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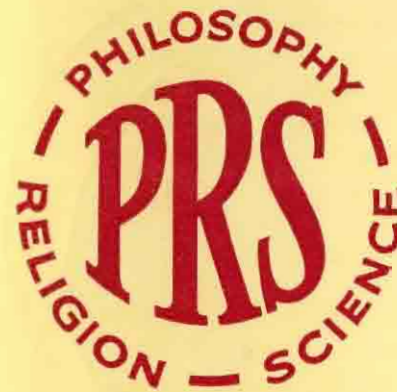
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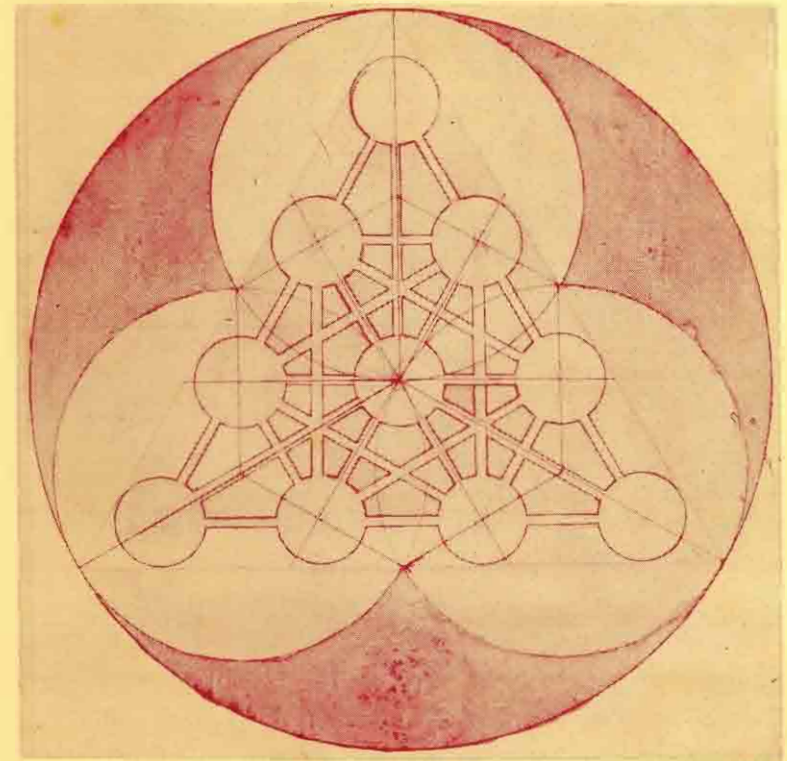
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THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

THE MEANING OF THE MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

IN recent years nearly all phases of psychical phenomena have captured the popular fancy. Efforts to stimulate extra-sensory perceptions through the use of marijuana or L.S.D. have led to tragic consequences. Many gullible people have been cruelly exploited and considerable literature, much of which recommends pernicious practices, had added to the dilemma. No doubt most of those adventuring into this realm of fantasy are sincere, but they lack the maturity of understanding to cope with the results of their hazardous practices.

We often hear about the stress of our times. Health, mental and physical, is being seriously undermined by neurotic tensions. Heart ailments are increasing rapidly. The duodenal ulcer has become a status symbol, and fatigue is nearly universal. The press provides us with a continuous report of human misery, and outbreaks of violence are occurring throughout the structure of society. All these disturbing factors contribute to feelings of personal insecurity. It is difficult to be optimistic, and many feel that a cheerful attitude is a testimony to feeble-mindedness. How can any thoughtful person be happy when mankind has lost ethical and moral directives and lacks any clear vision of the purpose for mortal existence?

It is inevitable that public confusion should lead to the disorientation of the private citizen. Not long ago we expected life to present us with obligations and responsibilities. There was nothing

disturbing to the mind in the thought that we should live within our means or call upon inner courage when a crisis arose in family or business. This has all changed with dismaying rapidity. Having lost faith in ourselves we have turned to tranquilizing drugs, even for trivial incidents. Some require sedation to drive their car to the nearest super-market. Others feel that some form of relaxing medication will assist them to endure a vicious television program. If you correct a child he becomes a neurotic. If you differ from your neighbor, he is likely to exhibit psychotic symptoms. We no longer feel that a certain amount of worry is normal, and should be overcome by resources which nature has provided in our own wonderful psycho-emotional structure.

