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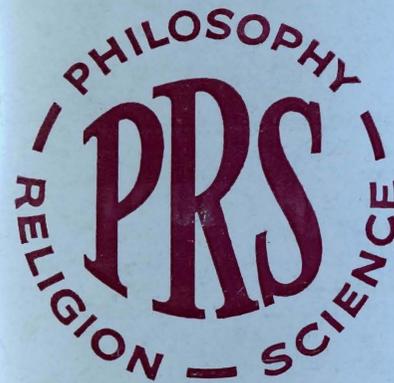
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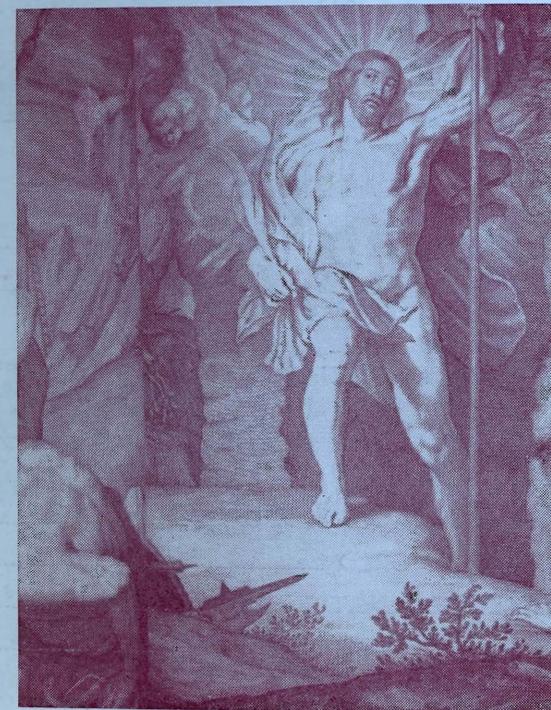
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WINTER 1967



# JOURNAL



## PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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WINTER 1967

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THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

**MEMORY—FRIEND, ENEMY, OR TEACHER**

It has long been assumed that the faculty of memory is one of those mental powers which elevates man above other members of the animal kingdom. The human being is able to retain a sequence of mental images by which he can estimate relationships between the incidents and experiences of living. It is memory, for example, that permits the individual to convince himself of the operations of natural laws, especially cause and effect.

Memory also helps man to establish his place in the historical descent of his race and nation. History is largely memory that has been written down or organized by the past for the benefit of unborn generations. It is assumed that by remembering the various events, scholars and students are able to apply the wisdom of the past to their own immediate needs, thus further strengthening their place in the descent of humanity.

Obviously, the faculty of memory is indispensable to modern living. Most education demands a fair retentive faculty. There is little benefit in learning if what we have so laboriously accumulated in the form of knowledge is quickly forgotten. We call upon memory in so many ways that we can only acknowledge that we would be lost without its power to reclaim past experiences, facts, or circumstances, and make them available to us by an action of the will whenever need arises.

It would be perfectly proper, therefore, to assume that memory is a good friend and a valuable companion as we journey through the years. It enables us to visit again in thought places we have seen in years gone by. It revives pleasant associations with good books, great art, and kindly persons who have vanished forever from our physical sight.

As we grow older, memories provide many pleasant hours of reminiscence, and can carry us serenely through those years in which our activities are more restricted. There is a danger, however, that the faculty of memory will bind us to the past, or cause us to escape from the urgent responsibilities of the moment to some pleasant region of inner recollections. Most of those who live in the past are entangled in old memory patterns, and this can prevent adjustment even to pleasant conditions in the contemporary world.

Because the tempo of activity has greatly intensified in recent years, reminiscing is often thinking back toward simplicity. Living was less eventful, crises less frequent, and there were permanences that seemed to extend over the greater part of a man's career. Decisions were not so demanding, ambitions not so intense, and emotions not so over-stimulated by entertainment, luxury, and a highly controversial press. To look back, is like remembering the pleasant years of childhood, when we were able to do mostly as we pleased, and parents made the necessary decisions that protected us against the stress and strain of duties and obligations.

Memory falls easily into habit processes. Ways that have endured long are given up with reluctance. Once we have learned to follow certain orderly procedures, it is painful to break away from familiar landmarks and well-worn platitudes and strike out into the new world of the novel and unexpected. Other circumstances being normal, the individual will not change his attitude easily or with much enthusiasm after he has reached middle life. As his patterns become deeper, his energies are also slowing down, and following the old way becomes the comfortable path of least resistance.

Memory helps us to revive acceptable procedures that were formerly adequate, so we try to perpetuate courses of conduct that

have always seemed reasonable and proper. Today, however, much that we remember with fondness has failed in vital meaning. Even the things we learned in school have been so changed and complicated that they have lost much of their original utility. Those who can remember back to times when there were no telephones or electric lights, automobiles or motion pictures, have preserved the shadow of a way of life that is gone forever. These utilities may not have been the important factors, but we still seem to carry a certain antagonism against patterns of modern conduct.

Thus, memory can play havoc with our peace of mind. We cannot understand the dissatisfactions that plague our present generation. We wonder why so many families are no longer resourceful; why we no longer create with our own hands the objects necessary to maintain our households. As a result of looking back with fond regret, we never quite adjust to the world in which we must live together.

We find this true also among those who move to a new country in middle life. Unless they are very strong-willed persons, they will drift into neighborhoods where other nationals from their own country form small communities, with their own churches and places of assembly. An older immigrant may never try to learn the language at all, but be content to mingle with a small group like himself.

To move from one country to another, is actually less difficult than to move from one generation of memories to a new generation in which so many of these memories are comparatively meaningless. Some try to adjust, but others gradually retire from intensive contact with young people. A certain percentage of older people will never be able to drive a car well, and will always be extremely critical of motion pictures and television. I remember one elderly gentleman, well into his eighties, who was finally persuaded to attend a motion picture for the first time. He was completely baffled. The art of modern film cutting was beyond his comprehension, and the poor man left the theater in a state bordering on shock. It is hard for us to understand him, and even more difficult for him to understand a form of entertainment that did not exist when he was growing up.

The point we want particularly to make is that memory can limit or date us so completely that new experiences are disagreeable, painful, and appear completely unreasonable. As we have not developed ways of coping with change, we prefer to evade it, with the result that the later years of life may not be productive of mental, emotional, or spiritual progress. They are years of frustration, bewilderment, and to a degree, open antagonism against the whole modern approach to social relations. Thus memory can cause not only confusion, but can become destructive of sanity and psychological security.

Actually, we have falsely assumed something that we cannot afford to accept so glibly. Considering the human being as a unique creature growing up from infancy through childhood, adolescence, and maturity to the ripeness of older years, we fail to realize that we are not the same person in our mature years that we were in our teens or twenties. Physically, the child has grown up, and for all practical purposes, our own childhood no longer exists. It survives because we remember it as a condition of ourselves.

If we could move the child we were into the maturity we have now reached, the result would be dismal. We would be incapable of guiding our destinies with even the degree of skill we now possess. The maturity that is not accompanied by mental and emotional growth, finds little happiness or fulfillment.

By the same token, we might say that to go back to childhood would be a complete tragedy if we had to take with us the attitudes and perspectives of our mature years. Childhood was wonderful because it was normal. It may have been burdened with unpleasant interludes, but these are gradually forgotten, and we choose to remember only the happy side of youth.

What we have to realize is that normalcy is to live each year according to the needs and requirements of that year, and in the social patterns which that year imposes. It does not follow that we must become delinquents because the world goes through an exaggerated cycle of pressures and intemperances. But when temptations arise, we must meet them with the strength of a social adjustment in which the mind, having reached a degree of good, copes with problems belonging to the history of the moment.

Two patterns of memories are especially difficult—one is antagonisms, and the other is regrets. To remember offenses, nurse grudges, or revitalize unhappy interludes that can be blamed upon the conduct of others, can only add to present discomfort. It is probably true that the older generation, with less to think about, nursed its antagonisms with greater devotion than the young folks of today. This means that the number of mature men and women nursing grudges is growing smaller, and for this, we can all be thankful.

With these grudges fading away, many intolerances are also losing vitality. We are no longer so tightly bound to family traditions and ancestral mores. Some of this is just as well, for as old houses are torn down, hallowed institutions completely renovated, and long-established standards cheerfully violated, we must either relax, or be in a state of constant psychic stress.

Here again, a certain discrimination must come in judging the value of memories. The tendency to reject simply because a pattern belongs to the past, is unwise, for it may be said of standards as of objects: that which has a little antiquity, is out of style; that which has a great antiquity, is a priceless antique. We must try to discriminate between the strength of character that we gained from our parents and the intemperances and intolerances which they also bestowed upon us.

We must cling to the good, and cast aside that which is evidently outgrown. Because most of us are formula-thinkers, however, we are not inclined to the wiser course of procedure. It is easier to decide that value is a matter of dateline. That which is prior to the present, is of slight value; that which is in focus at present, is real, important, and valuable.

Out of old antagonisms, family feuds, and other dismal mental obsessions, it is easy to develop a painful neurosis. If the past can do no more for us than make us sorry for ourselves, convincing us that we are the victims of cruelty, injustice, and misfortune, then our memories are contributing to our destruction. Ultimately, we will sacrifice mental creativity to the perpetuation of grudges; we will exhaust energy—that priceless and wonderful power—for purposes that can never add anything to the enrichment of our present career or future destiny.

Much the same results from the nursing of regrets, the remembering of old faults and mistakes for which we condemn ourselves for many years. Obviously, it is wise not to make mistakes that can injure a complete lifetime, but if we have trespassed our own convictions, or the civil law, the only answer is to remember that the person who made those mistakes lived and died long ago. We have since become older and wiser, and it is useless to blame ourselves for inevitable ignorance.

It may be that when we committed some serious offense, we intellectually knew better. Perhaps we were warned against it, and it was contrary to our moral and ethical training. But because we were young, we were ignorant; and because we were ignorant, we were headstrong; and the only remedy for the willful determination to do as we please comes from the sobering experience of facing the responsibilities of mature living.

This is a point that young people will do well to remember today, for sometime they must live with memories and perhaps even more painful consequences of reckless and ill-considered conduct. Their children will blame them, as the young people of today blame their own parents, if false attitudes go uncorrected and wrong policies are encouraged.

Memory will help us to transmute both antagonisms and regrets into powerful constructive forces if we so desire; for it is memory that makes it possible to contemplate past errors, observe the inevitable sorrows that followed bad judgment, and be inspired to greater thoughtfulness in the future. We build virtue upon the foundation of mistakes that have been recognized and corrected.

Few persons can really accept the advice of others with fullness of spirit. We all believe that we are different. Our friends may be penalized for their mistakes, but we can break the rules with impunity. Only memory can show us how wrong we are, and why we are subject to the same laws as all other creatures. Just to learn this, by remembering the lesson as we experienced it on our own flesh, is to gain in wisdom, and to build new foundations for understanding.

As teacher, the mind performs many useful functions. First of all, it is the only instrument we possess by which we can hope

to understand the intellectual life of the human being. In other words, the mind must explain the mind, revealing to itself the natural limitations and inadequacies of thought processes. It is in this respect that we most commonly fail to take advantage of our own ability to think. We seldom question the validity of our own ideas, doubt their importance, or seek to understand the processes that engender them. If we use the mind wisely, it will reveal to us its own fallacies. We can become aware of what it can contribute to our good, and how it can also hazard our security and peace of mind.

By memory, we can say to ourselves, "recently I made a certain decision, only to find out that my judgment was at fault and I merely complicated existing difficulties." Yet how many times do we actually pause long enough to consider the consequences of attitudes, opinions, and beliefs, that we have held in the past and which have influenced present conditions? Can we really say that our judgment has proven itself to be correct in the majority of instances? Can we also estimate the cause of bad judgment? What influences intruded themselves into our thinking, and led to a desperate effort to support a prejudice or defend a mistake?

Actually, our lives through the years are largely the result of thoughts and emotions that have led to various decisions, helpful and hurtful. Are we learning from these experiences? Does our profession demand a knowledge that we do not possess to an adequate degree? Are we therefore trying to bluff our way or force our opinions upon those around us? Are we trying to maintain a home without due thoughtfulness, assuming that it is unnecessary to train the mind, improve our knowledge, or discipline our natures? Do we take it for granted that we should think as we please, and that by some divine Providence things will work out to our advantage? If we are inclined to such optimism, can we look back over the years gone by, and find evidence that we escaped the penalties of negative or destructive thinking?

We can also ask if the mind has built for us a strong and constructive reference frame. Are we using it to solve problems, or to evade them? Do we face each day with a little better perspective of what we have already learned? If we have reached

middle life, have the experiences through which we have passed equipped us for mature living? Has the mind helped us to plan a future based upon previous achievement?

Most persons who are at present in difficulty have not remembered correctly the past circumstances that have contributed to their present condition. Nearly everyone who believes that nature is unfair, the universe unjust, or the world cruel and unfriendly, has memory defects. They have failed to use the mind to increase resources and interpret the phenomena of daily living.

Actually, we can all read and study and meditate and pray, but what helps us most is to advance practical insight. When we expect other persons to be wiser or better than they are, it is because we have failed to make use of the records stored away in our own minds. We have departed from what we know through experience, to what we hope for by optimism alone.

No thoughtful person can live forty or fifty years without attaining some practical wisdom. If he has not learned many useful lessons, he has simply closed his own consciousness to instruction. When experiences occur, and we put them away for future reference, we must realize that in due time, the mind itself will begin to re-interpret its own original testimonies. We are always inclined to defend what we want to believe and condemn what we do not want to believe. Thus the very mind that gave us a valid report on many vital subjects, will in the course of time interpret the validity out of its own reports.

Memories are not very valuable unless we can preserve their honesty. Memory has a tendency to a kind of psychic forgetfulness. This is really only a subconscious refusal to recognize experiences that are contrary to our inclinations or condemn us for follies for which we have an inordinate affection. Thus we can recall a whole sequence of occurrences, but if they are unfavorable to our desires or opinions, we can conveniently forget the lesson that we do not wish to accept.

For example, we can remember the unkindness of another person, and develop a warm glow of self-pity, forgetting entirely that we were the cause of misunderstanding, and that our own action was as critical or unkind as the one we condemn. It is nice to feel that we are always right and that the other person

is always wrong, but if we nurse this attitude through a lifetime, we will discover that many years of troublous circumstances have brought us few benefits and little self-improvement.

As long as memory is keen, we should explore its records and try to recover lost or forgotten meanings. Usually it is wise to assume that we have made a number of significant mistakes; to look back over a lifetime and be completely complacent, is an extremely bad symptom. It can only mean that we have overlooked the principal reason for our own existence—self-education. We should be especially thoughtful if this life, which seems so faultless, has brought us to a critical situation in which nearly everything seems to be wrong.

Memory records direct experience. It tells us what actually happened when we committed certain actions, neglected certain responsibilities, or unreasonably pressed certain ambitious objectives. We can deny the great moral codes of the world, we can insist that there is no pattern of universal ethics, we can proclaim ourselves as architects of our own destinies, but experiences still remind us that there are patterns and laws which no one can violate with impunity. There are also rules that will, if we keep them, bring us to more lasting contentment and security.

We will ultimately respect experience far more than the opinions of our associates. By keeping the memory honest, we will be ever mindful that effects do follow their causes and are consistent with them. We shall learn that if we sow a whirlwind, we will reap a whirlwind; if we break rules, they will break us; and if we protect the great ethical structures of our society, these ethical structures will protect us.

We cannot depend upon man-made institutions for perfect integrity, but we can learn to evaluate the works of men, the labors of nature, and the mysterious processes of universal consciousness. Just as ordinary school enriches the memory with useful skills, so the school of experience matures our inner judgment and provides us with those mental powers and faculties by which we can ennoble and enrich our years in this world.



