

There are few men who have no kindly feelings, and would not wish, if they could, to be at peace with all the world. Yet the idea may have its danger and be as likely to lead downward as upward. It may lull to rest and render useless passions and energies which ought to be given play to. And the evil of Lamaism is that it has fostered lazy repose and self-suppression at the expense of useful activity and self-realization.

The Mongols in their deserts, the Tibetans in their mountains, have had the amplest opportunity for carrying into effect the Buddhist idea. I have seen the one in the deepest depths of their deserts, and the other in the innermost sanctuary of their mountains, and to me it seems that they have both been pursuing a false ideal. They have sought by withdrawing from the world into the desert and into the mountain to secure present peace for the individual, instead of, by manfully taking their part in the work of the world, aiming at the eventual unison of the whole. Peace, instead of harmony, has been their ideal—peace for the emasculated individual instead of harmony for the united and full-blooded whole.

The Tibetan's main idea, in fact, has been to save his own soul. He does not trouble about others so long as he can save himself. Indeed, he thinks it will require all his energies to do even that much, for at heart he is still full of his original religion of demonology. He looks upon the spiritual world as filled with demons, ready to prey upon him if he makes the slightest slip. Every temple, almost every house, is full of fantastic pictures of the most terrible and blood-curdling devils, with glaring eyes, open fang-studded mouth, extended neck and outstretched arm, ready to pounce upon some miserable victim. The belief in heaven is vague. The belief in hell is the one great fact in their lives, and how real it is may be imagined when we hear of these poor wretches, who, in order to escape its terrors, voluntarily allow themselves to be walled into solitary cells, from which for years they never emerge, but take in their food once a day through a narrow opening. Thus only do those poor deluded