When a family becomes neurotic, because it cannot afford an expensive car every year, or falls into the depths of despondency for lack of a yacht, it is evident that there cannot be many happy people in our environment. The family next door must build a larger rumpus room. The people down the street are still making monthly payments on their present home, but driven by a vanity compulsion are moving into a larger establishment which will keep them in debt for the rest of their mortal lives. In a typical family the husband is miserable because his job does not give him the opportunity for "creative self-expression". The wife is dissatisfied because she has plenty of time for creative self-expression, but has nothing essentially creative to express. The children are living in an atmosphere of great frustration, and are waiting impatiently for that wonderful day when each will be able to drive his own car and stay out at night as long as he pleases. When you multiply conditions of this kind by some well-established figures, you come to the conclusion that nearly half the population of the United States is staggering under a heavy load of self-pity sustained annually by 175 million prescriptions for tranquilizers.

Those who feel frustrated and defeated share their dissatisfaction with others who might normally consider themselves rather fortunate, and discontent spreads like a highly contagious disease. These general remarks are a preamble to our present subject. Nearly every neurotic at some time or other will have a dream, a vision, or a nightmare, which he considers a legitimate metaphysical experience. Even under the most favorable circumstances, visions

are usually associated with persons under some type of intense emotional stress. Religious mystics have usually fought an heroic battle against weakness of the flesh. Inspired by an heroic dedication, men like St. Anthony departed from the abodes of men to struggle in the wilderness against hierarchies of demons that plagued them daily. It may be useful to point out that only the visions of happy, relaxed and normal people can be trusted, and such fortunate mortals are not much given to metaphysical experiences. The more stressful and unhappy the times, the more confused the individual, the more he rejects unpleasant reality, the more certain he is to disturb his inner psychic integration.

If you have been perturbed by any form of psychic phenomena, you should sit down quietly and ask yourself a few simple and direct questions. Presuming that you are a mature person, have you a happy and secure home? Are you really compatible with your family and is the marriage partner the object of a deep and normal affection? If you are in business, is your work reasonably satisfying? Are you earning enough to live quietly and comfortably and meet your proper responsibilities? Is your family demanding more than you can provide without impairing your health and peace of mind? Is your program for daily living well diversified? Do you have hobbies and avocational outlets? Looking back over your earlier years, do you hold ill-feelings against parents or guardians? Do you feel that you are an unwanted child? Or have you nursed a grievance because you were not understood or catered to or overindulged? Did you show neurotic tendencies early in life? Did you resent normal correction? Were you headstrong, self-willed and tyrannical? As you grew older, were you inclined to advance your own desires at all costs? Did you cultivate friends in order to impose upon them? What of your religion? Was your faith kindly, liberal and cheerful? Were you over-indoctrinated in sin? Have you a tendency to intolerance of some kind? Have you secretly felt yourself to be better than other people and allowed this attitude to contribute to a dislike for those who do not recognize your extraordinary insight, judgment or knowledge?

If you can honestly say that you know with certainty that you have not harbored these feelings, never held these attitudes nor indulged in these emotional intemperances, you may consider extra-

sensory experiences as more likely to be valid. This test is useless, however, if you carefully refuse to recognize the unreasonableness of your own conduct.

When I asked one person about his own arrogance, he became overly vehement, shouting "I am superior. I have one of the greatest minds in the world". With this complete blockage, discussion was useless. This superlatively endowed man was a total failure. His judgment was poor and his egotism had led him into nothing but tragedy. But he always had the answer: Others were jealous of him, or had failed to give him the opportunity to exhibit his extraordinary talents. A man with these attitudes, finding himself completely blocked, may well have compensatory dreams, and these usually invite him into some abstract field of speculation, in which he is relatively safe from criticism. Religion is a good example. It is an unwritten law that every individual is entitled to his own beliefs. If we come upon a fanatic whose convictions are impossible, we quietly withdraw, and our tolerance may be misinterpreted as defeat or surrender.