## PARALLELS BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

### ALCHEMY: THE SEARCH FOR THE UNIVERSAL MEDICINE

Alchemical speculations developed almost simultaneously in Europe, North Africa, and Asia, but it is difficult to determine the origin of the mysterious science dealing with the transmutation of metals. One thing is reasonably certain: medieval Western writers greatly exaggerated the antiquity of the Hermetic art. With an enthusiasm that transcended the boundaries of sober reason, they liked to assume that the secrets of the regeneration of metals and essences were communicated to Adam by a supernatural being, and from our common father descended through the most illustrious scholars, princes, and philosophers, even to the present time. And there are still some researchers working with the old alchemical books and manuscripts. Each believes that he has discovered the golden key that opens the secret room in the palace of Semiramis, Queen of Babylon, who was said to be a personification of the esoteric wisdom of the Hermetists.

On the more conservative side, there seems to be very little factual information about the state of chemistry prior to the first century of the Christian era. It is certain that the Egyptians did produce synthetic gems, and the physicians of many ancient nations compounded medicines, while the private sorcerers of ambitious rulers concocted poisons. It is quite possible that philosophical speculations about the ultimate forms of medication, and the hope that somewhere in nature could be found a universal cure-all, were known in early times. If so, however, they were so involved in magic, strange superstitions, and mystic practices, that little of a concrete nature can be found.

With the rise of esoteric organizations in the principal cities along the caravan route between the Far East and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, a number of curious beliefs came into prominence. Because of the two-way traffic opened by such arteries of commerce as the great Silk Road, it is now difficult to determine whether alchemy began in Asia and was transplanted to Europe, or

originated somewhere along the shores of the Mediterranean and was carried to the more remote areas of the Far East. There is a feeling that the Near East was probably the cradle of metaphysical chemistry. From here it spread into Egypt and the Roman Empire, and gradually worked its way eastward, carried on the crest of the rising power of Islam. In any event, the tradition appears almost simultaneously in Rome and China.

There were vestiges of an alchemical metaphysics in ancient India, but it was soon overwhelmed by a higher esotericism concerned with the abstract practices of Yoga and Vedanta. Alchemy was never prominent in Buddhism, either the Northern or Southern school. In the first place, the manufacture of gold would be completely inconsistent with a philosophy that taught the renunciation of physical wealth and human honors. Nor would the elixir of life be likely to intrigue the type of mind that assumed physical existence to be little better than a span of misfortune.

European alchemists found this conflict also with the early teachings of Christianity. Western man, however, has always had a profound respect for wealth, so he overcame his scruples, carried on his researches with a clear conscience, and was satisfied to be absolved from his other sins.

In China, the Confucianists were also a rather severe group of scholars. Intellectually, at least, they were capitalistic socialists; more particularly, they had a sufficiently strong scientific instinct to regard the transmutation of metals as a most improbable speculation. Furthermore, there is the little-known fact that prior to the opening years of the Christian era, gold was comparatively unimportant to the Chinese. Jade they respected; cinnabar they admired; and various other precious and semi-precious stones were attractive for purposes of adornment. But the Chinese had no real interest in using gold as a medium of exchange. They discovered its value only when they came into contact with foreign powers.

Eastern alchemy, therefore, found its principal exponents among the Chinese Taoists. This does not imply that Lao-tse was in any way involved in such preoccupations. After the death of this great mystic and his more immediate disciples, Taoism fell upon evil times. It was simply so abstract as to be incomprehensible to

the average person. With only one brief basic text, the *Tao Teh King*, to sustain the entire unfoldment of Taoism as a world religion, it became evident that much interpretive material was required.

Most of the interpretations were misinterpretations, wandering further and further afield toward the cultivation of miraculous arts. In one particular, however, the Taoists were extremely practical. They recognized the need for a strong central leadership—which, incidentally, neither Buddhism nor Confucianism ever developed. In the course of time, Taoism was integrated around a descent of spiritual authority vested in what is now called the Taoist popes. These regulated orthodoxy, and held the far-flung membership together, either by scholarship or by ingenious recourse to superphysical phenomena.

The impact of Buddhism upon Taoism was most important to the cultural life of China. The Taoists were quick to realize the importance of the invisible hierarchy of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats that supported the religious phase of Buddhist thought. Almost immediately, the Taoists decided that Buddha was an incarnation of Lao-tse. They accepted the doctrine of rebirth enthusiastically, and proceeded to develop a mysterious group of semi-divine beings that corresponded to the Buddhist bodhisattvas. They also brought into prominence a large number of eccentric hermits, recluses, forest men, and exponents of magical arts, now generally described as the sennin. These not only closely resembled the circles of Buddhist arhats, but there was considerable interchange between the two systems, so that these eccentric sanctified persons shared most of their wisdom and skill.

The Taoist sennin became the particular exponents of alchemy. It was all very mysterious—an incredible art practiced by strange beings living in inaccessible regions where their exploits could not be studied or even seen. Some of the sennin claimed to have conversed with Lao-tse, who appeared in a spiritual body and instructed them in the mysteries of transmutation.

It is obvious that the Western belief in adepts and the Eastern concept of arhats must have had a common origin. The Chinese sages, some of them slightly visible, and most of them completely invisible, are said to have manifested their superphysical natures



A CHINESE FOREST SAGE

Woodcarving of unusually fine quality, representing a Taoist hermit. The outer part of his robe shows the original structure and texture of the wood. The Taoist sages were masters of the secret wisdom of nature, and were supposed to possess all the mysteries of alchemical art.

to faithful truth seekers and chemists under certain conditions. These sennin had discovered how to distil the elixir of life from the spiritual elements that united to form cinnabar. As a result, they could live forever, or at least extend their lives indefinitely. They had also found the peach of longevity, which grew in the secret garden of the Queen of Heaven. They wrote learned treatises, or at least such writings are attributed to them, setting forth, in obscure symbolic terms, the priceless secrets entrusted to them by the spiritual powers that govern the universe.

Occasionally, the sennin took on physical bodies and wandered the roads of China. They might appear in the court of the Emperor, where they acted as physicians, astrologers, and soothsayers. They could be called upon to cause rain or protect the nation from the disastrous consequences of eclipses. Sometimes these sennin would evaporate into thin air in the presence of the imperial court, or walk through locked doors, or sail about the sky on the backs of storks or dragons.

These men of magic knew all things, but were faithful custodians of the great secrets of life. They bestowed the secrets only upon the most deserving, and then under strict obligations of discretion. At one time, it was frankly assumed historically that the sennin were real persons who had ascended from the common state of humanity to an heroic dignity, becoming the messengers between heaven and earth.

In Europe, the Hermetic adept was just about as elusive and remarkable. He had performed the *Magnum Opus*; that is, he had accomplished the Great Work. He possessed the mysterious red lion, which might have an affinity to cinnabar. Like the sennin, he lived in inaccessible places, moved about in a cloud of obscurity, was seldom recognized in proper person, but occasionally visited the sincere chemist, instructing him in the advancement of his experiments.

There is no doubt in the world that during the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, and even a little later, Europe believed firmly in Hermetic adepts who possessed all the powers of ancient magic. They not only could travel instantly by some kind of astral projection, but they could read the minds of men at a distance, and could assemble in secret places for high conclaves when need arose.

One of their favorite meeting places was always some lonely oasis in Arabia.

These alchemists were held to be good Christians, with some Cabalistic leanings. They were members of a most secret and august fraternity, which issued occasional ultimatums, but declined to leave any historical records. Like the sennin, they frequently participated in affairs of state. One is supposed to have transmuted base metal to provide the gold with which to pay for one of the Crusades.

Since nearly every principality and dukedom in Europe was impoverished, and the nobility was addicted to an extravagance that threatened the solvency of its states and countries, the nobles were inclined to view alchemists with high favor. They employed them, imprisoned them, and even tortured them in an effort to discover their secrets. First-grade alchemists, however, could not be held by prison bars and, like the sennin, disappeared under the most mysterious conditions.

Perhaps the outstanding adept of Europe was Elias Artista, or Elias the Artist. It was assumed that the biblical prophet had continued to live on earth as the all-knowing and all-powerful chosen agent of the invisible empire of the sages. He was constantly wandering about, appearing in every country as a citizen of that land, speaking its language perfectly, wearing appropriate clothing, and obeying all its obvious laws and regulations. Occasionally, in the dark of the night, he would admit to some devout alchemist that he was Elias; but for the most part, he was non-committal, and permitted those who benefited by his wisdom to discover his identity if they could.

Back in China, a gradual change was taking place in the inner structure of Taoism. It was moving inevitably from a magical to a religious foundation. Changing ways of life, and increasing competition of Buddhism and Confucianism, required the Taoist to unfold as rapidly as possible the mystical overtones he had inherited from the founder of his school.

This was almost immediately obvious in the turn of alchemical speculations. Gradually, it was assumed that all the chemical aspects of the subject—the formulas, vessels, cycles, ferments and incinerations—were allegorical. The Chinese finally pronounced



Almost immediately, another interesting phenomenon occurred. The alchemical art of Europe abounds in fantasy. It is unique in its selection of incredible devices to represent the elements and the various processes by which man can manufacture the Hermetic gold, or fashion the ruby diamond, or concoct the infallible elixir of life. As we look over the pages of the old books, and even some especially choice manuscripts, we see a riot of designs that compete strongly with the ancient religious images of India, Tibet, and China.

The alchemists were especially fond of dragons, and devised some most ingratiating monstrosities. They also chose the phoenix bird as the symbol of the supreme achievement in the art. It is the same phoenix found everywhere in the world as a symbol of initiation and esotericism. It even exists in the Western hemisphere as the Thunderbird and the sacred Quetzal.

The composites created by the alchemists equaled those of the Egyptians, who liked to combine human and animal forms. The alchemists made birds with the faces of men, and men with the heads of beasts and reptiles. They called upon all the imagery of the Old Testament, the Greek myths, and the Gnostic remains. They specialized in the trimurti form—placing three heads on one pair of human shoulders, and multiplied the arms and legs according to the best Tantric fashion. They also developed a group of attributes that were associated with the images, much as in Northern Buddhism. Attributes are objects held in the hands of symbolic beings to indicate their particular meaning or function.

The alchemists contrived a large number of mandalas in the form of all kinds and shapes of symbolical devices. Circles predominated, but there were sometimes squares, usually enclosing a number of other symmetrically arranged designs. One of the most common was a rosiform design with seven petals, identified with the planets, the seals of Revelation, and the base elements used in the compounding of the philosopher's stone.

Like the Northern Buddhists, the alchemists devised their own alphabets of symbolic figures, intelligible only to the initiated. We cannot study the elaborate symbolism without being convinced that there was some type of profound meaning, and that the entire display of emblems originated in a comprehensive philo-



An example of Tantric symbolism in an early work by Andreae, believed to be associated with the Rosicrucians. Like the Eastern figures, the three-faced Roman figure carries symbolic attributes in its six hands, and the legs wear various types of footwear.

sophical tradition. It was not merely a group of arbitrary devices originated to bewilder the uninformed. The symbols had keys that could be transmitted from a teacher to his disciples.

Without question, the alchemical symbolism of 16th- and 17th-century Europe was the outstanding creative artistry of that time.

It has seldom been noted or appreciated, but some of the work, such as that found in the *Splendor Solis*, or manuscript versions of *The Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine*, is really excellent. A number of engravers illustrated the alchemical writings of men like Robert Fludd and Michael Maier. Théodore de Bry was one of the outstanding illustrators of the time, and his engravings show a rich imagery and a real gift for adding drama to curious figures and creatures. In harmony with the Cabala, many of the designs included some type of rebus, a cipher, either in the picture itself or in the inscription that accompanied it.

We must assume that these alchemical mandalas could be explained only as meditation symbols. The devout alchemical mystic, in his search for the keys to the transformation of his own character, certainly gained inspiration and comfort from these extraordinary pictures.

One of the figures attributed to the philosophy of Basil Valentine, is especially interesting. A man with two heads stands upon a winged globe, which is internally divided by lines into mathematical forms. In its hands, which are outstretched, the figure holds a compass and the square. The design is most reminiscent of an ancient carving in one of the old Chinese tombs. From this carving, a number of stone rubbings have been taken, and it is supposed to represent the male and female creative powers bringing the universe out of chaos. It is also interesting to remember William Blake's figure of the creating Deity holding in his hand the compass with which he is circumscribing the field of eternity.

It has been said of the Chinese mythologists that they created a world of fantasy so intriguing and convincing that even modern scholars wish that some of these prehistoric creatures could actually have existed. The riotous carvings are all symbolical, and nearly all the designs, including the human-headed dragons and the phoenix birds so beloved in metaphysical speculation, are found in the metaphysical artistry of Europe and China.

With the gradual decline of mysticism due to materialistic pressures, both East and West developed a rather depressing realistic attitude. In China, contact with the West was generally dis-



The Hermetic Rebus, according to Basil Valentine.

astrous. Internal political conditions worsened as one wave of conquerors after another invaded the country, only to be absorbed into the quicksand of greater China.

Unfortunately, however, all these absorptions diluted China's own cultural tradition. Buddhism languished and lost most of its higher philosophical overtones. Taoism became a more or less respectable asceticism. It was suspected that much of the old mysticism still lived on, but it exercised slight influence upon the public mind. Confucianism became sterile of creative force. Its formalities remained, but the reason for them was conveniently forgotten.

By the time of the first republic under Sun-Yat-sen, the great China of the Wei, T'ang, Sung, and Ming periods was only a fading memory, and even most of the ancient physical landmarks had been destroyed by war or had perished from neglect. China descended to a nation striving desperately to re-establish its ancient glory in a modern world. The struggle still goes on, and is still largely ineffective. The very elements most necessary to an enlightened nation were the very ones that have been allowed to fade away.

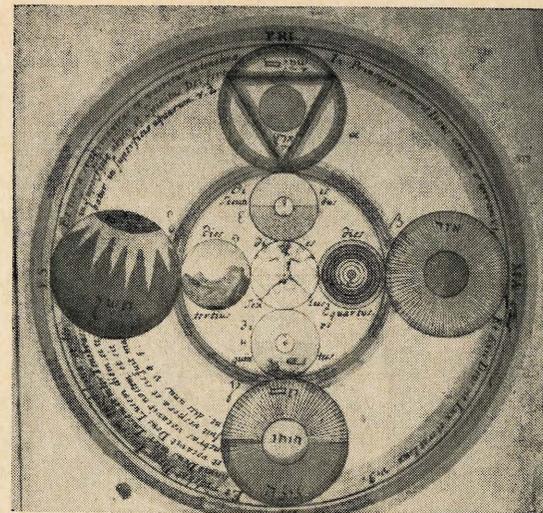
It has been said that alchemy ceased in the West when Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood. Men learned it was easier to create wealth by exploiting each other than through long and tedious experiments in some gloomy laboratory. By the opening years of the 19th century, nearly all branches of Western metaphysics were little better than literary curiosities. It was assumed that all alchemists were mad, and that their strange writings and stranger hieroglyphics were evidences of an insanity resulting from centuries of mental frustration and emotional repression.

Fortunately, Western civilization was better equipped to preserve its own historical record than China. While many books and manuscripts were lost in the wars, rebellions, and revolutions that tormented European peoples for centuries, museums and libraries had already come into existence; and into these, the rarer manuscripts and books of the past gradually found their way. Alchemy remained fallow for a hundred years, waiting for someone to restore its mysterious meaning and bring it back to life in the form of knowledge.

