

The Trinity of Human Beingness.

By Li. Hong Chong.

A few sages lived in a far-off jungle of India, leading a life of spiritual bliss. They were more concerned with their present affairs than the foolish cares and anxieties of tomorrow. They were as happy as birds. The troubles of the world did not vex them as it does the gross people of the world.

When Alexander the Great of Macedonia came to conquer this land of ancient seers, his troops declined to cross the river Sutlej, as beyond it lay the realm of a powerful king, Mahananda the Emperor of Magadh. They were unable to vie with his prowess, and were quite unable to cope with the disciplined army of the Indian Emperor. What could the great conqueror do? He had no alternative but to change his mind and submit to his destiny.

He was about to depart for Greece; his ministers, however, advised him to see the sages and profit by their admonitions. Taking them with himself, he came to the abode of these. They

appeared to him as savages, living in a nude condition. They were sky-clad, with no home, no possession, and with no anxieties for the future. All of them were sitting on a rock overspread with trees, and took no notice of the far-famed August personality that came to pay a visit to them. It is customary with the civilised people to greet the visitors, but they seemed to pay no heed to this custom of the people. They maintained their taciturnity, and gazed at the foreigners, as if they were so many barbarous animals. The companions of Alexander, too, entertained the same view about them.

When neither party entered into conversation, the minister of the Great King addressed them thus, "Alexander the Conqueror has come to pay a visit to you, and as good sages it behoves you to do him homage, as it is his due."

They were silent for some time, but after a while the youngest of the party opened his mouth, "Alexander the

Conqueror! how do you say so? Has he conquered himself?..... Unless a man has done so, it is a mistake to call him a conqueror or victorious. Let him look into the innermost of his heart, and he will easily see that he has been entirely vanquished, and subjected to his mind; and its avarice and greed influences all his movements; and he is wandering from place to place in quest of the sordid gain of the world. This, too, escapes his hands. He grapples and cannot grasp them. How can such a slave of the mind be called a conqueror?"

Alexander heard this harangue of the sage, and was thunderstruck with his rational reasoning.

Asks the minister, "Whom do you call a conqueror in your opinion?" The youth seer replied, "Whose mind is a slave to himself, only such one is victorious. Open your eyes and look towards us: we are conquerors in the real sense of the word. We are independent, and depend on no one for our sustenance. We are free and make no one a slave of our whims and caprices. We are what we are, and want to speak nothing in our self-praise, which is not good."

It was another lesson to the great potentate and his courtiers. The minister then said, "Ask something of him; the king is very rich and generous, and has been bestowing kingdoms on his favourites." Whereupon the youth spoke, "Alexander is a rich and generous man: how can he be so? He had not enough in and at his home and that is why he has been roaming abroad to relieve his wants, and to satisfy the hunger and thirst of his heart. He is extremely poor and not rich; and his poverty is apparant from his action. What and why should we speak anything of such a poverty-stricken personality?"

The minister asked, "Whom do you regard rich?" And the youth among the sages replied, "One who is desire-

less, wantless, and necessityless is the only rich man. Desire, want, deficiency and necessity are the true signs of a defective man and he is the poorest man on the surface of the Earth. Desire is the cobweb of misery, and foolish human beings get themselves entangled into it, as the ignorant flies are unconsciously caught into the spider's net. Verily I say unto you: we are rich, for we have no desire.

We never pray for the riches of either this or the other world. We are perfect and feel no deficiency in our life."

These reasons they relished or cherished, we do not know; but they went straight to the hearts of the listeners for the time being. In the end spoke Alexander the Great, "You seem to be very wise people. Let some one of you accompany me to Greece to teach us this useful philosophy, which is so much elevating, consoling and enlivening."

The youth said, "None of us wants to leave our present condition of life in this sphere."

Alexander, however, with his beseeching and alluring words persuaded them to accede to his wishes.

Some four naked sages went with him as far as Persia. In the way they fell sick, and said to the August Emperor, "Look here, O king, we have been contaminated with your association. Your artificial mode of living proved contagious. We, up till now, never knew what sickness was. Now the case is otherwise. Natural manners have been upset, and we wish to live no more in this planet. They then prepared a pyre of wood, entered into it and, setting fire to it, expired before the king, without murmuring or making any complaint whatsoever.

These Sages were known among the Classic Greeks as Gymnosophists of India.