Another type of circumstance which may lead to mystical adventures is the disorientation caused by over-addiction to religious teachings that emphasize esoteric matters. It would not seem unreasonable if an avid reader of science fiction should occasionally have dreams involving situations outside of the mundane commonplace world. The sincere reader of mystical books dealing with ancient initiation rites in the crypts of Egyptian Temples, or the vivid remembrance of a series of previous embodiments, may also have psychological experiences, which can appear to have special metaphysical significance. If a person dreams and finds himself shipwrecked on a desert island, it may be a vivid and memorable incidence of sleep phenomena, but when he awakens, he is not on a desert island but in the same world that he left the previous night. He therefore says "I have certainly had a dream". If a devout metaphysician dreams that he went to a beautiful temple in a remote place and there amidst radiant figures received a special spiritual sacrament, this dream is not so easy to identify correctly. The person awakes and finds no sign of the temple or its shining custodians, but it is perfectly possible for the dreamer to insist that

he left his body in bed, and in his spiritual overself actually visited a center of metaphysical instruction, and there received the reward for an outstanding spiritual attainment. It is difficult to disprove such a dream or even to determine whether or not it might be a legitimate example of initiation on the inner planes of life. Fortunately, there are some simple rules that can help us to decide the degree of validity to which the experiencer might testify.

Several rather honest folks have actually asked me a rather reasonable question, "What have I done to deserve initiation?" If the sincere student is not aware of any achievement that justifies extraordinary recognition, and even after the experience cannot imagine why it occurred to him, we are entitled to certain reservations.

Another type of psychic experience which is very confusing, is one involving an elaborate group of complex symbols. Ancient interpreters of dreams noted that many important prophecies were presented to the consciousness through symbolism. The Bible includes many prophetic visions of this type. Sincere individuals come to me with pages of symbols, which were given to them in dreams. Sometimes these curious designs are supposed to be the letters of celestial alphabets, or the true key to the pictographs on ancient rocks. More frequently, however, they are supposed to indicate the degree of spiritual insight that has been attained, or to provide instructions for future growth. Many of these symbols should be read according to the accepted procedures of dream analysis. They merely reveal the pressures which have arisen in the subconscious life of human beings under stress. It has always seemed that a person who has been given a legitimate revelation should also be provided with some means of understanding the symbols projected upon his consciousness. It is difficult to understand why a great Master or Adept or Initiate would give instruction in the form of incomprehensible emblems and figures. When, therefore, someone comes to me to ask the meaning of these characters or glyphs, I have a feeling that the situation is psychological rather than metaphysical. The individual does not understand his own pressures and when these take arbitrary forms in his sleep, there is no certainty that he can interpret them.

If we wish to assume that many of these initiation rites or illumination visions are genuine, we have not greatly advanced the

interpretation of their meaning. Most of the State Mysteries of Antiquity never divulged their ceremonies or philosophical instructions to the uninitiated. Most of the Schools were not even recorded historically, and there is practically no way of identifying them or providing biographical information about their leaders or members. A few of the more prominent Schools were mentioned by early writers. For example: Plutarch made a considerable study of the nocturnal rituals of the Egyptian Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, and Apuleius, the Neoplatonist, provided some hints on the Mysteries of Eleusis. To expose the mysteries was a crime punishable by death, and when Socrates was accused of revealing fragments of esoteric information in his writings, he escaped punishment only when he was able to prove that he had never been initiated and had taken no solemn obligations.

As to Esoteric Schools now functioning on the inner planes, the situation is approximately the same. Such organizations do not solicit members or provide extensive information about themselves or their activities. It is useless to search for physical evidence referring to these superphysical institutions. The only way in which the mystery can be solved is when an individual passing through the experience receives necessary information.

There are many honors which can be bestowed upon an outstanding citizen in the material world. He may receive the Nobel Prize, or the Legion d'Honneur, be decorated by the Pope, or be made a Knight of the British Empire. In most cases such recognition does not greatly change the personal life of the recipient. He must still earn his living, maintain his family, educate his children, and cultivate his own soul. A person who believes or feels that he has received some special spiritual recognition must also continue to live a practical career in the mundane world. He cannot afford to be so overwhelmed that he becomes disoriented. It has not been my observation that most visions have resulted in a major change in character. True, the angel that appeared to Jeanne d'Arc changed the course of French history, and ended in the terrible death of the Maid. Some have said that visions might have changed their lives if they had been more accurately interpreted, and the promises that so often accompanied such revelations had been actually fulfilled. This is one of the most tragic conditions associated with

psychic experiences. The recipient was encouraged to believe that he was on the threshold of illumination, but with the passing of years promises were not kept and often the spirit voices become things of evil and pain.

St. Paul recommend that in cases of metaphysical phenomena, the devout person should "try the spirits". By this he meant to test them, whether they were good or evil. Actually we cannot subject these revelations to formal testing, but we can quietly and thoughtfully weigh and examine all available evidence. We do not need to be in the dilemma of the person who annually predicted the end of the world until his own end terminated his prophecies. He certainly believed but never learned from his own mistakes. After his predictions remained unfulfilled year after year, there was no further virtue in continuing to believe them.