In the 20th century, this task was undertaken by several progressive psychologists, who sensed the possibility that this art was actually a key to the unfoldment of the human mind, and quite possibly could provide a vital remedy for those mentally and emotionally afflicted. Further research led a few to suspect that truth on a psychological level might also imply a physical truth, according to the Hermetic axiom of analogy. The discovery of laws that might solve the problems of the soul, might also solve the problems of human society. These problems and researches brought together Chinese and European alchemy.

An example of the Western interest in Chinese metaphysics is *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, by Dr. Richard Wilhelm, and the new look at Western alchemy can be estimated from *Psychology and Alchemy* by Dr. Carl Jung, who also wrote an introduction to the Chinese researches of Dr. Wilhelm. Suddenly alchemy became highly respectable, and the interest in old books and manuscripts dealing with the subject has increased rapidly.

Among the most intriguing and perhaps authentic of European alchemical figures are those included in the *Treatise on Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury*, by the German alchemist George von



An alchemical mandala indicating the place of man in the composite structure of the universe, according to the doctrines of the celebrated alchemist von Welling.

Welling. It was long realized that these symbols had secret significance, and an effort was made to bind them to the mysterious speculations of the Rosicrucians. A typical mandala by von Welling, designed in the 17th century, is reproduced herewith. It would be quite simple to substitute Eastern religious symbols for those of Western Hermeticism.

Speaking of the Rosicrucians, we should point out that the symbolic rose associated with the Brothers of the Rose Cross and the heraldic arms of Martin Luther, has much in common with the red lotus in the mandalas of Northern Buddhism, as well as with the thousand-petaled lotus, called the Sarisrara Chakra, of Hindu Yoga, and the cosmic rose, with its countless petals, of Dante's vision.

Perhaps the union of East and West in the Hermetic experiment, as represented by the union of the rose and the lily, has more behind it than the Biblical quotation: "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the field." This was a favorite device among the alchemists. The crucified rose is also reminiscent of the lotus in the center of the crossed thunderbolts of esoteric Buddhism.

The difference lies largely in the level of interpretation. The alchemists, the Gnostics, the Cabalists, and the early Christian mystics, were all telling the same story, each in their own way. By the same token, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism had found convenient symbols with which to both conceal and reveal their doctrines.

It is only natural to ask the question: What was the essential purpose of this fantastic defensive imagery? Why did not these various groups tell their story, or even the same story, in simple and comprehensible words? What kind of knowledge should require such elaborate secrecy? Modern man is inclined to believe that there was no valid excuse for the extravagant use of emblems to conceal what might reasonably be only commonplace knowledge.

Here we run against one of the most difficult of all questions to answer, especially in a time when strong prejudices are almost inevitable. It was certainly the belief of antiquity that there was a kind of knowledge that required secrecy. How can we justify this in the light of modern insight? To a degree at least, it can be justified. We have realized that knowledge can be a two-edged sword, as for example, the problem of the formula for LSD. This is now in public domain, so to say, and a high school chemistry student can concoct a preparation that can be highly dangerous to him and even a menace to society. Yet in the hands of informed persons, the drug can be useful.

We also realize the care with which nations guard secrets that they believe must be withheld from others for the preservation of their own states. There are very few kinds of knowledge or skill that cannot be abused, but today we take right and wrong use for granted. If a person wishes to destroy himself by perverting knowledge, this is now regarded as his right, although we may regard the circumstance as unfortunate.

If, as the ancients believed, there is an exact science by which man can release the extrasensory band within himself, by which he can extend physical life at least for a considerable time, and by which he may ultimately be able to conquer the mysteries of both inner and outer space, it is reasonably evident that such knowledge can be perverted and might be dangerous. Here again,

however, the attitude is much the same as that which inspired research in nuclear fission. Man must learn to live with the consequences of his own discoveries. If he finds out how to destroy half the planet, he must either learn better, or continue with his course of destruction.

Ancient man did not feel this way about knowledge, even though he may have possessed less of it than we have today. Traditions from the earliest times, and even from the most primitive people, indicate that there was some kind of a sacred science by which such prodigies as arhats, adepts, and sennin, could be produced, and to which they testified. It was also held that an increase of knowledge without a corresponding increase of integrity, would almost certainly lead to catastrophe, even though the knowledge itself might be no more transcendent than the discovery of fire or the manufacturing of gun powder. The problem is not one of ultimate knowledge, for this is still not available. There was always, however, a kind of relative knowledge, which gave individuals advantage in their own time, and could lead to the enslavement of other men.

The mystical tradition in Taoist alchemy affirmed that all advantage must be earned. The individual must deserve to know more than he does, for if knowledge is imparted without some type of moral control, disaster is likely to follow. As all alchemy does deal with the interior structure of man, secrecy may be more justified than is generally suspected. Assuming that concealed beneath both Taoist and European alchemy is a kind of Yoga, or a Tantric philosophy concerned with the release of energies resident in man, not even yet generally understood, though now scientifically suspected, it is quite possible that unless the physical body be sublimated, or regenerated, the cultivation of extrasensory perception may destroy health, both mental and physical.

In our world we can do much as we please, but even so must face the consequences. In ourselves, however, we realize that dangerous attitudes can destroy health. By the same rule, the effort to develop any spiritual faculty or power for the advancement of a physical estate, or to gain temporal power, or to exploit or enslave other human beings, may set up a terrible reaction. All laws, if abused, turn upon those who abuse them, and the indi-

vidual without conscience and character cannot safely be entrusted with any form of knowledge that can give him an advantage over others—especially if this advantage leads to mental malpractice.

So far as we know, the old rules have never actually been broken. The secret science behind alchemy remains unknown to the West, with the exception perhaps of a very few advanced students. The same is true of Chinese alchemy. The modern Taoists know very little about it, but there may be a few old hermits in the Jade Mountains of China, or the Diamond Mountains of Korea, who have the secret.

It is not their responsibility, primarily, to tell what they know to a world that has no appreciation for spiritual culture. Their real responsibility is to find a successor—one disciple to whom they can entrust their secrets. Many never find a suitable spiritual heir, and for this reason, the knowledge dies with the older man. This was the fate of the Pythagorean Institute at Crotona. The inner teachings of Pythagoras faded away when the scattered and persecuted disciples could no longer find qualified students to whom the secrets could be entrusted.

It is perfectly possible to reject the whole idea and assume that we are merely trying to justify some glamorous myth that fascinated our forebears. But before we completely reject this esoteric symbolism, it may be well to remember that so far as the inner life of man is concerned, nearly everything is still a mystery. We do not understand the mind or the emotions; we have no adequate definition of consciousness; nor have we the remotest ability to make a clear, concise, and meaningful statement about the nature of life, of what it is composed, what its purposes may be, or how it happens that we share this elusive vitality.

So long as we do not know how man grows, we are hardly in a position to dogmatically reject a concept of growth that men have clung to in the face of ridicule, persecution, torture and death for thousands of years. We cannot disprove the validity of the great sacerdotal colleges of Egypt. We have never actually examined those Mystery institutions of Greece which gave to the world the most honored names of classical times. We have not exhausted the secret arts of India or China, and for that matter,



An alchemical mandala in the form of the Hermetic crest of the House of Lambsprig.

we still do not know how the Indians in the pueblos of the American Southwest are so consistently successful in their rain dances. We know almost nothing of the wisdom of Shamanism, of Sufi spiritism, and of all the strange remote beliefs that men have preserved with such dedication of spirit.

Are they all wrong? Is there nothing whatever behind the appearances of things? Are we exactly what we seem to be—no more and no less? To affirm the absolute validity of the commonplace, is to destroy something within ourselves that has to do with the romance and magic of hope, faith, and miraculous wonders.

In recent years, another interesting point has come to general attention. The alchemists of both East and West were not quite as impractical as was long believed. While some may feel that their ultimate objectives were never attained, the world is indebted to the alchemists for countless discoveries in almost every field of endeavor. Von Helmont, in his alchemical researches, discovered

illuminating gas, which was not what he was looking for. Another alchemist, in his efforts to transmute substances, discovered the formula for Dresden china.

It is almost certain that the Chinese added greatly to their many skills through their alchemical researches. At a time when all scientific knowledge was involved in magic, the Chinese physician developed elaborate systems of philosophical speculations, scientific procedures, chemical and alchemical remedies, to such an advanced degree that they are still of interest to many scientists behind the bamboo curtain and in Europe. The acupuncturist made needles of different substances, using gold for one purpose, silver for another, and slivers of jade for still a third. European physicians have experimented with the use of gold as a heart stimulant and have compounded magnetic medicines incorporating meteoric iron.

Paracelsus was convinced that sidereal properties were captured in water, exposed to various positions of the planets. We are inclined to regard him as a combination of genius and charlatan. Garrison, in his *History of Medicine*, lists Paracelsus as one of the greatest therapists of all time. We know that he was initiated in Constantinople by Arab physicians who were reputed to have brought most of their knowledge from the doctors of the Far East. There were persistent rumors that Paracelsus actually cured diabetes, successfully treated leprosy, and was able to handle such ailments as tuberculosis and smallpox at a time when most doctors could resort only to purging and bleeding and a few traditionally acceptable remedies.

By degrees, alchemy drifted into chemistry. At the important point when this transformation occurred, a group of enlightened men, later to be associated with the Royal Society of England, helped to make the difficult transition. If we were to examine carefully the modern pharmacopoeia and could check the origin of many of the choicest remedies involved in modern preparations, we would find that they originated with alchemist physicians.

The alchemist always regarded his physical medications as symbolical of a greater science of medicine. Some day man would realize that within his own compound nature are the sovereign remedies for all the ills that afflict him. Every prescription that is

written has two meanings—one relating to the physical ingredients of a remedy, and the other relating to the magnetic and electric forces of the universe and the releasing and balancing of the biochemical processes of the human body.

Man's body itself is the alchemical retort in which the great experiment must be made. Everything necessary to human health exists within man. His final art must be to discover the inner cure, rather than to be dependent forever upon the introduction of foreign medicines into his system.

This, perhaps, is the very essence of alchemical philosophy. In due time, the old riddles will be solved and the secret arts of the ancients will be revealed in their proper light, as mysterious truths arising in consciousness and perpetuated in the world through dream-like symbols, each of which is the archetypal figure of a valid idea.



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## “IF CHRIST IS NOT RISEN . . .”

There have been many interpreters of the culture of the Roman Empire. Some have condemned it completely, associating it with war, political corruption, and the persecution of the Christian faith. Others have felt that it was the first great sociological system established by Western peoples; that, for the most part, it was well governed, with political corruption and intolerance exceptions rather than the general rule.

Actually, the Romans were people with the same basic instincts and attitudes that have distinguished and burdened humanity from the beginning. The Roman way of life was a mixture of good and bad, and the achievements for which it was distinguished contributed, as is always the case, to the ultimate collapse of the state.

It is generally agreed that Rome has come to be accepted as the peculiar symbol of materialism. From the beginning, it was concerned essentially with conquest, barter, and exchange. The Roman Empire developed in a world largely dedicated to religious concepts and the institutions through which such beliefs were disseminated. By degrees, Rome gained authority over many nations and their religions. It became an administrator of temples, of merchants and merchandising, and dedicated its resources to a far-flung program of colonial expansion.

The Roman successes have long been remembered, and its failures ignored if not forgotten. From this ancient state, with its fortress on the seven hills, came the doctrine of material achievement. To the Roman mind, man lived while he lived; and in this living, he built the world and advanced the political courses and fortunes of nations. Having achieved these ends, he departed, and left the fruits of his labors to later generations.

The Caesars were the personifications of gods, and the expansion of the Empire under their leadership was the real purpose for human existence. Men lived to glorify the Roman way of life. The

legionnaire died for Rome with no particular hope that his spirit would return, or that beyond the grave he would remember the glorious cause for which he perished. To labor for Rome, was good citizenship; to pay the taxes, was the law; and to die for Rome, was the highest valor.

The Romans had a distinct disinclination to become involved in any philosophical or religious controversy. Men could worship as they pleased, so long as their faiths did not impel them to question the ideology of the State. There was no taste for holy wars and, broadly speaking, no need for them. When the Roman phalanx marched to victory, it defeated both the enemy and the gods of the enemy. They all became subservient to the will of the victorious, and it was the duty of the vanquished to acknowledge the supremacy of the conqueror in both spiritual and mundane affairs.

It does not follow that Rome was deficient in men of learning or good morals. Such names as Cicero, Marcus Aurelius, and the Emperor Julian, reveal clearly the broadening and maturing influence of Greek philosophy. Roman scholars, however, lived precariously, and unless they were already vested with the purple, it was safest to appear no wiser than your contemporaries.

Gradually, however, a change came about, particularly around the periphery of the Roman sphere of influence. Conquered peoples were not content to acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of Rome. The Jewish mystics were in open rebellion against the cult of emperor worship. In Britain and France, the Druids were driven underground, but their influence was not entirely destroyed. From the Near East, streams of Oriental wisdom were reaching the Mediterranean to mingle their currents with ancient Egyptian scholarship and the worship of the Persian Mithras.

To make matters even more complicated, Christianity had established at least a precarious footing in the heart of the Roman state, and gradually, materialism and idealism were aligning themselves for a major conflict. It was to be, for those most deeply concerned, a struggle between might and right, expressed in terms of the opposing doctrines of the mortality or the immortality of the spirit.

There was only one way of breaking the power of Rome, and that was by assailing its weakest part—its inability to satisfy the

inevitable instinct of man to require a concept of life after death. Here was the substance of a heroism that could transcend Roman law. It was because of this faith that is stronger than death that Christian converts chose to die in the Circus Maximus rather than to deny their hope in the resurrection of the human soul. When Rome could no longer control the individual by the threat of death, it lost dominion over a larger part of the world than it realized. Around the concept of eternal life, the forces rallied that were to finally overthrow the proudest city ever built by mankind.

It seems to me that this realization must have inspired the words of St. Paul, "If Christ is not risen, then is our teaching vain." There is no doubt that he accepted without question the accounts of the disciples that after the body of Jesus was laid to rest in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, the stone was rolled away and the Master came forth in glory. Here also, in the garden beside the tomb, Mary the Magdalene saw him in the costume of a gardener, carrying in his hand the spade, perhaps symbolizing his harrowing of the underworld. Paul also believed that Christ appeared among the disciples in a locked room, and that Thomas the Doubter placed his finger in the wound in the side of the Messiah.

Paul was even more convinced by the experience that occurred to him when he was on the road to Damascus to persecute the followers of the Christian faith. He was stricken with blindness, and felled from his horse by some terrible force. He heard the voice of Christ, but whether the Master was in the flesh or not, Paul could not tell.

From these happenings and other accounts, the Apostle to the gentiles held it as certain within his own heart and mind that his Savior had risen from the dead and was truly the "first-born of them that sleep." The implications of this certainty, held and preached with complete dedication, may not have been originally obvious, but in the course of ages, it was to change the destiny of Western civilization.

To Paul, immortality was no longer a concept, a teaching possessed among the wise, or a hope communicated in the sanctuary of a temple; it was a great and glorious fact, substantiated by irrefutable evidence. To us, the story has descended only as a religious



#### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

This engraving, based upon the original composition by Peter Paul Rubens, is from a series of engravings made in connection with the publication of the Great Elzevir Bible.

tradition, but to Paul and the other apostles, it was a miraculous reality, certain beyond all doubt, and a promise of the better destiny that awaited all virtuous men beyond the grave.

If one man, even though he be divinely overshadowed, could come back from the darkness of the grave, could live as a conscious being after his body was dead, and by his own supreme achievement open the gates of everlastingness to all men, then materialism was vanquished. If death was truly the last great enemy, and it had been conquered by life, light, and love, then men and women living in the mortal world had a natural and proper duty above their responsibilities as Roman citizens. Allegiance could no longer be first to Rome; rather, it belonged to the invisible universe from which men had come, and to which they would depart again. Rome

might command their bodies, but only God was the lord of their souls.

