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CONTENTS

I. ARTICLES

1. Dharmaśrī on the Sixteen Degrees of Comprehension
by Leon Hurvitz 7
2. Indrabhūti's 'Confession of Errors in the Fundamental Teachings of the Vajrayāna', A Critical Edition, English Translation and Discussion, *by Nathan Katz* 31
3. Non-duality of the Two Truths in Sinitic Mādhyamika: Origin of the 'Third Truth', *by Whalen Lai* 45
4. Transpersonal Psychological Observations on Theravāda Buddhist Meditative Practices, *by James Santucci* 66
5. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 9:2 as a Focus for Tibetan Interpretations of the Two Truths in the Prāsangika Mādhyamika
by Michael Sweet 79

II. SHORT PAPER

1. Some Buddhist Poems in Tamil, *by G. Vijayavenugopal* 93

III. BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Reviews:

1. The Prajñāpāramitā Literature, *by Edward Conze* 99
2. Two Ways to Perfection: Buddhist and Christian
by Shanta Ratnayaka 103
3. An Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems
by F. D. Lessing and A. Wayman 104
4. Religion and the Legitimation of Power in South Asia;
Religion and Legitimation of Power in Sri Lanka;
Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos
and Burma, *by Bardwell Smith* 107
5. Studies in Pali and Buddhism, *Edited by A. K. Narain* 109

Notices:

1. Buddhist Wisdom. The mystery of the self, *by George Grimm* 111
2. Buddhism. A select biography, *by Satyaprakash* 112
3. Living Buddhist Masters, *by Jack Kornfield* 112
4. Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, *by Steven T. Katz* 112

IV. NOTES AND NEWS

1. On Buddhist Research Information (B.R.I.)
of the Institute for Advanced Studies
of World Religions (IASWR), New York 113
- OBITUARY 116
- LIST OF IABS MEMBERS 117

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OBITUARY

Edward Conze

Edward Conze has been for contemporary Western scholars of Buddhism what Tibetan Buddhists have respectfully called certain scholars, "a great translator" (tib. *lo tsa wa chen po*) of the Buddhist religion. His prolific and insightful writings and translations have immeasurably helped to open Buddhism to our language and culture. With his passing away on September 24, 1979, we are reminded of his enormous contribution; grateful for his presence, we are saddened by his departure.

Professor Conze published more than 250 books and articles on Buddhism, sixty-one of which deal with his special area of interest, the literature of the Perfection of Wisdom Scriptures (skt. *prajñāpāramitāsūtra*). His translations of many recensions of these scriptures have provided a basis for critical analysis and his lucid explanations of their doctrines have opened the door to scholars and non-scholars alike to probe more deeply than ever before into their meanings.

Born in London on March 18, 1904, Dr. Conze lived in Germany from 1905 until 1943. Receiving his doctorate from Cologne in 1928, he soon after published his first book on Marxist dialectics (*On the Principle of Contradiction*). His active interest in Communism forced his departure to London where he held the position of lecturer from 1934 to 1962 at the University of London.

At the age of forty-one, stimulated by the writings of Suzuki, Professor Conze took up the study of Buddhism. Never holding a permanent teaching position he served as distinguished Professor at the University of Wisconsin, 1963-64, and the University of Washington, 1966-67, and at the University of California-Berkeley, 1971-73. He also served as a research fellow at Oxford University and Manchester College.

His memoirs, entitled *A Modern Gnostic*, have been recently published by Asian Humanities Press. The next volume of the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* will contain a detailed account of his life and works. (We are grateful to Professor Lewis Lancaster for providing information for this brief notice.)

Edward W. Bastian