Initiation experiences often promise further enlightenment, and it is perfectly proper to expect that such promises will be kept. If the visions are wrong and the promised assistance does not come, we have given the spirits ample opportunity to prove themselves.

We do not say that genuine visions cannot occur. There are enough incidents in history to prove conclusively that the human being under certain conditions can contact levels of consciousness superior to his own normal range. Whether these visions originate in the causal nature of man himself, or are impressed upon his mind by outside forces, can only be determined by exhaustive research. We must gradually understand what lies behind both psychic and psychological phenomena. We must learn through our own experience to differentiate between a symptomatic dream and a metaphysical vision. As such clarification is extremely difficult, and in many instances relatively impossible, the proper course would seem to be to weigh all things and cling only to that which is good. If a mystical experience inspires us to live well, and accept with greater dignity the responsibilities which we have voluntarily assumed, we will certainly accept it as useful and encouraging. If, however, the experience merely bestows a glow of ego satisfaction, causing us to feel more privileged than our neighbors, it is safe to point out that such consequences are not appropriate to a genuine mystical experience.

One other very important point should be mentioned. In all too many cases so-called psychic phenomena results in a deterioration of the personality. This is probably due to a gradually developing neurosis, leading in the end to mental or emotional illness. The victim experiences a gradual change in the entities with which he believes himself in communication. The "heavenly beings" may reveal wicked tendencies, often giving evil advice that leads the bewildered person deeper and deeper into temptation. Such messages may support persecution complexes and messianic manias, and completely destroy rational procedures. Many cases have come to my attention in which spirit guides, trusted for years, suddenly mocked and ridiculed sensitive persons who have sincerely followed advice they believed came to them from the other world.

A person who subconsciously is dissatisfied with his marital status might be advised by the voices to break up his home and then they will reveal to him his perfect soulmate. Because of these peculiar occurrences, in which metaphysical experiences so often justify human attitudes which are not right, we are reticent to acknowledge a divine source for such phenomena.

Devout persons occasionally have visions or dreams centering around Christ, the Apostles and Saints, or the Archangelic Hosts mentioned in the Scriptures. In such cases there is less danger of tragic results. Whether the mystical experience is true or merely a product of wishful thinking, the Christ concept preserves integrity. The sincere person will not accept any guidance which is contrary to his standard of religious integrity.

Very devout individuals may have dreams or visions associated with their faith. These visions are usually helpful, emphasizing the Christ principle as a protecting power and a center of hope and faith in the consciousness of the believer.

False phenomena is more likely to center around less kindly and familiar patterns, especially when the dreamer is seeking to escape integrity for some reason or other. It is difficult to pervert the Sermon on the Mount, and all mystical experiences should be judged in terms of their spiritual integrity and their power to build a better life.

JAPANESE POCKET SHRINES

The carving and decorating of Buddhist pocket shrines is one of the most beautiful arts of the Japanese people. Some of the dealers refer to these shrines as *manju zushi*. A manju is a small round cake or bun filled with sweetened bean paste, and the word is used to describe the shape of the shrine. A sushi is a small portable altar usually in a lacquer box. When combined the words mean a miniature Buddhist sanctuary in a round or semi-round shaped case.

For practical purposes we are restricting the present article to circular shrines or those in the shape of a lotus bud or petal, or suggesting the radiant pearl, a favorite symbol in Buddhist religious art. To fulfill basic requirements the case containing the image must open into an upper and lower half, like an old-fashioned pill box. Within the container is a religious figure occupying the lower half. The inside of the lid may contain a second icon, some appropriate symbolic device, a Sanskrit monogram, or an ornamental tracery in gold leaf.

Pocket shrines are usually carved from wood and measure from 2½" to 4" in diameter. The finest examples are made of tsuge or box wood. This is a hard and enduring material which becomes more beautiful as a result of wear which adds to its sheen. Another popular wood is hinoke or Japanese cypress. This is of a light color and fine grain, and has been used for centuries in the building of Shinto Shrines, and is the traditional choice among carvers of Buddhist images. Sandalwood may also be used, and the various artists follow their natural taste.