By degrees, the rights and powers of the soul, and the dignities appropriate to this spiritual part of man, took precedence, requiring and receiving the greater homage. Man would live as a citizen of Rome for seventy years, but he would live as a child in the house of his Eternal Father forever and ever. It was therefore proper that he should give his greatest concern to that part of his nature that survived the grave.

Thus there was a ruler greater than Caesar, a law higher than the Roman law, a reason for existence more noble than fighting and dying to expand the domains of Rome. Under the pressure of this psychology, the Roman Empire crumbled, until finally the Emperor himself had to bow before the concept of an eternal God. In that day, when Constantine acknowledged the growing power of Christianity, the proud city of the Caesars became itself the vassal of the Heavenly Power that rules all things.

History has a strange way of repeating itself, and today we are again confronted with the opposing concepts of idealism and materialism. Rome continues in the ambitions of modern nations. We are still under a heavy pressure of material achievement, and we still hope to build a lasting civilization upon industrial, economic, and political foundations.

At the same time, we are in precisely the same dilemma as the Roman legionnaire. Materially, we have not conquered death. We must still build in this world, and then depart from all that we have accomplished. Tomorrow is always the beneficiary of contemporary achievement. We have not solved any of the major moral or ethical problems that plagued the Roman Empire. We have not subdued the ambitions of tyrants; nor have we been able to maintain peace and brotherhood between states and countries.

Again, we are drifting into dilemmas that are possible only to a people essentially materialistic. It is not reasonable to assume that man is willing to die for something which itself cannot live. There is little virtue in being a martyr to a lost cause, or defending, with every available resource, policies that have failed since the beginning of time. We do not really accept materialism in our own

hearts, any more than the Romans did, but we lack the faith of Paul or the immediate evidence of the original disciples.

Today most of the religions of the world teach immortality of some kind. They believe in a life beyond the grave, and affirm it to be an evident and irrefutable truth that man's happiness or unhappiness in the future depends upon the virtues he practices in this life and the vices he fails to correct. We also have a fair listing of those qualities of character which prepare mortal man to enter with confidence into his own immortality. If these virtues were truly practiced, we would not only face the future with optimism, but would correct nearly every tragic situation that confronts us in this mortal world.

It would seem, therefore, that physical existence is actually and factually the Pronaos of the Eternal Temple. Here we are tried in the balance. Our works are weighed against our pretensions, and we are judged according to our merits.

How does it happen, then, that with nearly three billion human beings now holding, at least to some degree, the belief that they will survive death, we have never been able to accomplish a state of physical civilization suitable to the requirements of our survival as conscious beings in an afterlife? Even if there is uncertainty, and men may not be sure that they will survive the grave, should not the possibility be carefully considered, on the grounds of probability?

Pauline Christianity developed an interpretation of the life of Christ more mystical than orthodox. To Paul, Christ was, at least in one sense, the immortal self in every human being. The resurrection of Christ therefore became the guarantee that all men who believed in truth would share in the mystery of the resurrection. By transforming the historical aspect of the life of Christ into a completely mystical revelation of man's spiritual hope, Paul bestowed the risen Christ upon the whole body of Christendom.

Paul made the raising of those spiritually dead the principal end of faith and the final reward for virtue. His statement presents us with a simple logical conclusion: regardless of what we believe about the matter, unless there is consciousness after death, all religion is vain, all hope is meaningless, and all achievement an insubstantial delusion held in the mind. Today we are beginning to find

new ways of substantiating the Pauline position. These ways have been forced upon us by dilemmas that strike so deeply into our hearts that only a positive hope and faith can bring us any measure of comfort.

Paul did not deny physical death; nor did he in any way reject the martyrdom of the apostles, or minimize the fact that he himself must go down into the earth, a martyr to his own faith. It was not physical death that he was assailing; it was the belief that death either ended or solved the dilemma of existence. Those who believe that death is the end of pain or of problem, or that by casting off the flesh, they will escape their just deserts, are subtly affirming a dangerous doctrine. They are not merely hazarding some future state, but undermining the possibility of peace, happiness, and progress while they are still living in the mortal sphere.

To believe that oblivion is desirable merely because it is the end of misery, completely neglects the possibility of survival bestowing upon those who have unfolded their own natures, a greater happiness than the physical world can ever offer. In coming down to common death, we bury both the sinner and the saint. If we raise the material state to supreme importance, we pay for this by the loss of all incentives to become proper citizens of a magnificent universe of wisdom, truth, and beauty. It is a bad bargain, and every civilization or culture that has chosen materialism, has survived only long enough to regret its choice.

At this Christmas season, it is good to realize that Christianity, in harmony with all other great mystical and philosophical religions of mankind, bestows as its greatest gift release from mental slavery to the modern version of the Roman Empire. It bestows upon each thoughtful person the strength of internal conviction by which he can continue to serve those truths which, though neglected by many, must remain the hope of all.

In the very celebration of Christmas, we experience a small resurrection of the spirit. In remembering Christ, we bring him to life again in our own hearts and minds by restoring, even for a day, his rulership over our conduct. We discover, at least to a small degree, the proof of Paul's statement. The teaching is not in vain, because the Christ image has become an archetypal part of our own subconscious. It is there, never to die. Generation after genera-

tion may depart from paths of righteousness, but when this departure ends in suffering, the mind re-envisioning the eternal hope.

So we may say that good must be real, and that it is justified by the fact that man himself can experience good, even though the attitude is impermanent and cannot be maintained. However we approach it, we have all known moments when love was our savior, kindness our fulfillment, justice our ever-present friend. It may be said of us as of the multitude that gathered when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, that first they glorified him, and then they crucified him. Such is the uncertainty and insecurity of all assemblages. Yet it also remains true that those who crucified, will sometime again glorify.

Paul tells us that a strange and deep despair must gradually darken our world and ourselves unless there be something more important than the prevailing confusion. In this confusion, the blind lead the blind, and we survive precariously from day to day, regretting the past and fearing the future. If there is not more than this behind the purpose which fashioned man, then all he teaches is vain, and he himself is a vexed spirit without substance or meaning.

We like to overlook this unwelcome interpretation on the ground that we do have a wonderful life, or at least the chance for it. With fair fortune, we may live seventy or eighty years, growing up in the midst of pains that seem a little pleasant, and pleasures that become slightly painful. We have our loves and our disillusionments; we make friends and lose them; we raise our children with good hopes. We live forever in the presence of a pageantry of gains and losses, and as we near the end, inevitable limitations close off by degrees the interests and activities that concerned us through our younger years.

It seems as though this is perhaps all we have a right to require or demand, but in practice, things do not work out quite so favorably. By degrees, it becomes evident that we are being moved irresistibly to something around some distant corner, for which we are usually ill prepared. There is no real reason why we should give up any immediate joys, but perhaps there is a way we can reduce the less fortunate occurrences, or strengthen ourselves for those misfortunes which will certainly be encountered. The only way we know is to enlarge our philosophy of life, to live today as though

truly we would live forever. This is usually more successful than the attitude that we should live today because death is nearer than we realize.

The greatest gift of the spirit is the realization that we abide forever in the grace of God. It is no more difficult to believe this than to disbelieve it. It seems strange, in light of this fact, that so many find disbelief easy, and believing extremely difficult.

When we rise on Christmas morning and gather with our immediate families to share in the festivities of exchanging presents, even this is actually vain unless within ourselves, the power of resurrection exists. As we watch the joy in the faces of the young, and the kindly indulgence of the beaming elders, it is all very wonderful and friendly and worthwhile. We can only say this with fullness of spirit, however, if this Christmas festival is tied to some justification for itself. To the materialist, a moment of happiness is worth all it costs, and he goes no further—afraid to question because the happiness itself is so short-lived. To the Christian mystic, however, a moment of happiness is a revelation of an eternal benevolence, a beatitude that rests in the maturity and unfoldment of the inner life.

If we live right and think right and dream right, laughter becomes eternal, and the joy of the moment is only a tiny fragment of a joy that can never end. This does not mean that all future years will be smoothed out, but rather, that the Christ principle in our heart guides us safely across the stormy seas of fortune.

Everywhere, a good deed has no real meaning unless good is an eternal principle which, manifesting through ourselves, achieves a double purpose. It not only enriches the one who receives, but also the one who performs the benevolent act. Every evidence of faith rewards all it touches, just as light shines equally upon the just and the unjust; for it invites the just to prove the virtue of their ways, and may cast some meaning or new vision of purpose into the hearts of the unjust.

In the end of things, there is the great alignment between Rome and the New Jerusalem. To the mystic, Rome signifies the empire set up in the abyss by the rebel angel, and the New Jerusalem is the world of the redeemed, made possible by the indwelling spirit of redemption. This is not some fragment of orthodox theology to the mystic, for he has experienced the meaning; and the meaning can-

not come unless the Messianic power in man himself be released. Without the personal experience of good, without knowing within self the healing power of the Universal Law, the teaching is in vain.

In a world torn by strife, with nations disturbed and their peoples afraid, we are all seeking peace; and the peace that will bring security to this mortal sphere is the same peace that will bring comfort to our own hearts. We must choose to live either according to peace, or according to death. There is no other choice, for that which is not governed by love, must be governed by some lesser power, and these lesser powers cannot bring enduring security. It is not probable that peace will come immediately to the whole world, but if it comes to ourselves, we will be helpful in all ways possible, and can live at peace with problems not yet solved.

According to the Gospel, Christ declared, "My peace I give unto you." This is the gift of Christmas, the great light that shines in darkness, the blessed acceptance through humility. This is the sureness that the Divine Will and the divine way are destined to come in glory. Sometime, truth will prevail. Therefore, we labor together, not in a cause that is vain, but in a work that is predestined.

At Christmastime, we restate our resolution, and in our hearts and minds, we share in a Eucharistic experience. For a little while at least, we know our purpose and our destiny, and we realize, with St. Paul, that it is truly "the Christ in you that is the hope of glory." And when this Christ is risen in our hearts, the teaching of brotherly love is not in vain.

#### *To Save or Be Saved*

This is a positively true story of a friend who, while visiting in a large Texas city, asked the telephone operator for the number of the Green Stamp Redemption Center. After a long pause, the operator, in a charming Texas drawl, asked casually, "Would that be listed under Churches?"

#### *A Curious Belief of Columbus*

During his voyages in the West Indies, Christopher Columbus noticed that the Indians, when searching for gold, always performed religious rites, including prayer and fasting. The great navigator then ordered that, if any of the men of his ships should prospect for the precious metal, they should first perform similar religious observances.

## THE "UNWORTHY" ONE

MASTERS OF INVISIBILITY



URNING from the stack of documents spread out on his cherrywood table, Mr. Nakamura remarked quietly, "This is another excellent opportunity for you to explore the secrets of the Oriental art world. Please to be seated beside me, Haru San, and we will go over these papers with a certain amount of diligence."

My Japanese friend handed me a photograph which had obviously been taken some years before, when the camera was not too well understood in the Far East. Although the print was badly faded,

it was still sufficiently clear to show the details of a magnificently decorated sword resting on a stand of carved ebony.

The shopkeeper announced solemnly, "This is the court sword of the great Minamoto no Yoritomo, the first military dictator of Japan. It is a National Treasure of the highest importance. After the Restoration, our venerated Emperor Meiji bestowed this sword upon a noble family close to the Throne, and it has been in their possession for the last fifty years.

"About a week ago, the present proprietor of the sword—I will refer to him as the Marquis rather than mention his name—came to me with the distressing news that the sword of Yoritomo had been stolen from his villa, where it was kept under lock and key in a most secret place. He did not wish to report the theft to the police for two reasons. First, it would open him to possible Imperial censure, and second, it occurred to the Marquis that some member of his personal household might be involved in the crime. If such happened to be the case, the entire family

would be disgraced. As I have had the honor of serving him on several occasions, including transactions requiring extreme discretion, he has overwhelmed me with his confidence in this critical situation.

"I might point out that the theft of a major work of art is seldom if ever an act of common thievery. Anyone stealing a National Treasure of Japan could not possibly dispose of it in any way without the gravest danger of severe punishment. Yet it has always been true that men have risked life and liberty to steal such priceless objects. We may note that dishonesty of this kind is nearly always commissioned by some wealthy foreign dealer or collector of fine art.

"We happen to have, here in Kyoto, an informal association of reputable merchants with special facilities to investigate any transactions that might bring discredit upon honorable establishments. From this group, I have been able to learn that an extremely wealthy European gentleman, who specializes in ancient weapons, contacted his buyer here and made a fabulous offer for the Yoritomo blade. This agent, who has many connections among distinguished families, was able to bribe a trusted retainer of the Marquis.

"The agent who instigated this crime we will call Mr. Dai, and it is only fair to say that he is a remarkable, if rather unscrupulous, person. He has no store, but transacts business from his home, which was formerly the palace of a powerful daimio. The house is a veritable fortress, and contains many secret rooms and passages. His treasure vaults are so cunningly concealed that even the police, who occasionally make official calls, have never been able to find any stolen goods.

"I am informed that Yoritomo's sword is now carefully hidden in Mr. Dai's establishment, and will be there for the next two or three days, when it will be smuggled out of Japan among the personal effects of a retiring diplomat whose baggage cannot be searched without international complications. We must therefore move quickly.

"As I am more or less committed to restoring the sword to its rightful owner, I must hasten to secure the most expert help available. I hope that you feel like taking an invigorating stroll in the countryside."

When I assured Mr. Nakamura that such exercise would be welcome, he gathered up the papers on his table and placed them, together with the photograph and a letter of his own, in a brass-bound cylinder with a tightly fitting cover. After wrapping this in a silk cloth, he bowed me out of his shop, and locking the door behind him, shook it vigorously, as usual, to make sure that it was securely fastened.

After a short ride, we left our rickshas in a temple courtyard at the foot of Mount Hiei and climbed a winding path that led past the gates of several ancient shrines. My friend motioned me to precede him. We found ourselves in a peaceful grove of trees, where monuments of weathered stone guarded the resting places of honored dead. Most of the markers were miniature pagodas, always associated with immortality, and a few were decorated with effigies of the benevolent Jizo, protector of the souls of children.

In a remote corner of the cemetery, apart from all the other monuments, was a tall bell-shaped granite tower, supported on the back of a crouching stone lion, its mouth open in a terrifying snarl. Mr. Nakamura pointed to an inscription carved deeply into the front of the huge memorial. "These characters may be freely translated, 'The Master of Invisibility.' No one knows who is actually buried here, but he had attained the highest proficiency in *ninjutsu*."

"The art of moving about unseen, of appearing and disappearing at will, and of entering and leaving the most carefully guarded places, is called *ninjutsu*. I should point out that no supernatural power is involved, but many years of apprenticeship are required to attain the highest perfection in this unusual skill. Training includes judo, karate, kendo, and certain special types of Zen disciplines. The body must be completely subdued to the purposes of the mind, and the thoughts themselves fixed completely upon the mission to be undertaken. In the higher grades of this—I think we may call it a science—only the most worthy and confidential missions are undertaken, Ninjutsu is never to be used for criminal ends—only in the service of honor and in the righting of wrong.

"You are aware of the singing floors of Nijo Castle. No one can take a step upon them without the sound being heard through-

out the building; yet a master of invisibility can go through every room without making a sound. He can climb up the vertical sides of buildings, walk upon ceilings by means of special devices attached to his wrists. He can enter and leave a room, in which persons are assembled, without being seen; and he trains his breathing so that even with the most extreme exertion, his breath will make no sound.

"After the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the masters of this art are supposed to have closed their schools and accepted no more disciples. Actually, however, a few have communicated their esoteric secrets to dedicated pupils. No one knows who they are, and there is no record that one has ever been caught or exposed. They operate only at night, dressed in tight-fitting black garments and completely masked. The only way to communicate with them is through this monument, which is supposed to mark the tomb of the first master."

