

The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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Dear Friends:

So many folks have expressed appreciation for my personal anecdotes that I am encouraged to include another early memory in this bulletin.

In 1914, Woodrow Wilson was President of the United States, and the Balkan wars were contributing to the misery of several European nations. My peripatetic grandmother decided to move to Washington D.C. and was soon comfortably situated in a genteel boarding house about three blocks from the White House. Among the guests, who formed a most amiable group, was a lady of Spanish extraction who had actually been born in the Basque country. She was completely Latin in temperament and appearance and spoke English with the soft accent of her people. Señora Carenza had a rather remarkable gift which fascinated Grandmother, and I was permitted to participate in their conversations. Señora Carenza was a *burn stroker*. All her life, neighbors, friends, and total strangers came to her for help; and she had assisted many with second and third degree burns. She considered her mysterious power as God-given and made no charge for her ministrations.

Fortunately or unfortunately, I did not suffer from any burns at the time, but Grandmother had a minor accident which was promptly cured. We noticed that Señora Carenza always stroked the burn very lightly and toward her own heart. While doing so, she was whispering a little verse. With my natural curiosity, I finally persuaded her to recite the verse for me in English. The words were as follows:

*Three wise men came out of the East,
Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar.
Go heat, come cold
Come cold, go heat
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

Those interested in burn stroking can experiment with this strange little verse. Our Spanish friend insisted that it was necessary to have great faith and humility of spirit. Then, if you had serene confidence in success, you would stroke the burn once for each line of the verse and repeat the procedure three times. I have since met others who claim the power to heal burns by the laying-on of hands, but this is the only case in which a verse believed to possess healing qualities was included in the procedure. The little poem is considered to be a great secret of Spanish folk-healing.

Speaking of curious folklore, I am happy to announce that I have finally acquired an old and genuine example of a Japanese Beckoning Cat. It is believed that the image of the Beckoning Cat originated about 150 years ago, because images of this type stood in front of two rival teahouses. The teahouse with the golden cat image was the most successful, and merchants inspired by this incident have favored the cat ever since. It is only on rare occasion that an old example of this particular type of cat can be secured. The Beckoning Cat is usually placed on a high shelf in the store of a merchant or curio dealer and is the only item on the inventory that is positively not for sale. While in Japan, I have caused considerable embarrassment by trying to buy one of these cats. Some are made of wood, others of plaster or porcelain, and a few are drawn on slabs of wood. The cat is usually of sedate appearance and may be costumed in the formal dress of a Samurai, as in the present example. The left front paw is raised and curved inward at the end. The Japanese beckon with the palm downward and motioning toward the body.



Cats are not especially plentiful in Japan, nor are they often included in works of art. One important exception to this trend is the Sleeping Cat at Nikko. There are a few legends of heroic cats who gave their lives in the service of grateful or ungrateful owners, and there are two or three monuments to such famous felines scattered about the country. Cats are associated with prosperity because they protect the food supply from mice and rats. This explanation is puzzling, however, because rats are sacred to Daikoku, the folk deity presiding over riches. It is a Japanese adage that the rat is fortunate, because it will not live where there is no food.

There is a monument in the graveyard of the Gotokuji Temple in honor of a cat that defended the temple against demon rats and lost its life in the encounter. There is also the story of a cat that committed suicide on its master's grave. On the occasion of the Nirvana of Buddha, many kinds of animals gathered to pay homage. No cat was present, however, because it was too busy chasing a rat.

In Japanese legendry it is believed that cats can take on human appearance and understand the language of men. They are said to steal headcloths and dance at night with them in temples or barns. Among popular superstitions is one to the effect that the nose of a cat is only warm on the day of the summer solstice. If a cat washes its face while looking toward the west, the weather will be fine; but if it is looking toward the east, it will rain the next day.

The Japanese Ukiyo-e artist, Kuniyoshi, was especially fond of cats. He always had them in his studio, and there is a picture of him by one of his students in which the master was instructing his pupils with a cat seated in his lap. Kuniyoshi made many sketches of cats in various postures and finally constructed a complete alphabet by combining cats to form the letters. There is an old legend of a goblin cat, and Tyoakuni designed a wood-block print upon the subject. Perhaps the cat is associated with the tiger or even the lion, which in turn is an important element in Buddhist symbolism. Whatever be the origin of the belief, my Beckoning Cat will be cherished as a symbol of good fortune. Incidentally, you can tell from the picture that this cat is in every sense of the word a superior being with dignity of mien and a face suggestive of intelligence. The folding fan tucked in his belt is a certain indication of gentility.

