

THE IDYLL OF THE WHITE LOTUS

(A Commentary by T. Subba Row, *The Theosophist*, August 1886)



[T. Subba Row was born on the 6th July 1856. At the time of his death he was aged but nearly 34 years. His native country was the Godavery District on the Coromandal Coast of India; his vernacular tongue the Telugu. In 1872, he started his studies in the Madras Presidency College. Later on he passed the B. L. examination, number 4 in the class. Having adopted the Law as his profession, he served his apprenticeship under Messrs. Grant and Laing and was enrolled a Vakil (Pleader) of the High Court in the latter part of 1880. After contacting HPB and HSO, it was as though a storehouse of occult experience, long forgotten, had been suddenly opened to him; recollections of his last preceding birth came in upon him: he recognized his Guru, and thenceforward held contact with him and other Mahatmas. He told his mother that H. P. B. was a great Yogi, and that he had seen many strange phenomena in her presence. His stored up knowledge of Sanskrit literature came back to him, and his brother- in-law told me that if you would recite any verse of Gita, Brahma-Sutras or Upanishads, he could at once tell you whence it was taken and in what connection employed. *He lived his occult life alone.* He died on 24th June 1890 in Madras.]
(https://www.cwlworld.info/Death_of_TSR.pdf)

THE assurance and the advice given by the Lady of the White Lotus to Sensa in the holy of holies marks the great turning point in the history of his career. He has perceived the light of the Divine Wisdom and has brought himself within the pale of its influence. This light of the Logos, which is represented in the story as the fair goddess of the sacred flower of Egypt, is the bond of union and brotherhood which maintains the chain of spiritual intercourse and sympathy running through the long succession of the great hierophants of Egypt, and extending to all the great adepts of this world who derive their influx of spiritual life from the same source. It is the Holy Ghost that keeps up the apostolical succession or Guruparampara as the Hindus call it. It is this spiritual light which is transmitted from guru to disciple when the time of real initiation comes. The so called “transfer of life” is no other than the transmission of this light. And further, the Holy Ghost, which is, as it were, the veil or the body of the Logos and hence its flesh and blood, is the basis of the holy communion. Every fraternity of adepts has this bond of union; and time and space cannot tear it asunder. Even when there is an apparent break in the succession on the physical plane, a neophyte following

the sacred law and aspiring towards a higher life, will not be in want of guidance and advice when the proper time arrives, though the last guru may have died several thousands of years before he was born. Every Buddha meets at his last initiation all the great adepts who reached Buddhahood during the preceding ages: and similarly every class of adepts has its own bond of spiritual communion which knits them together into a properly organised fraternity. The only possible and effectual way of entering into any such brotherhood, or partaking of the holy communion, is by bringing oneself within the influence of the spiritual light which radiates from one's own Logos. I may further point out here, without venturing to enter into details, that such communion is only possible between persons whose souls derive their life and sustenance from the same divine ray, and that, as seven distinct rays radiate from the "Central Spiritual Sun", all adepts and Dhyan Chohans are divisible into seven classes, each of which is guided, controlled and overshadowed by one of seven forms or manifestations of the divine wisdom.

In this connection it is necessary to draw the reader's attention to another general law which regulates the circulation of spiritual life and energy through the several adepts who belong to the same fraternity. Each adept may be conceived as a centre wherein this spiritual force is generated and stored up, and through which it is utilised and distributed. This mysterious energy is a kind of spiritual electrical force, and its transmission from one centre to the other presents some of the phenomena noticed in connection with electrical induction. Consequently there is a tendency towards the equalization of the amounts of energy stored up in the various centres. The quantity of the neutral fluid existing in any particular centre depends upon the man's Karma and the holiness and purity of his life. When evoked into activity by being brought into communication with his guru or initiator it becomes dynamic, and has a tendency to transfer itself to weaker centres. It is sometimes stated that, at the time of the final initiation, either the hierophant or the "newly born", the *worthier* of the two must die (see page 38, *Theosophist*, November 1882). Whatever may be the real nature of this mysterious death, it is due to the operation of this law. It will be further seen that a new initiate, if he is weak in spiritual energy, is strengthened by partaking in the holy communion; and for obtaining this advantage he has to remain on earth and utilize his power for the good of mankind until the time of final liberation arrives. This is an arrangement which harmonizes with the Law of Karma. The neophyte's original weakness is due to his Karmic defects. These defects necessitate a longer period of physical existence. And this period he will have to spend in the cause of human progress in return for the benefit above indicated. And, moreover, the accumulated good Karma of this period has the effect of strengthening his soul, and when he finally takes his place in the Sacred Brotherhood, he brings as much spiritual capital with him as any of the others for carrying on the work of the said fraternity.