Mr. Nakamura looked around carefully and motioned me to do the same. Although there were many slender trees and some small rock formations nearby, there was actually no place where a human being could conveniently hide. My friend stepped over to the base of the tower and placed the brass-bound cylinder between the jaws of the stone lion.

The little art dealer then linked his arm in mine, and pointed toward several of the ancient graves. "These markers, made of five stones, one resting upon another, are most interesting," he observed. "They will be of special significance to you because they symbolize the five regions through which the soul ascends after death." He then turned abruptly and pointed. "You will observe that the cylinder is gone; notice also that there is no person in sight."

As I looked around in amazement, and was about to frame the inevitable question, the art dealer shrugged his shoulders. "No, I do not know how it was done; but I have a slight suspicion that one of the rocks scattered about may be a man in disguise. It would be indiscreet, however, to investigate."

Back in Mr. Nakamura's store, we made plans for a further meeting. "In my note," my Japanese friend observed, "I have stated clearly the urgency of the present situation, and have suggested

that the sword be returned the day after tomorrow, which will be Wednesday, in the late evening. At that time also, a certain honorarium, in the form of money, will change hands.

"I am allowing two nights, so that the expert will have the opportunity to spend Monday evening exploring Mr. Dai's establishment, and locating the exact hiding place of the sword. This he will accomplish with unerring accuracy. He may also spend the entire day on Tuesday in close company with Mr. Dai, who will not know of his existence. That evening, the sword will be quietly removed from the house, without injury to anyone. No guard can prevent this from happening, and protective devices will be ineffective.

"Perhaps you will be interested in the successful consummation of this transaction, and I hope that it will be possible for you to be with us on Wednesday evening. The confidential secretary of the Marquis will be here at eight o'clock with the reward agreed upon. The delivery of this valuable sword will be most discreetly handled, and because of the sacredness of the weapon, there will be a certain ritualism, in the spirit of our old traditions. This you may find unusual."

Needless to say, I entered Mr. Nakamura's shop precisely at the appointed time, and was ushered immediately into his private study. The confidential representative of the Marquis had already arrived, accompanied by two stocky men. It was obvious from their stern faces and grave manner, that these retainers were beholden to their lord in the best tradition of the old samurai.

In the dim light of Mr. Nakamura's back room, the scene was decidedly medieval. The secretary and his attendants were in full formal costume. Their richly brocaded garments were ornamented with crests wrought in gold thread, and they wore dark skirt-like trousers that reached to the ground. Each carried in his sash two elaborate swords, their shark-skin handles enriched with golden fittings. Mr. Nakamura was in similar attire, but discreetly had selected black, and carried no swords.

Feeling somewhat out of place in a business suit, I followed the solemn procession through the front room of Mr. Nakamura's shop and out into the street, where two brass-trimmed automobiles waited with liveried chauffeurs. There were other attendants in

one of the cars, probably to further protect the valuable sword when it was returned.

Our little group was soon on its way to the old cemetery we had visited a few days before. Arriving outside the gate, we waited while two members of the retinue lit strolling lanterns decorated with the crest of the Marquis. Led by the lantern-bearers, we advanced along the path toward the monument of the Master of Invisibility. As we made the last turn in the path, it seemed as though we had entered a world that had actually ceased to exist centuries before.

In front of the monument bearing the ancient inscription stood a strange figure, attended on each side by torch-bearers. In the flickering smoky light, he resembled some heroic spirit from Shinto lore conjured up by magical rites, rather than a human being of the 20th century. He appeared to be quite aged, for shining white hair hung to his shoulders, and a thick beard covered the upper part of his breast. His outer robe was of white brocade, bordered with gold, and beneath this over-garment he wore a kimono of magenta silk.

The face of this apparition gave the impression of being strangely luminous, but careful scrutiny showed that he wore a beautifully fashioned golden mask, which concealed the upper half of his face.

Slowly the mysterious man raised his arms, extending before him a magnificent sword with silken cords and pendant tassels. There could be no doubt that this was the splendid blade of Yoritomo. The torches caused its jewels to sparkle, and the slight movements of the hands of the masked man resulted in strange reflections of light.

No word was spoken. The confidential secretary of the Marquis and his two retainers advanced toward the white-robed figure and knelt before him. The man in the golden mask leaned forward and placed the sword reverently in the hands of the secretary, who bowed three times upon receiving it. The two retainers arose and, stepping forward, became obviously guardians of the sword. At this point, the masked man inclined his head gravely, offering homage to the sword, after which one of the retainers placed in his hands a packet wrapped in fine brocade.

The ceremony was obviously over, and the representative of the Marquis, with his attendants, backed away, pausing every few steps to bow. Although I had remained discreetly in the background, taking no part in the amazing scene, it seemed only proper that I should join in the bowing. When I raised my head after several seconds, the only thing to be seen was the ancient monument touched by the faint light of a new moon.

Outside the temple grounds, we said good-bye to the secretary and his associates, who departed in one automobile with the precious sword. The other splendid limousine was placed at our disposal for the journey back to Mr. Nakamura's shop.

As we rode along, the little art dealer was in splendid spirits. "These, Haru San, are the old ways that never die. Our traditional procedures will linger on for at least a few more generations. Of course, we do not know the identity of the man with the gold mask. Certainly he is the present Master of Invisibility, and he rules over a little empire of his own—the skillful men he has trained according to disciplines and regulations that are centuries old.

"It might also interest you to know that the Honorable Secretary was actually the Marquis himself. Etiquette would never have permitted sending even a trusted retainer under such conditions. Everything has been consummated to the satisfaction of all concerned. The sword is safely home, and you can be certain it will be guarded with even greater care than before.

"And now, you must join me for a cup of tea before you return to your hotel."



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### In Reply

## A Department of Questions and Answers

*Question: Is the spiritual evolution of man a fact, or only wishful thinking?*

*Answer:* We have received an interesting letter recently from a person who is obviously under considerable responsibility and pressure, and who is developing reasonable doubts about the spiritual evolution of humanity. From daily experience it appears to him that conditions in general are not improving, and that the average person is more likely to be discouraged than encouraged as he contemplates his own daily life and the future that lies ahead for him.

The prospect of being reborn many times as a means of advancing our quest for enlightenment, seemed attractive and reasonable until the difficulties of the moment became oppressive. Then the question arose as to whether further embodiments would be merely repetitious cycles of inadequacy, insecurity, and futility. If such should prove to be the case, it would appear that the eternal plan offers slight consolation to tired people of the present generation.

By taking a human life span as a microcosm of the world pattern, it would appear that the journey from infancy to old age is little more than a trip from bad to worse. It is true that youth has vitality, courage, and an optimistic determination to escape from the frustrations of the past. By middle life, however, the individual discovers that survival, under present social and industrial conditions, means adjustment with a sterile way of life that not only offers few incentives to personal improvement, but recommends a broad indifference to that which cannot be changed or greatly improved.

As the years pass, age becomes a further restriction upon the spiritual factor in the ethical compound of human nature. Physical limitations result in mounting fatigue, chronic ailments, and a gradual separation, voluntary or involuntary, from the main stream of approved activities. In the end, all momentum is lost, and the person appears to fall into a complete defeat.

The idealist would rather assume that young people with high purposes would be given every encouragement and assistance, and each day would be happier and more significant than the preceding one. As this is not the case, what proof have we that things in general—or even anything in particular—are improving? Even as we look upon history, the precious encouragement that might inspire us to struggle on, also appears to be lacking. We are still making the same basic mistakes that troubled our remote ancestors; and each generation departs, weary of life, bestowing its weariness upon its descendants.

This rather depressing picture opens an interesting area of reflection. The first problem we have to face is to discover some basic attitude of our own toward the whole situation. If we are one of those persons who do not believe that there ever was a plan behind the processes of nature, and have no expectation that such a plan will arise in the future, we have cut the Gordian knot so far as our own kind is concerned. All we have to do is to learn to live with our own conviction, for experience is the test of all opinions.

It is hardly useful to have an attitude of any kind unless it accomplishes something of value. So far as we know, a negative attitude has never produced any really positive effects. About the best it can do for a person is to cause him to accept his difficulties as inevitable, meaningless, and purposeless, and blame his inadequacies upon circumstances, or upon an ill-starred birth at an unfortunate time in history. It is very difficult, however, to live even a moderately intelligent life without profoundly suspecting that there are some kinds of rules operating behind the splendid pageantry of existence. Men have toyed with the idea that the entire cosmic system resulted from an infinite accident, but very few have been able to accept such an explanation as valid or useful.

If we do assume that there is a reason for anything, it is only fair to suspect that there is a reason for ourselves. While we may be

continuously disillusioned with our associates, and have strong reservations about the moral structure of the world, we cannot deny that some human beings have done wonderful things in the course of time. Man has given to the stream of humanity magnificent testimonies to the highest possible dedication. He has shown remarkable skill, insight, and foresight. He has quietly and serenely sacrificed his own happiness, year after year, for those near him for whom he had personal affection, or for the whole structure of the human race for which he held a great unselfish love.

There are also a considerable number of reasonably happy people. They are not exuberantly joyous, nor can they claim that their careers have been without obstacles or disappointments. But having reached the prescribed three-score years and ten, or perhaps four-score years, they can say quietly and earnestly, "I have had a good life." People have said this to me many times, and most of them had no great achievements to record; but they had found tremendous personal fulfillment in the joyous acceptance of common duties and obligations.

It is not really fair, therefore, to assume that the world is composed of miserable people, all of them desperately unhappy and the overwhelming majority of them wishing they had never been born or could pass out of this life in the near future. One thing the thoughtful person nearly always overestimates is the misery of other people. Actually, if we stand aside and watch the stupid things some people do, we can be annoyed, disillusioned, and spiritually offended, but the individuals making the mistakes are often well satisfied with themselves and are fulfilling life in the way which they regard as proper. This simply means they are enjoying themselves doing exactly what they please, even if it may be necessary to work hardships on others.

Humanity, as a group, is composed of an overwhelming majority of men and women who wish to be kind and thoughtful as long as it does not interfere with being unkind and thoughtless when emergencies arise. These persons expect to pass through a certain amount of suffering. When it comes, they are emotionally disturbed; but not having especially retentive memories, they soon recover from their depressions and resume the principal objectives of their lives—to exist as comfortably as possible as long as possible. They have no

real understanding of the workings of such a law as cause and effect; they do not relate future conditions to previous conduct; nor do they feel that selfishness must be atoned for at some future time.

The most advantageous point from which to make a survey of the human tragedy, or comedy, is middle life. Having reached these years, we gain another peculiar advantage. To the vitality of youth we add the mature discretion of years—at least we think so; and this discretion permits us to come to some very important conclusions about the fallacies of the young and the foibles of the aged.

To us, under the present pattern of living, maturity is synonymous with disenchantment. We are growing up to the degree that we lose faith in ourselves, our neighbors, our world, and our God. If this be maturity, then we may agree with Kipling that the bottom is out of the universe. Actually, our point of view in measuring others is based upon a series of reactions, reflexes, and interpretations uniquely our own. This does not mean that others may not have similar attitudes or conclusions; it is perfectly natural that a great many persons should feel the same way when we realize that sixty percent of the population is neurotic.

Most individuals have become involved in patterns with which they could not cope. Education has not provided them with the means of maturing their own personal characters, and countless factors have permitted the individual to reach forty or forty-five years of age without ever imposing any strong pattern of self-direction upon himself. He may therefore feel that he came from nowhere, is not anywhere in particular, and is not going anywhere in general.

If we come to such a conclusion, we should never forget that our conclusion was reached by the interpretation of our own inner motivations, and by the assumption that other people are like ourselves. We defend this on the ground that other people are in the same difficulties that afflict us. What we fail to realize is that although the problems may be general, each individual is a separate person in the difficulty because of a particular series of circumstances that have affected or conditioned his own thinking.

If we look around us in nature, all physical life seems to end in death. The beautiful flower, as Omar points out, "that once has blown, forever dies." The pessimistic preacher of Ecclesiastes de-

clared long ago that "man cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down." All this is a proper cause for a certain type of nostalgia. How can we believe in evolution when every living thing begins to die the day that it is born? We know, also, that each year of life modifies conduct, and as we grow older, we have less vitality, and probably less optimism and courage with which to face the future. All living creatures, whether they are aware of it or not, are moving inevitably toward that unexplored country from which no traveler returns—at least as far as we can tell.

After we have become a little tired of our own weariness on this point, we can take a second look at the processes of generation constantly taking place around us. In the simplest biological thinking, each generation dies giving birth to the next generation. In some of the lower kingdoms, life is very short after the perpetuation of the species has been assured. Man lasts longer because he has other things to do in addition to propagation.

Thus, while each person can see no assurance of his own immediate attainment of wisdom or happiness, he is certainly part of a process going on through time and eternity, which does lead inevitably toward greater good for all living things. Wars, crimes, disasters, pestilences, and depressions, are occasions of the moment. They are like the inevitable brief infirmities that afflict the efficiency of an individual during his mature years. He may break an arm in college football, fracture his skull in a ski jump, or put himself in the hospital for several weeks through an auto accident, but he is usually not willing to admit that such interludes are conclusive evidence that a useful career is without purpose.

Each individual is the victim, psychologically, of the generation in which he lives; and from what we can gain from the perusal of history, each generation that has gone before us has been convinced that it was living in the most difficult and precarious times that could ever arise in the mortal sphere. Evolution, to be acceptable, must be contemplated with a degree of impersonality. To see progress, we must get our minds off ourselves and the immediate situations around us, and study the long graph that records the ups and downs of races, nations, and persons.

If we do this, it will be difficult to deny that evolution exists, but if we think only in terms of a single day, we are very much in the

condition of a man sitting down to watch a tree grow. If he expects it to develop overnight—like the fabulous Mango tree of Hindu sorcerers—he will be bitterly disappointed when the miraculous does not occur, even though he might be the first to deny the possibility of a miracle.

All this also adds up to another important point—and we can again quote from the Bible: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” While we stand in judgment over circumstances, have we ever paused to consider ourselves as beings? Much will depend upon some thoughtfulness turned in this direction. If man is merely the product of the physical generative processes of his parents, if he is nothing but a vitalized body of which the highest part is the mind—which is also, incidentally, one of the most discouraging parts—then it is very difficult to find any excuse for our own existence or the world in which we live. Thus we must decide what we are before we can honestly judge the meaning of life, personal or collective. If it is all a matter of physical adjustment and psychological orientation to the consequences of our collective psychological disorientation, then truly all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

From this we must gather the suspicion that our philosophy of life arises from what we believe about living; and if our believing is too narrow and materialistic, we will find very little in material existence for which we can be truly thankful. As most human beings have little or no interest in their own spiritual growth, being concerned primarily with the comfort of the body, we must expect the world to be dominated by general indifference. There is nothing, however, that says this indifference has to be. It results from surrendering our natural instinct to be active and productive to the prevailing habit of being inactive and unproductive except in terms of economics.

If we take such personal ineffectiveness and try to impose it upon the universe as a cosmic norm, it is evident that an intellectual acceptance of the doctrine of reincarnation is not going to be very helpful. It merely means that the individual is going to continue to be like himself forever. If reincarnation means that the same person is going to come back hundreds of times in the same world, and is going to meet this world with the same attitudes, prejudices, and

opinions that have distinguished former embodiments, then a grand futility would be inevitable.

What right do we have, however, to assume that we are not changing, and that the world is in no way improving, or growing, or developing? In the times of the Roman Empire, ninety per cent of mankind was in actual slavery without any rights to education, freedom, personal family ties, or justice in courts of law. In the time of the philosophic splendor of Greece, the majority of humanity was without most of the privileges that today we all take for granted.