In January, PRS cooperated with the Pacific Culture Center in Pasadena, California, which presented a special exhibition of "The Arts and Culture of Tibet." The event received strong civic support and was dedicated to the traditional cultural skills of this remote country now under the domination of Communist China. On January 9th there was a special reception in honor of Lama Govinda and his wife, Li Gotami. On this occasion, dances of Tibet were performed by Sujata and Asoka. Our old friend, Dr. Framroze Bode, spoke on Tibetan mysticism and mystic mandalas. A special display of Tibetan arts and crafts opened on January 9th and continued to the end of the month. The material was beautifully arranged in the three galleries of the museum. Several of our good friends loaned important pieces, and PRS provided a colorful display of tankas, several fine examples of gilt bronze images, and altar ornaments. The exhibition was a fitting tribute to an important cultural tradition which must now be protected and perpetuated by art lovers of the Western world.



May I take this opportunity to express my most sincere appreciation for the many remembrances which came to me over the Holiday Season. I am grateful indeed for your good thoughts and encouragement. Please accept my best wishes for a fortunate and happy New Year, and may your search for inner wisdom be rewarded with peace of heart and mind.

Always most sincerely,

Marilyn P. Hall

SPECIAL NOTICE FROM OUR BOOK DEPARTMENT

A number of important and scholarly volumes in our fields of interest are now available in attractive and accurate reprints. Most of those listed here are included in Mr. Hall's list of recommended reading and have long been rare and out of print. To these have been added selected works by outstanding modern authors. The Contributors' Bulletin will list additional works in future issues.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Price</u>
Aesch Mezareph, or Purifying Fire	W. Westcott (P)	\$ 2.00
The Astral Plane	C.W. Leadbeater	2.00
Adepts of the Five Elements	David Anrias	3.50
Alchemical Writings of Edward Kelly	A.E. Waite	8.50
Astrology for the Millions	Grant Lewi	10.00
Anthroposophy, An Introduction	Rudolf Steiner	3.50
Applied Astrology	Margaret Hone	5.00
Altered States of Consciousness	Chas Tart (Ed.)	9.95
Basic Writings of C.G. Jung	Violet DeLazlo (Ed.)	2.95
Beyond Good and Evil	Nietzsche (P)	1.65
Bhagavad Gita	Annie Besant	1.50
Book of the Dead	E.A. Budge	12.50
Brother of the Third Degree	W.L. Garver	7.50
Breakthrough to Creativity	S. Karagulla	5.95
Bread Upon the Waters	C.G. Ketchum	4.00
Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross	A.E. Waite	10.00
Bulfinch's Mythology		3.95
Book of Tea	O. Kakuzo (P)	2.00
Bug Haiku	J.W. Hackett	2.95
Buddhist Texts through the Ages	Ed Conze (Ed.) (P)	1.95
The Buddhist Tradition in India, China, & Japan	T. de Bary (Ed.) (P)	2.45
The Byzantines	D.T. Rice	7.50
The Betrayal of the Body	Alexander Lowen	6.95
The Buddhist Praying-Wheel	William Simpson	7.95
Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism	Coomaraswamy (P)	2.95
Blake, William, His Philosophy and Symbols	S. Foster Damon	12.50
Buddhist Mahayana Texts	E.B. Cowell (Ed.) (P)	3.50
Candle of Vision	A.E. Shepard	5.00
The Canon of Reason and Virtue (Lao Tze)	Paul Carus	2.00
Cheiro's Complete Palmistry	L. Hamon	7.50
The Christian Platonists of Alexandria	Charles Bigg	8.00
Christianity, A Mystical Fact	Rudolf Steiner	5.75
Cicero on Moral Obligation	J. Higginbotham	5.00
Civilization in Transition #10	Carl G. Jung	10.00
The Cloud of Unknowing	Ira Progoff	4.00
Color Psychology and Color Therapy	Faber Birren	7.50
Complex, Archetype, Symbol (C.G. Jung)	J. Jacobi	5.00
The Conference of the Birds	F. Attar	3.50
Consolation of Philosophy; and The Initiation of Christ; and Religio Medici	Boethius, Kempis, and Browne	2.45

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