If these few remarks are borne in mind, the incidents related in the last five chapters will soon disclose their real significance. When Sensa gains his power of spiritual perception through the grace of his guardian angel, and begins to exercise it knowingly and voluntarily, he has no occasion to rely on the flickering light of intuition. "You must now stand alone," says the gardener and places him in possession of his beloved flower, the full meaning of which Sensa begins to understand. Having thus gained the seat of spiritual clairvoyance, Sensa perceives the hierophants who preceded him and into whose fraternity he has entered. The guru is always ready when the disciple is ready. The initiation preceding the final struggle for liberty from the bondage of matter is pretty plainly described. The highest Chohan reveals to him the secrets of occult science, and another adept of the Brotherhood

points out to him the real basis and nature of his own personality. His immediate predecessor then comes to his assistance and reveals to him the mystery of his own Logos. "The veil of Isis" is removed, and Sensa discovers that within the bosom of the Lady of the White Lotus, his real Saviour lay concealed. The light of the Logos enters his soul and lie is made to pass through the "baptism by Divine Fire." He hears the final directions given by his Queen and recognises the duty cast upon his shoulders.

His predecessor, whose soul is so "white and spotless," is commanded to give him a portion of his spiritual strength and energy. The three great truths which underlie every religion, however disfigured and distorted, through ignorance, superstition and prejudice, are then taught to him for the purpose of being proclaimed to the world at large. It is needless for me to explain these truths here, as their enunciation in the book is sufficiently plain. Thus fortified and instructed Sensa prepares for the final struggle. During these preparatory stages the passions of the physical man are, as it were, dormant, and Sensa is left alone for the time being. But they are not entirely subdued. The decisive battle is yet to be fought and won. Sensa begins to enter on the higher spiritual life as a preacher and spiritual guide to men, directed by the light of wisdom which has entered his soul. But he cannot pursue this course for any length of time before he has conquered his foes. The moment for the final struggle of the last initiation soon arrives. The nature of this initiation is very little understood. It is sometimes represented in vague terms as a terrible ordeal through which an initiate has to pass before he becomes a real adept. It is further characterized as "the baptism by blood." These general statements do not in the least indicate the precise nature of the result to be achieved by the neophyte or the difficulties he has to encounter.

It is necessary to enquire into the nature of the psychic change or transformation which is intended to be effected by this initiation before its mystery is understood. According to the ordinary Vedantic classification there are to states of conscious existence, viz., *Viswa*, *Thyjas*, *Pragna* and *Thureeya*. In modern language these may be described as the objective, the clairvoyant, the ecstatic, and the ultra-ecstatic states of consciousness. The seats or *upadhis* related to these conditions are the physical body, the astral body, the *Karma Sarira* or the Monad and the Logos. The soul is the Monad. It is as it were the neutral point of consciousness. It is the germ of *pragna*. When completely isolated no consciousness is experienced by it. Its psychic condition is hence compared by Hindu writers to *Sushupti*—a condition of dreamless sleep. But it is under the influence of the physical body and the astral body on the one side, and the sixth and seventh principles on the other. When the attraction of the former prevails the *jiva* becomes *baddha*, and is subject to all the passions of embodied existence. The power of these passions grows weaker and weaker as the neutral point we have indicated is approached. But so long as the neutral barrier is not crossed their attraction is felt. But when once this is effected, the soul is, as it were, placed under the control and attraction of the other pole—the Logos; and the man becomes liberated from the bondage of matter. In short he becomes an adept. The struggle for supremacy between these two forces of attraction takes place on this neutral barrier. But during the struggle the person in whose interest the battle is fought is in a quiescent, unconscious condition, almost helpless to assist his friends or strike hard at his enemies, though the result of the fight is a matter of life and death to him. This is the condition in which Sensa finds himself in passing through the last ordeal, and the description of the said condition in the book under examination becomes clear by the light of the foregoing explanations. It can be easily seen that the result of the fight will mainly depend upon the *latent* energy of the soul, its previous training and its past Karma.

But our hero passes successfully through the ordeal; his enemies are completely overthrown. But *Sensa* dies in the struggle.

Strangely enough when the enemy is defeated, the *personality* of *Sensa* is destroyed on the field of battle. This is the final sacrifice which he makes and his mother, *prakriti*—the mother of his personality—laments his loss, but rejoices at the prospect of the resurrection of his soul. The resurrection soon takes place; his soul rises from the grave as it were, under the vivifying influence of his spiritual intelligence, to shed its blessings on mankind and work for the spiritual development of his fellow beings. Here ends the so-called tragedy of the soul. What follows is merely intended to bring the story in its quasi-historical aspect to a proper conclusion.