We would hardly want to go back to the time when a man could be executed in the public square for stealing a penny loaf of bread, and even less would we enjoy the thought that his execution was the occasion for a holiday and family picnics; nor do we like to think of the fact that at one time hospitals were so badly run that it was not uncommon for a living patient to lie in the same bed with the dead for two or three days.

Thus, it is useless to deny that there has been progress. We owe a great deal to courageous persons who were not appreciated in their own day, who may have been ridiculed and even martyred, but who nevertheless proved conclusively that the life of the human being can be incalculably important.

We must approach the subject of spiritual evolution by realizing that this evolution is concerned primarily with the maturing of the consciousness within man, and no person has a right to feel that he can pass judgment on who is evolving, and how, unless he fully understands human consciousness—its origin, purpose, and destiny.

It has been noticeable—and many great psychologists and philosophers have emphasized the point—that man, as a conscious being, grows more rapidly and matures with greater dignity under adversity than in any other way. A life that ends in a grand frustration may, therefore, be the most useful and purposeful incarnation for the conscious being in the body. Man is slow to correct his own faults, and in periods of great prosperity, he corrects very little and develops a large group of exuberant delinquencies.

The universe is not primarily concerned with happiness, whether it be in the insect kingdom, among the birds or fishes, or in human affairs. What nature wants is that the inner life of a man shall

evolve; for as far as we know, this is the only part capable of evolution. Even if the human body should unfold more rapidly, very little would be accomplished unless the person in the body kept pace with that growth. The real purpose of reincarnation, therefore, is that the best part of man shall become better, and that the individual, through growth, shall ultimately attain that degree of consciousness which is the justification of the elaborate patterns through which he must pass.

Now, we have no proof that the consciousness of man must be matured in a hurry; nature has plenty of time at its disposal. It is now suspected that man may have been on this earth for nearly ten million years; and so far as nature is concerned, it is of little importance whether he is here another ten million years or not. It is also very likely that this mysterious universal light locked within man, unfolds in terms of huge time patterns. A human body may come and go in less than a century; but the Hindus believe that the lifetime of Brahma, one incarnation in the duration of this vast cosmic being, requires four billion, three hundred and twenty million earth years.

The mathematical formula behind this calculation is extremely complicated, but it has been checked by modern mathematicians. While they cannot prove that Brahma lives this long, they can support the extraordinary skill of ancient Indian astronomer-physicists who made the original calculations. The point of value is that man, thinking in terms of trading in a car every year, or the continuance of time-payment plans, is trying to judge evolution without taking into consideration that such great laws as reincarnation and karma apply to the infinite life that sustains us, and not the minute and transitory bodies through which this life moves.

Actually, our despondency is due to short-sightedness. We seem to have a desperate determination to make our way of life the most important thing in the cosmos and the final proof of the operations of all cosmic laws. It is quite possible to sit down quietly and think the whole thing through in an entirely different way.

Suppose we assume for a moment that our principal purpose for being here is not to change other persons, or even to change ourselves according to some preconceived formula. It may well be that our failure to accomplish what we consider to be the most justifi-

able of all ends is due to a mistake in our own thinking. Suppose, therefore, that instead of trying to impress our own knowledge upon everything and everyone, we pause for a moment and accept our own basic inadequacy. If we are willing to admit that we need to know more before we can live better, we shall make more progress than by taking the attitude that we know enough or too much already.

The disillusioned person is always disillusioned with some false concept that he holds in himself, and from which he does not gain sufficient insight to sustain him through emergency. To be disillusioned in our mistakes, is progress; but to be disillusioned in constructive ideals, or noble incentives, is simply a misinterpretation of what happens to us, or lack of ability to live up to what we hold to be the best that we know.

How are we going to correct this? How is the human being going to discover that his pet opinions are immature, his solemn pronouncements little better than nonsense, and all his futilities merely lack of basic enlightenment? He is not going to know in a few years, or for that matter, in a few hundred years; but he is going to become a little wiser every day.

A dog who puts his paw in the fire lacks man's elaborate intellectual mechanism, but will seldom repeat the mistake. Man is the only creature that makes the same mistakes many times, and even finally tries to prove them to be right and proper. Realizing how difficult it is to correct our own faults, and that it is even more difficult to correct the faults of others, we can perhaps begin to appreciate the infinite wisdom of eternal nature.

The only plan by which living things are forced to grow, is when the condition they presently occupy becomes uncomfortable or impossible. It is this continual need to grow in order to survive, that is said to have brought physical creatures out of the depths of some ocean of elementary substance. Pressed on by pain, frustration, and fear, life has invented an incredible diversity of escape and defense mechanisms, many of which only add misery to the human estate.

The most successful and best adjusted people it has ever been my privilege to know, were people who were grateful to the experiences of life and recognized difficulties as lessons. They learned from daily experience that each lesson that was honestly learned, each prob-

lem that was properly accepted and solved, contributed something to an over-all maturity. The people who cooperated with growth the best they knew, were the happiest and healthiest in advancing years.

There is no particular sorrow in looking forward to some hundreds of future embodiments. We shall be a little better in each, but there is no reason to expect that we shall be perfect. The fact that the next generation will have its miseries, does not mean that we will be among the miserable unless we deserve to be there. Although it may be a long time before problems will be solved for mankind in general, the problems of the individual are solved when he becomes wise enough to keep the rules of living.

Because there is a collective progress, slow but inevitable, the next generation will not be exactly like our own; and if we are reborn a thousand years from now, we will not be plagued with precisely the same difficulties that now beset us. It is very probable that the political system of the world will be greatly altered. Economics as we know the subject today may not even exist; and there are certain to be major renovations in the codes of human relationships. We may very well live in a much better world, but unless we understand it better, we can be just as miserable under favorable situations as we now are under unfavorable ones.

There is no doubt that it will take a long time for the life in man to evolve all of its potentials, for within it are the seeds of the whole cosmos; yet sometime, we must be all things to all creatures. To hasten this, or to opine that it can be hastened, is merely to assume that the end we seek to attain is inconsequential. Any happiness the average person can hope to enjoy in this life, or in the next several to come, must be transitory and passing. It cannot be an ultimate happiness, for this can arise only from an ultimate integrity.

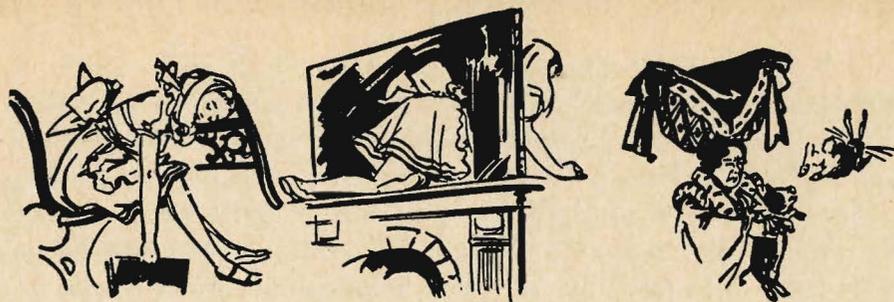
If we want to assume that we can accomplish everything, or fail in everything, in one lifetime or a few lifetimes, then the doctrine of rebirth offers little consolation. It is wiser, then, to accept nature's way. Nature measures time in billions of years, distances in light years, and integrities in terms of universal wisdom, insight, and understanding. To achieve such ends, would certainly require a great deal of time, and we should be grateful that nature will always provide us whatever time is necessary for our ultimate attainment.

It is perfectly possible to reject this whole idea, to assume that human idealism is merely a hope-mechanism within man himself; that the saddest and the dullest is the truth. Or we can regretfully say that we hope we will have future lives, because the present embodiment is not overly productive. But the final summation of the problem lies in the consequences of attitudes. Persons who do not believe in some universal plan, who do not accept a wisdom greater than their own, who do not strive to live better and more optimistically, and who do not seek with deep good-heartedness for the evidences of universal progress, are simply less happy and less self-sufficient in emergency than those who have stronger beliefs.

To have a strong belief of some kind, it is always necessary to stretch mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, increasing inner capacity and trying to become more thoughtful and more protective of ideals that we sorely need. We also often try to bring these ideals to the attention of those we care for; but we cannot convert others—we can only demonstrate the advantage of idealism over a materialistic pessimism by its effects upon our own disposition.

Because times are difficult, and it is not easy to maintain a strong idealistic attitude, we need to philosophize a little about the universe, God, and our fellow man. We are trying to find ways of supporting our own belief—not because the belief is weak, but because our own thinking is weak. Finally, the energy spent in trying to prove that the universe is wiser than we are, and that there is a sovereign purpose unfolding in time and space, seems to be more productive of individual and collective good than energy spent attempting to justify negative conditions as inevitable and beyond correction.

All other elements and circumstances being equal, it is best for us to cling to such convictions as sustain the best in us and give us courage for the job of the day. Whatever is necessary in logic or reason to help us to gain this inner strength, is available if we use it. Positive thinking, supported by natural law, personal experience, and the common experience of all mankind, will give us at least a measure of substantial confidence that we are going somewhere and will arrive in due time.



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## Curiouser & Curiouser

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### THE WONDERFUL ONE-MAN CART

Those with romantic memories of the Far East often become quite nostalgic about the vanishing jinrikisha. Even the name of the curious conveyance is subject to the mysteries of Eastern language. In Japanese, the word *jin* means man; *riki*, power, and *sha*, a wagon, cart, or other vehicle. In recent times, it has become a custom for foreigners to refer to this conveyance simply as a *ricksha*, but the Japanese, who were always rugged individualists, prefer *jinriki*. More correctly, it can be called a *kuruma*. By any name, it is equally wonderful as a means of transportation.

Strangely enough, it is not an ancient vehicle, to be found on old Chinese or Japanese scroll paintings. It is comparatively recent; but even this circumstance does not prevent its origin from being veiled in mystery. According to one account, the ricksha was invented in 1869 by a Christian missionary, the Rev. Goble, who was seeking to spread the Christian gospel among the somewhat reluctant citizens of Kanagawa, a community in the vicinity of Yokohama. The good-hearted clergyman had an invalid wife, and all other facilities being unsatisfactory, he adapted a baby carriage into a sort of invalid's chair, so that he could take Mrs. Goble for rides along the countryside. As a result of his inventiveness, he is held responsible for a means of travel that has now virtually disappeared from Japan, but is still found in several parts of China and was at one time quite fashionable in South Africa.

By another equally authentic record, the true inventor of the ricksha was Yasuke Izume, who is also reported to have introduced his contrivance in 1869, although it did not gain recognition until the following year. Yasuke Izume came to Tokyo while it was still Edo, in 1851. The rest of the story is a little uncertain. He is said to have seen an early carriage that was imported into the country. It is possible, of course, that what he actually saw was Rev. Goble's one-man vehicle. In any event, Yasuke was immediately impressed by the practical potentials. He united his efforts with those of Kosuke Takayama and Tokichiro Suzuki, and the result was the wonderful horseless carriage, which rapidly gained popularity. It is recorded that the ricksha was patented in 1870 by Kosuke Takayama.

Almost immediately, the unfortunate climate of Japan recommended some type of awning or covering. Poles were therefore set into the four corners of the ricksha, and oil paper was spread over them. About 1872, there was another important step forward. The ricksha was painted firehouse red. In time, however, this seemed to clash with the gay costumes of the feminine riders, so the color was changed to black, brightened with occasional stripes of red or gold. It developed into a handsome lacquered vehicle.

The next important innovation was the introduction of the two-seater. By this time, the three Japanese who were responsible for the development of the device had gained official recognition from the Imperial Government, together with a cash gift of two hundred yen, which was quite a sum at that time. To recognition was added immortality, for a monument was erected to their memory in the Zenkoji Temple, a convent in Tokyo.

The two stories bearing upon the invention of the ricksha are probably not in conflict. The Rev. Goble's device provided the inspiration that made it possible for Yasuke Izume to make the useful improvements that resulted in the perfected ricksha. The clergyman made no effort to patent his own invention so far as can be learned. We may assume, therefore, that all concerned share in the glory, and we are probably dealing with the evolution of an idea that was to provide convenience to many and comfort to a few.

The drama of the ricksha, however, does not end with these rather prosaic facts. The vehicle was in many ways more tempera-



RICKSHA STAND IN YOKOHAMA

Things are not quite as tidy as they should be, as the ground is still scattered with wreckage of the great earthquake of 1923.

mental than a race horse and more complicated than a combustion engine. Much of the complication, of course, was due to the human equation. The ricksha man was a variable commodity—very much in evidence during the seasons unsuitable for agriculture, but difficult to find the rest of the time. He was a man of extraordinary stamina, and it was not unusual for him to trot along at his rather shuffling gait so consistently and continuously that he could cover thirty miles in a single day.

Of course, the ricksha was most suitable for level ground. On hills, or if the terrain underfoot was badly rutted, assistance had to be brought to bear. A second ricksha man would bend his back to the staves, or under special emergencies, a third man would go along behind, pushing with all his strength. In the end, it was general for the passenger to get out and walk. A long ricksha ride could be assumed to include a considerable amount of walking. If the uphill was steep, the ricksha was likely to get away and the day might end in a serious accident. If the downgrade was precipitous,

it might not be possible to hold the contrivance back, and again, walking was the only safe procedure.

In some areas, the window-like opening in the back of the ricksha could prove disastrous. Paned with isinglass, it could concentrate the sun's rays at the back of the passenger's neck, resulting in sunstroke. It was sometimes advisable, therefore, to wear a British tropical helmet or some form of headgear with a cloth curtain down the back.

It was also necessary to lean forward in a ricksha. Being nicely upholstered, it recommended itself as a good substitute for an easy chair. If, however, while you were leaning back, the ricksha man released his hold on the stays even for an instant, the entire contrivance would go over backwards with remarkable speed. Another hazard was the rather frolicsome game often engaged in by the drivers, or perhaps we should say "the pullers." Running at top speed, they would try to lock the wheels of each other's rickshas, usually at the expense of the passenger.

In the old days, the ricksha men were outstanding examples of Asiatic courtesy. In a congested situation, priority was given to age. If the man pulling the ricksha in front was elderly, or his passenger was of advanced years, it was considered most indelicate to pass him. This often resulted in a serious tie-up, especially if the venerable man in front was window-shopping or enjoyed pausing occasionally to converse with friends. The only solution was to call out in English to your own runner that he should stop, leave his ricksha properly balanced, and go forward to make polite apologies to the vehicle in front. With sufficient bowing and explanation, it was then permissible to go around the object of delay, but it must be done slowly and with further bowing, many bright smiles, and profuse apologies.

The ricksha man had many talents, and was one of the first and most valuable of all Japanese guides. He knew all the best shopping centers, the proper restaurants, the theater programs, and the days when the local museum was open. If he went shopping with you, it was reasonably certain that he would claim a percentage of the transaction from the merchant. Ricksha men therefore had a peculiar habit of disappearing for a few seconds after each purchase. In the old days, ricksha men not uncommonly transported their pas-

sengers for two- or three hundred miles, but when better conveyances became available, this gradually ceased to be an approved practice.

We can wonder why the vehicle so suddenly disappeared from popular use in Japan. The transformation began in the early nineteen twenties, when the idea of taxicabs took root in the Japanese consciousness. The ricksha men resisted valiantly, feeling that the automobile constituted unfair competition, and most of the early automobiles were never put in use, but were dumped over the end of a dock near Yokohama.

