with numberless landslides, killing hundreds of people and making thousands homeless and destitute, as well as isolating the town from the rest of the world, for there were no communications of any sort for three weeks. However she is pleased to have shared this trouble with her friends and if her presence has brought a little comfort to but one soul, she is happy indeed.

This disaster is only the beginning of a series of cataclysms which will change the face of the Earth. There will be a New World for the New Age and a New Continent for the New 6th Race. Such changes in the planet have occurred before us when the great continent of Atlantis went down under the ocean and long before it Lemuria suffered the same fate. Periodically these cataclysms take place in order to destroy what is no longer helpful to progress and bring forth new and better forms. It is like pulling down an old house and building a new and more comfortable one in its

place. We should not grieve at these changes since they are absolutely necessary to evolution. In India Shiva, the Transformer or Third Person of the Trinity is worshipped and Sages of all times know that all things work together for Good. If we could only see something of the glory and grace that God hath prepared for those that love Him, we should be always happy and filled with gratitude.

CHAPTER V.

The Goal.

All is Thee, and there is nothing else but Thee, only THEE.

No words can describe the great REALISATION. It can be attained and experienced but never described for it is limitless and words limit. It is said "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all other things shall be added unto you;" this is only too true for what actually happened to this humble seeker on the path to the mountain top is undiscrivable. To find the companion soul is happiness on earth, to find the Guru (Spiritual Teacher) is untold joy; to find the inner Master, the Real Self, to be one with the Father is to reach the Goal; but when all three combine one just dissolves in Bliss. The great Mahatma of India, Sri Aurobindo says "Thou shalt contain in thy being thyself and all others, and be that which is neither thyself nor all others. Of works this is the consumation and the summit."

And henceforth in this life and forever this disciple will not rest in spreading the Light, the Love and the Joy attained. For thus do all those who reach the Goal. That is why we call them Masters of Compassion for they renounce the Beatitudes of Nirvana,—Heaven—and come back to this valley of tears to teach and aid suffering humanity. A few of these glorious Masters take upon Themselves the suffering of others, bearing in Their Persons some of the heavy Karma or bad Destiny of persons and places. They are the divine Nirmanakayas thanks to Whom the world owes its progress as well as we who imperfectly follow in Their footsteps.

So it behoves every aspirant of Truth to offer him or herself in service to others. Knowledge alone (Jnani Yoga) is not sufficient neither is Power by itself (Raja Yoga); love and devotion (Bhakti Yoga) without service (Karma Yoga) are incomplete. A combination of all these Yogas develops us in a harmonious manner.

In each individual is generally prominent either the will or the brain or the heart. But we should study ourselves and

try to develop what is most lacking in our character. A combination of the mind in meditation and study, the heart in loving and giving and the hands in disinterested service, will make us good disciples and in time, Masters of Wisdom, Power and Compassion. For love is the law, the basis and the end of life and God is LOVE—another word for Love being Joy. As the sage Sri Aurobindo says "Learn of pure Delight and thou shall learn of God".

Peace to all beings

AUM MANI PADMI HUM!
