

'It may be,' said Po Tun, with a shrug, 'but whether it be so or not, what matter? Our business is not with any God, but with ourselves.'

'Well, I can't agree. If there be a God, as nature and history suggest, then our business is surely with Him. If He sustains and rules the world, it seems foolish to ignore Him. "Perishing shall we not seek a refuge?"'

"Every man is his own refuge"—*Attahi attano natho*—replied his companion. 'I, for one, do not need any helper.'

The topic dropped, and as evening came on they were glad to see the dark roofs of a Tibetan monastery rising in front of them and to claim the hospitality of the Lamas.

One of these had been to Burma, and in his company the evening passed very pleasantly as they stretched their tired limbs by the log-fire and talked over the day's adventures.

In the early morning, as dawn was lighting up the snowy summits of the hills, Po Tun called his drowsy friend, and together they explored the dark recesses of the monastery. Here were red and blue and yellow 'Guardians of the Four Quarters', and strange paintings of gods unknown in the South; strangest of all the image of Dolma, Mother of Buddhas, whom the people love and who may be approached at any moment without the aid of Lama or incantation.

'See how hungry the human heart is!' said Ba Gyi. 'Gaudama tried to make men all stoics; but never will the mysticism of the heart of man be killed! It is all written in stone upon the monuments in Calcutta Museum.'

'I should like to visit them with you,' said Po Tun, 'and get your interpretation. But what are these extraordinary objects in front of the shrine?'

'They are skulls and other stage-properties belonging to our friends the Lamas! Fear plays an essential part in the