When rickshas were no longer in large demand in the major cities, they continued for some years to be found in older and smaller communities where streets were narrow and there was hardly enough patronage to justify the purchase of an expensive automobile. Later, the ricksha enjoyed a special use among doctors, who found it the most convenient vehicle for making their rounds of patients in the neighborhood. Geisha also considered it picturesque and practical, and a few have used it up to very recent times. It was inexpensive, and maneuverable in streets too narrow to permit large conveyances. Although it has virtually disappeared from the Japanese scene, the ricksha has survived in other parts of Asia because most Eastern countries cannot afford automobiles, and programs for widening streets and controlling traffic have been slow to develop.

It is a loss for tourists that this picturesque vehicle has vanished from the native life. It was a wonderful experience to leave your ship at Yokohama, Osaka, or Kobe, and find rows of rickshas lined up, each attended by its owner in a strange medieval costume with white letters woven into the cloth. Even in the last years of its survival, this curious ensemble was a living link between modern Oriental life and the Japan of the early Meiji period, which was indeed a world of wonders, mysteries, miracles, and rickshas.



## Library Notes

by A. J. HOWIE

### A WORLD OF CATALOGS

#### I. THE HAUSER COLLECTION

Among the treasures often overlooked in the Library of the Philosophical Research Society are unusual catalogs. The impact of a catalog or booklist is subtle, particularly in a specialized field. One who peruses a catalog becomes aware of the tremendous power of thought that has been directed to various subjects throughout all time. It is hard to find any field of learning where some pioneering work has not been done.

The bibliography of a book is directed to supporting testimony for the statements of the author. But a catalog wanders further afield. There are often reproductions of art objects and illustrations from books that may not easily be consulted. The notes and comments direct us to a profitable search for new facts.

The Hauser collection was offered for sale by Sotheby and Co. in 1934 who publicized it in a *Catalogue of the Very Extensive and Important Library of Early Books and Manuscripts relating to Alchemy & the Occult & Physical Sciences. The property of M. Lionel Hauser (Ancien Membre du Conseil de Direction de la Societe Theosophique de France)*. The sale also included "Four Important Mediaeval Manuscripts, the property of a gentleman." This was the sale from which Mr. Hall secured the St. Germain manuscript and a number of other books and manuscripts that now are treasures of our library.

The sale took place during the peak of the depression years. In spite of the restricted economy of the time, the sale attracted such attention that it was necessary to outbid others to secure important items. It was a financial strain to bid on many of the manuscripts, although today much higher bidding levels would probably prevail to the exclusion of the private collector and small libraries like ours.

The catalog is discreetly silent as to the reason or necessity for Mr. Hauser to offer such a magnificent collection for sale. It seems a tragedy to have broken it up, although the sale did disperse items so that they became accessible to more people. Mr. Hauser must have spent many years haunting the bookstalls and sales in and around Paris to locate and purchase such rarities. He probably had esoteric interest in the items he collected. He accumulated manuscripts and books in Latin, French, German, Dutch, English, Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Italian. There are titles of works on magic, cabala, masonry, mysticism, heraldry, secret societies, geomancy, astronomy, astrology, cartography, the Wandering Jew.

The catalog is quite incomplete, as the listings represent 569 lots for which only one or two descriptions may have been noted. But the items that were named pique the curiosity no end. For those interested in mystical, religious, political secret societies, how about the following? *Précis Historique de l'Ordre Royal Hospitalier-Militaire due S.-Sépulcre de Jérusalem. Mémoires Historiques sur les Templiers. Constitution et Organisation des Carbonari. Carbonari: Rules, Regulation and Ritual of the Chambre d'Honneur of Dijon* (sic). *History of the most Noble Order of the Garter. Historia Interna Documentada de la Compañia de Jesús. Histoire de l'Ordre Teutonique. Recherches sur l'Ancienne Constitution de l'Ordre Teutonique.*

For students of Rosicrucianism: *Flambeaux des vrais Rosecroix ou des sages*; ms. XVIII cent. *Cento Virgilianus de fratribus Roseae Crucis*, 1618. A Collection of Twenty Works on the Rosicrucians, with five Alchemical Tracts, all 1615-19. *Roseae Crucis Frater Thrasonico-Mendax. Das ist: Verlogner Rhumb-sichtiger Rosencreutzbrüder*, 1619. *The Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of R: C: Commonly, of the Rosie Cross. Rosicrucian Statutes.*

For the Masonic brethren: *Le Veritable Lien des Peuples ou La Maçonnerie rendue a ses vrais principes. Statuts et Reglemens du Souverain Chapitre de Rose-Croix*, établi a Paris le 17 Juin 1769, mss. XVIII cent. *Initiations: Grade de Rose Croix*, c. 1838. Three Edicts of Francisco Xavier Mier y Campillo, Inquisitor General, against Freemasons, 1814-16.



Portrait and frontispiece of a French manuscript translation of the *Atalanta Fugiens* of Michael Maier. This was one of the outstanding items in the Hauser Collection, and was described in detail in the *London Illustrated News* at the time of the sale.

*Registre de T. R. Loge du Contrat Social Mère Loge Écossaise*, 1775-89. The minutes of every meeting of the lodge are signed by the officers present, who included La Rouchefoucauld, La Salle, Montesquieu, Rousseau; mention is recorded that on June 24, 1782 the Marquis de la Fayette was received into the lodge "avec des honneurs qui ne sont ordinairement rendus qu'à des maçons des plus hauts grades." Reception faite au T. . . C. . . F. . . Lafayette par la R. . . L. . . du Parfait-Silence à l' A. . . de Lyon, Metz, 1829. James Anderson's *Constitutions of Free and Accepted Masons*, revised by Noorthouck, 1784. Oliver's *The Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry*, 1846. Ragon's *Orthodoxie Maçonnique suivie de la Maçonnerie Occulte*. Another lot was of interest to the Grand Orient of France. And there was Balsamo's *Haute Maçonnerie d'adoption Egyptienne* (rules, rites, etc. for the admission of women as masons), mss. c. 1800.

There are many items referring to Cagliostro and the Comte de St. Germain, and it is regrettable that this valuable informa-

tion on these elusive personalities has been dispersed among unknown purchasers. Mr. Hall did secure several of the lots.

One item that would have intrigued a student of comparative religion was *La Sagesse des Anciens ou Precis du Travail des Sages*, tiré des Versions Hebraïques, Arabes, Chaldeenés, Egyptiennes, et Grecques, mss. XVII cent.

Curiosity might be aroused to know more about the contents of Robert Fludd's only original work in English, and the only one published in England during his lifetime, entitled *Doctor Fludd's Answer unto M. Foster: or, Squeezing of Parson Foster's Sponge, ordained by him for the wiping away of the Weapon-Salve*. Or by Thomas Vaughan's *The Man-Mouse Taken in a Trap and Tortur'd*, as well as his *The Second Wash: or The Moore Scour'd once more*.

Among the Rosicrucian items offered was a copy of the *Fame and Confession of the Fraternity* with the autograph of Isaac Newton in a note inscribed on the flyleaf giving the book to a Mr. Doyley. His closing comment is: "This was the history of the imposture."

The main emphasis of the Hauser collection was upon alchemy and the Cabala. Many of the titles suggest the close association between these subjects. One entry is titled: *Tractatus Mago-Cabalistico-Chymicus et Theosophicus, von des Saltzes, 1729*. Several choice items were the collected works: Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*; the *Museum Hermeticum Reformatum*; and a collection of over fifty tracts in Latin and Italian called *Opuscula Alchemica*. There was a manuscript collection of transcripts, translations, and original works comprising an arrangement in dictionary form of biographies of many famous adepts, and copies of tracts and documents relating to alchemy in the library de l'Arsenal.

The listings include printings or manuscript copies of the works of the most famous of alchemical lore: Basil Valentine, Arnoldus Villanova, Flamel, Glauber, Grossparmy, Helpen, Kelley, Khunrath, Lully, Maier, Norton, Paracelsus, Philalethes (Irenaeus), Ripley, Sendivogius, Vaughan.

Also, there was copy of Martin Ruland's *Lexicon Alchemiae*, Frankfort, 1612, and apparently an English translation titled *A*

*Lexicon of Alchemy*, n.d., with a notation that only six copies of this work are believed to have been printed. The placing of the note suggests that it applies to the translation, although it seems unlikely that the typesetting of such a translation should have been expended for so few copies. This work is referred to frequently in Carl Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*.

What kind of a body of literature was represented in Mr. Hauser's library? The subject matter was much too serious to be part of a perpetuation of some universal hoax or delusion. Orthodox religion and science during the past several centuries have been positive and aggressive in their denial and denunciation of the tenets of alchemy. Their condemnation of books and authors seemed reasonable because of the great number of charlatans and opportunists who claimed to know the secrets of alchemy, which they would share, at a price, with those in whom they could arouse an easy lust for gold, the desire for longevity, and a universal cure for the infirmities of the body. Alchemy did not exclude such benefits, but the tradition always had aimed at preventing the secrets from falling into the hands of the uninitiated and unworthy.

Modern chemistry passes lightly over its indebtedness to alchemy for an inheritance of method, information, and tradition. Little mention is made of the recondite and labored researches into the mysteries of metals and potions. Isaac Newton, the formulator of one of the basic laws of science, possessed quite a library that included works on alchemy and astrology with marginal notes in his own handwriting to prove that he took more than a passing interest in such subjects.

The transmutations of alchemy have been taken both literally and symbolically. There have been accounts of evidences of actual transmutations of base metals into gold, but these rarely have been at first hand. For a long time, we had a test tube of mercury, rich with flecks of yellow, that was left with Mr. Hall by a nameless transient visitor who stated that it had been produced by alchemical means from oil shale. He had nothing to gain by convincing Mr. Hall, because he was not trying to sell his method. His question was concerned with what he should do with his knowledge. It was illegal for him to use the knowledge; he had the power to upset the economy of the world. If he declared his power, he would be-

come the object of those who would control him for selfish purposes; in fact, his life probably would be in perpetual danger. Mr. Hall listened and advised. The nameless one departed and nothing has been heard from him since.

Manuscripts and books dealing with alchemy form a most paradoxical literature, because all the writers profess to conceal from the profane, presumably by misdirection, the very truths of the most arcane secrets of nature and man that they are revealing to the worthy. One common theme of alchemical literature is the tendency to belittle the goldmakers and gold seekers, and at the same time offer as proof of the *Work*, famous instances of gold having been produced by alchemical means. The methods propounded by the authors are infinite and contradictory. Their terminology is confusing and inconsistent. Yet throughout the literature, there is a religious fervor and dedication that cannot be denied.

Masonry had its operative masons, but today it is dominated by speculative masons. Somewhere in the tradition, the earlier alchemists were superseded by the alchemystical philosophers. As one attempts to trace the origins of alchemy, the traditions extend further and further back in time, until there seems never to have been a beginning. The European alchemists drew from the Arabian, Egyptian, and Jewish adepts who had their knowledge from still earlier cultures. The literature is filled with symbolism drawn from astrology, Greek and Egyptian mythology, and biblical terminology.

Though not numerous, there have been women prominent in the descent of alchemical tradition, from Maria Prophetess to the wife of Nicholas Flamel. So it is fitting that a woman should have been inspired to attempt a comprehensive review of the subject titled: *Hermetic Philosophy and Alchemy*, a suggestive inquiry into "The Hermetic Mystery" with a dissertation on the more celebrated of the alchemical philosophers. Mr. Hall reviewed the few known facts about the authoress, Mary Anne Atwood, in the Summer 1958 issue of *Horizon*, Journal of the Philosophical Research Society.

The 1850 edition of the book was almost totally destroyed and very few copies are extant. However, there have been several later reprints, 1918, 1920, and 1960, all containing an Introduc-

tion by Walter Leslie Wilmhurst. He never met or corresponded with Mrs. Atwood, but through Madame de Steiger he did have some indirect communication. Thus he has been able to give additional background information on a most unusual book, in which the authoress quoted freely from very rare alchemical literature, and reached some surprising conclusions (1850), which were to be paralleled in a modified sense some fifty or seventy-five years later by the psychologist C. J. Jung.

When the writings of Jacob Boehme appeared in Germany, the alchemists of the time were alarmed that their art could remain little longer secret. The same fear was expressed earlier among the Rosicrucians over the books of Agrippa and Paracelsus' disciples, because they spoke openly of applying the practice of alchemy to human life, suggesting the method and medium of attraction. Some pages after noting the foregoing, Mrs. Atwood writes:

"Man then, shall we conclude at length, is the true laboratory of the Hermetic art; his life the subject, the grand distillatory, the thing distilling and the thing distilled, and Self-Knowledge to be the root of all Alchemical tradition? . . ."

". . . Yet on no ground with which we are now actually acquainted could it be proved that man is a perfect microcosm, wherein, as it was said, the great world and all its creatures might be summarily discerned: we have no evidence of any such thing; our affinities with external nature are bounded in sense, and our knowledge of her integral operations is proportionately defective. All that we do know is learned by observation, and we should be hardly induced, from anything we are commonly conversant with, to conclude that Self-Knowledge would be a way to the knowledge of the Universal Nature. Yet this was taught and believed formerly, not either as if it were an arbitrary conceit, but as a truth understood and proved beyond speculation."

In her conclusion: "And Man was the proper laboratory of the whole Art; not only the most perfect chemical apparatus, devised by Nature for the distillation of her Spirit, but having besides the whole fermentative virtue, motive, and principle of vital melioration and every requisite complete within himself, for the rectification and furtherance of her prescribed Law . . ."

Item 5 of the Appendix: "Alchemy is an universal art of vital chemistry, which by fermenting the human spirit, purifies, and finally dissolving it, opens the elementary germ into new life and consciousness . . . The process takes place in and through the human body in the blood, changing the relation of its component parts or principles, and reversing the circulatory order, so that, the sensible medium becoming occult, the inner source of its vitality is awakened, and the consciousness at the same time being drawn centrally, comes to know and feel itself in its own true Source, which is the Universal Centre and source of all things."

In 1944, almost a century after Mrs. Atwood published her *Inquiry*, C. J. Jung published his *Psychologie und Alchemie*, based on two lectures given in 1935 and 1936. It is most illuminating to read the observations and conclusions of a psychologist who has observed thousands of clinical cases. He does not write with the mystic dedication of a Mrs. Atwood, but in scientific terminology he finds the alchemical symbolism deeply rooted in the psychic consciousness of the race. "However remote alchemy may seem to us today, we should not underestimate its cultural importance for the Middle Ages. Today is the child of the Middle Ages and it cannot disown its parents." The English translation is most readable. The 270 illustrations are reproduced from a vast bibliography of early books and manuscripts.

This is far too important a book to quote loosely and out of context. It certainly should be recommended reading for all students of comparative religion, mysticism, philosophy, and anyone else who is casting about for a rationale to the problems of faith and idealism. However, for the purposes of this article, I shall have to presume a few quotes, which it would be difficult adequately to paraphrase or suggest.

"So long as religion is only faith and outward form, and the religious function is not experienced in our own souls, nothing of importance has happened. It has yet to be understood that the *mysterium magnum* is not only an actuality but is first and foremost rooted in the human psyche."

"The archetypes of the unconscious can be shown empirically to be the equivalents of religious dogmas . . . the psychic archetype is simply itself and can therefore be interpreted according

to time, place, and milieu. In the West the archetype is charged with the dogmatic figure of Christ; in the East, with Purush, the Atman, Hiranyagarbha, Buddha, and so on. The religious point of view, understandably enough, puts the accent on the imprinter, whereas scientific psychology emphasizes the *typos*, the imprint."

"A symbolism as rich as that of alchemy invariably owes its existence to some adequate cause, never to mere whim or play of fancy. At the very least it is the expression of an essential part of the psyche."

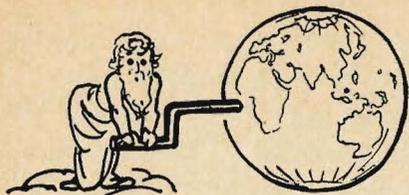
"Strictly speaking, projection is never made; it happens, it is simply there. In the darkness of anything external to me I find, without recognizing it as such, an interior of psychic life that is my own . . . The alchemist does not practice his art because he believes on theoretical grounds in correspondence; the point is that he has a theory of correspondence because he experiences the presence of the idea, or of spirit, in physical matter. I am, therefore, inclined to assume that the real root of alchemy is to be sought less in philosophical doctrines than in the projections experienced by individual investigators. I mean by this that while working on his chemical experiments the operator has certain psychic experiences which appeared to him as the particular behaviour of the chemical process . . . but what he was experiencing was his own unconscious. In this way he recapitulated the history of man's knowledge of nature."

Alchemy has been, and is, a challenging subject for study. If the Hauser sale were to be repeated and you were appointed to serve on a committee to recommend twenty-five lots from which ten would be selected on which to bid, what would be your choices? Such a selection would be a revealing expression of your interests and perceptiveness.



#### *Capitalistic Socialism*

Thales said, "That commonwealth is best ordered and most fortunate where the citizens are neither too rich nor too poor."



## HAPPENINGS IN THE WORLD

### *Hilton, Take Heed*

Many Japanese inns and some hotels provide their guests with free tooth-brushes and tooth paste. Each is sealed in a sanitary package, and the brushes are of good quality. Nearly all hotels welcome newcomers with a number of indications of thoughtfulness. There are neatly pressed cotton kimono and comfortable-looking slippers. If you arrive at a typical Japanese inn a little weary and wilted, your slightest need receives prompt attention. The tariff includes laundry and pressing, darning and the replacement of lost buttons, a good shoeshine, and a stiffly starched nightrobe. In a large hotel, it is customary to find a cabinet by the bed with switches to control the lighting, radio, temperature, and an electric clock that can be set to awaken you at the appointed time. The windows are almost certain to be double thickness of glass with an air space between, and so adequately soundproof that even in the heart of Tokyo there is complete quiet. Foreigners view with some reservations, however, the small peephole in the door which permits the maid to decide whether or not you are in occupancy. Americans especially appreciate constant reminders that tipping is not expected or required, and experience shows that tips are usually declined.

### *The Non-toxic Press*

Most foreign nations publish English-language newspapers for the benefit of tourists, foreign residents, and natives who wish to improve their English. These papers may be issued daily or weekly, but they are models of dignified journalism. The average paper is from 8 to 20 pages; 12 pages seems to be a favorite size. It contains just about all the news of the whole world that is fit to print, and may include American comic strips—"Peanuts" is a favorite.

From these foreign papers, we get simple and concise statements of almost everything that is actually interesting. Two complete

areas of coverage must be combined. The paper must be divided between world events and the news of the country in which it is published. Imagining a paper to be 12 pages, it will give an adequate summary of all world events, and then go into some detail about the affairs of the nation and its relations with other powers. Visitors in some remote place on the globe can find out the temperature in Chicago, the opening and closing figures of the New York Stock Exchange, local concerts, visiting celebrities, imports and exports, and of course the regular columns. Instead of devoting space to scandal-mongering, one columnist specializes in the flowers of the country, another in its architectural monuments, while a third covers the feast days and fast days of the week.

Illustrations are, for the most part, of major events. It is not uncommon to find a large picture included simply because it is beautiful. Advertising is at a minimum, most of the large stores being satisfied with one-inch single columns. Very little space is given to crime, but there may be short selections of poetry, and in the spirit of modern trends, previews of new automobiles and occasionally the front elevation of a recently completed factory. The facts are simply and quietly set forth, with the obvious intention of providing information but permitting the reader to do his own thinking. This is why it has been said in several places that these foreign papers are alkaline rather than acid.



## THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE PRS JOURNAL

will feature Mr. Hall's annual forecasts of

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## Happenings at Headquarters



While in Japan this summer, Mr. Hall set up his Tokyo headquarters in the Imperial Hotel (new wing). In 1915, the Imperial household of Japan, in a moment of extreme optimism, invited Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright to design a modern hotel in Western style. The huge rambling structure, which seems to suggest an old Aztec or Mayan temple, required nearly six years to build, and covers a vast and now priceless ground area. Needless to say, the Japanese had never seen the like of it before, and probably will not see anything similar in the future. In spite of its name and fame, Japanese cab drivers still have difficulty in finding Wright's masterpiece, especially if you refer to it as the Imperial Hotel. You do better if you ask them to take you to the Takoku Hoteru.

With all its monumental proportions, the old Imperial Hotel has only 250 guest rooms, and beneath its ponderous superstructure are mysterious passageways resembling catacombs. These have gradually been transformed into a kind of twisting labyrinth of gift shops. The corridor is only about four feet wide, and tall persons bump their heads on the ceiling. As Mr. Hall was a guest at the Imperial in 1923, shortly after the great earthquake, it seemed appropriate to stay there again in 1967, for at the end of the year it will be demolished to provide the site for a new and more luxurious hotel.

The wonderful old building, sometimes referred to by native residents as "Wright's Haunted House," is now dingy with age and defies repairs. There is a certain nostalgia in the air, however, and as the fatal hour approaches, some feel that the Japanese nation is losing its greatest monument of prehistoric culture. The wonder of its day, it now waits in shabby grandeur for the inevitable end.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Library Exhibit for the month of February (4th-25th) will be devoted to a group of magnificent full-color lithographic prints of Moslem religious architecture. These pictures, which are accurate in every detail, reveal the amazing grace and charm of Arabic

and Turkish mosques and the intricate decorations that cover their surfaces. The arches and minarets of these gleaming buildings seem like visions from the Arabian Nights Entertainment. Examples of Moslem writing, painting, and book binding will also be displayed.

The March exhibit (3rd-31st) will feature Japanese Ukiyo-e prints by 19th-century masters, including Toyokuni, Kuniyoshi, and Kunisada. There will be actor prints of the Kabuki theater, charming ladies in colorful kimono, and rugged historical themes. A series of prints honoring the great theatrical family of Danjuro, and showing these actors in their eighteen favorite roles, should be mentioned. A number of lovely triptychs will add gay moods from the days of the Genji. At this time, also, we will display an old and rare set of the complete dolls and furniture of the girls' doll ceremony.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dr. Framroze A. Bode had a busy summer. While in Chicago in August, he appeared on a TV program entitled, "Little-known Religions of the World." On the panel were representatives of Mormonism, the Bahai movement, Vedanta, Buddhism, Zen, and Zoroastrianism. Dr. Bode represented Zoroastrianism and wore his robes as High Priest. He also delivered three lectures at George Williams College before American and Zoroastrian audiences. As we mentioned in the last issue of our Journal, Dr. Bode was a delegate at the 27th International Congress of Orientalists held at Michigan University in August. After the Congress, he visited Canada, ministering to the Zoroastrian community in Toronto, and then went to Montreal, where he was most favorably impressed by the 1967 exhibition. Dr. and Mrs. Bode then spent a vacation in the Canadian Rockies, and arrived home in excellent condition for the fall season of activities.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Fall Quarter included two special events. The Open House on October 29th was well attended, and the delicious luncheon served by the Hospitality Committee—always a highlight of these occasions—enabled many friends to stay over for Mr. Hall's afternoon talk. His subject was "Plans for Greater Usefulness—The P.R.S. as a Center of World Culture." On Friday, November 10th, Dr. Bode presented a special program of films prepared by the In-

formation Service of India, depicting five thousand years of Indian culture. During the intermission, he spoke on "The Cultural Heritage of India."

We are pleased to report that Mr. Hall is back on his regular schedule of lecturing on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. With the exception of November 12th, he is lecturing every Sunday through December 17th. After a recess for the Christmas and New Year's holidays, he will resume the Sunday lectures on January 7th, when he will begin his annual series of forecasts of world, national, and personal trends for the new year.

Mr. Hall gave two Wednesday evening seminars on the fall program. The first, from October 4th through November 1st, was "Adventures in the Wisdom of the Past," in which he discussed Greek philosophy, Egyptian religion, East Indian wisdom, Chinese art, and Roman law. The second series, which is especially appropriate for the Christmas season, is titled "My Favorite Sections of the Bible." In the four classes (November 29th through December 20th), Mr. Hall will discuss selections from *The Laws*, *The Prophets*, *The Gospels*, and *The Epistles*.

Dr. Bode gave two series of six classes on Tuesday evenings—the first on "Basic Doctrines in World Classics," and the second on "Studies in Consciousness." Hakuyu T. Maezumi, Director of the Los Angeles Zen Center, was again a Guest Instructor, giving a series of seven Friday evening classes in October and November on "Methods of Ten Zen Masters." Dr. Henry L. Drake discussed "The Humanizing Function of Art" and "The Psychology of C.G. Jung" on two Wednesday evenings in November. Dr. Drake also took the platform on Sunday morning, November 12th, speaking on "Psychology of the Good Life."

\* \* \* \*

The program of Workshops in Philosophical Psychology and Psychotherapy is under the direction of Dr. Henry L. Drake, and has been proving most successful. On Friday, October 13th, and Saturday, October 14th, Dr. Everett L. Shostrom and Nancy Ferry, M.S.W., conducted a Self-actualization Workshop, based upon their work and research together. Dr. Shostrom holds his Ph.D. from Stanford University. He was formerly Head of the Department of Psychology at Pepperdine College. He has taught

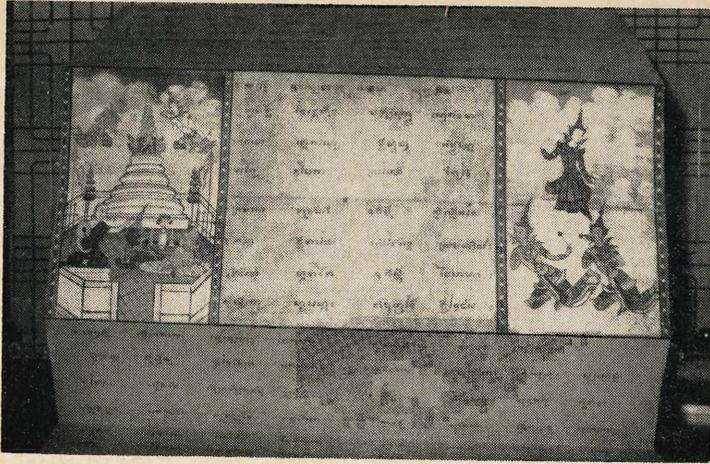
at Stanford University and Oregon State University, and is currently on the training staff of the Institute of Industrial Relations of U.C.L.A. Miss Ferry received her degree in social welfare from the University of California at Berkeley, and holds a graduate certificate from the School of Social Work of U.S.C. In their workshop, these two well-qualified persons outlined concepts of therapeutic psychology now used in over two hundred universities and colleges. Included in this workshop was a one-hour presentation of a motion picture film in which Abraham Maslow described the characteristics of the self-actualization technique.

\* \* \* \*

We wish to take this opportunity of expressing our sincere regret at the passing of Miss Helen Kern, who left this life on August 31st, 1967, on the eve of her 72nd birthday. Miss Kern had long taken a deep interest in our activities, and had assisted in many ways, especially in the art department of our Library. She was for many years a teacher in the public school system. It was not known until after her passing that she had taken on the financial responsibility for two Oriental orphans, one in Free China and the other in Vietnam. Her gracious smile and continuing patience under the pressures of physical infirmity were an inspiration to all who knew her.

*"Her spirit shall rest for a little time upon the winds."*

Among recent acquisitions for the reference library of the Society may be mentioned two Thai manuscripts. Both are Buddhist sutras, probably written in the middle years of the 19th century. The larger volume is about 26 inches long, 5½ inches wide, and 3 inches thick. It is in accordion form, on a heavy native paper with black lacquer covers. The smaller volume is about 14 inches long, 4 and ¾ inches wide, and slightly less than 2 inches thick.



SECTION OF A BUDDHIST MANUSCRIPT FROM THAILAND

These books, in accordion form, frequently include interesting examples of native folk art. At the viewer's right, an angelic being, accompanied by musicians, appears floating in the sky. At left is a pagoda-like tower with figures in the foreground and a ritualistic scene occurring in the foreground. Most manuscripts of this type were made in the 18th or early 19th century.

The binding is similar to the larger work. Both volumes are illuminated with water-color paintings in Siamese style. It is customary with the manuscripts of this country that illustrations are placed at the two ends of the leaves and the text in the center. The pictures usually cover two pages, and are therefore folded in the center. We have a considerable group of this material, which was brought out of Siam about forty years ago, and these two volumes are welcome additions. The accompanying illustration shows the way in which pictures are added to the text.



#### *An Interesting Old Belief*

Gypsies and other natural mystics have a ritual for stroking away burns. They stroke very lightly the burned area, and recite the words: "Three wise men came out of the East—Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Go, heat—come, cold; come, cold—go, heat. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Many testify that this procedure is infallible.



## LOCAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES



It is more important than most realize that all group activities should attempt to maintain a high level of constructive attitudes during meetings and in the lives of the members. The tendency today is toward hyper-criticism. Friends of long standing find themselves divided by political issues and all the controversial reports that burden the daily press. We feel it necessary sometimes to take sides on issues that we really do not understand. It would be well to remember that we all suffer together from limitation of understanding, and what we regard as seasoned judgments may be little more than highly emotionalized opinions.

Study groups constitute small worlds within the larger cosmos of society. If we really believe that we are enlightened and well intentioned, we should be able to discuss almost any subject in a fair and open-minded way. We should also be willing to modify our own points of view in order to maintain harmony, and be ever mindful of the devastating possibility that those who differ from us may be right.

One way to make study group activities especially useful is to approach the differences of opinion that exist within the group and try to maintain a democratic relationship with the convictions of fellow members. It is also good to devote some part of regular meetings to living issues, always approaching them, however, in the light of a basic philosophy. The only rule of conduct that we have is enlightened conviction. If this fails, we are left without any constructive leadership from within our own natures. The mind and the emotions impel to action, but they in turn are dependent upon the censorship of a strong, constructive idealism. The person with no firm ground of belief can seldom maintain any planned or purposed career. Continuity depends upon determination, which in turn must be sustained by a consistent pattern of clearly envisioned policies or programs.

Each person must be the leader of his own life. He must lead it wisely, skillfully, and lovingly. He must have values that make it possible for him to understand others, even as he wishes others to understand him. It is our hope that planned programs of group studies will help each person to strengthen his own insight and be more compatible with those of similar ideals and dedications. By watching for traces of inharmony, airing them immediately, and solving them in terms of mutually accepted laws and concepts, we gain a valuable skill that can be used in every walk of life.

The following articles in the present issue of the Journal may suggest special material for study group discussion.

*Article: MEMORY—FRIEND, ENEMY, OR TEACHER*

1. Discuss the danger of the use of memory as a means for escaping maturity.

2. Consider how a memory which has become corrupted by false attitudes can lead to mental and emotional disease.

3. Explain the function of memory as teacher. In what way does recalling our own past help us to plan a better future?

*Article: ON SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION*

1. Discuss the pros and cons of the concept that man is an evolving creature, becoming wiser and better as the result of experience.

2. What evidence is there that man does not improve and is committing the same mistakes that burdened the lives of his most remote ancestors? Is it certain beyond doubt that evolution is completely biological and that bodies become more complicated, but the lives within them remain unchanged?

3. Advance reasonable proofs that spiritual evolution is possible, and that there is evidence that man is growing, possibly in spite of himself. If asked for the greatest single proof that spiritual evolution is factual, what would you answer?



*"Segregation Crisis" in Japan*

A group of modern Japanese ladies have organized their efforts to prohibit mixed bathing in hot springs and public bath houses.

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