Images and ornamentations on the inside of pocket shrines are carved in high relief, and are part of the original case. The workmanship differs considerably in quality, but older examples have a tendency to be superior in quality. As the wood dries out it becomes noticeably lighter in weight, which sometimes assists in distinguishing an early example. Very often the aroma of the sandalwood is still noticeable in shrines more than 100 years old. Several dealers

have insisted that powdered sandalwood incense was originally enclosed in the shrine case. This implies that it was not always opened for purposes of worship. It was sufficient to visualize the interior image.

In addition to the more familiar wood carvings, pocket shrines may also serve as netsuke, the large various-shaped toggles used to suspend inro or other small articles from the obi or sash. Shrines serving as netsuke are usually circular or in the shape of a lotus bud. The outsides of these miniature altars are frequently unornamented, and appear as natural wood, polished to show the grain — which is often very beautiful.

Many pocket shrines are elaborately lacquered on the outside. The quality of the lacquer work assists in determining both age and value. A favorite type of lacquer is called tame, of a dark brown rather mottled appearance. Decorations resulting from various lacquer techniques have special names, but for our purposes it is sufficient to mention decorations in low or high relief, and the application of tiny flakes of gold or silver foil, which are lacquered over in successive coats, resulting in a beautiful metallic-like finish. Old examples sometimes have exquisite lacquer inlay-work and resemble pieces of jewelry. Those of more recent production may display an artistic arrangement of a lotus flower, with its buds and leaves. As the lotus is intimately associated with Buddhism, it is seldom used ornamentally except for decorating religious objects. Other designs on the circular shrine cases include such symbols as a vajra or thunderbolt, a rimbo or Wheel of the Law, or a Sanskrit spell letter equivalent to the deity represented inside. We have seen examples in which the wooden shrine is completely enclosed in a gilt bronze case. The one pictured in this article shows the case engraved with the design of an open lotus blossom.

While miniature shrines are by no means limited to Japanese Buddhism, it would seem that in Japan these beautiful objects have been greatly refined to conform with the esthetic taste of the people. Very early shrines (usually square or rectangular) have been traced to China or Korea, and there is a report that miniature altars of this kind originated in India. Nothing close to the Japanese pocket shrine is found in other strongholds of Tantric Buddhism.

Several small shrines are included among the treasures of the Koyasan Monastery. In the Kongobuji Temple at Mt. Koya is a beautiful example referred to as "a reliquary". It is about nine inches high, carved from wood, and is said to have been brought to Japan from China by Kobo Daishi. The shrine is cylindrical with a slightly rounded top and there are two doors elaborately carved with Buddhist figures. The central and principal design represents Gautama Buddha accompanied by Arhats and Bodhisattvas. This is an exquisite piece of work, believed to have originated in the Tang Dynasty.

Two other such altars are mentioned in the catalog of the Koyasan Treasures. The first is a square shrine about seven-inches high, carved in sandalwood, and now preserved in the Fumon'in Temple at Koyasan. In place of a lid there is an open screen-like design, which can be placed on the front, and provides a dramatic setting for the images in the center who also represent the historical Gautama Buddha, accompanied by two Bodhisattvas and two Arhats, probably disciples. The Buddhas of the Ten Worlds are arranged in two vertical panels, one on each side of the central group. This is also believed to have originated in China, but is regarded as less excellent than the one previously mentioned.

In the collection of the Hemmyoin Temple at Mt. Koya is a wonderful miniature shrine about six-inches high, also carved in wood, and traditionally believed to have been made by the great priest Kobo Daishi himself. The shrine when open reveals a most dramatic image of the Bosatsu Monju mounted upon a lion. The episode signified by the carving refers to a well-known religious theme of Monju crossing the sea on a lion. This is considered one of the finest known examples of miniature shrines, and if actually carved by Kobo Daishi, must have been made in the Tenth Century.

In the official catalog, these small shrines are consistently referred to as "pillow reliquaries", evidently implying that they were kept close to the person during sleep. If we may assume that the information is well researched, the carving of miniature shrines may have originated at a comparatively early date. In any event, ancient specimens are regarded as exceedingly rare. It can only be assumed that the carvings of a later date were based upon those brought from other countries. Beyond this, there is little known.

It may be that the circular design was influenced by Japanese clothing. The Japanese never had any pockets in their garments. They depended upon the long sleeves of their kimono, or receptacles suspended from the sash, or the space in front of the kimono above the obi, to carry small articles. It would be quite proper for the miniature shrine to be placed in the front of the kimono over the heart.

From the number I have seen, it does not appear that the pocket shrines were limited to one Sect. Figures of Amida are certainly very popular. Several types of Kannon occur, Dainichi Nyorai is much favored, and grim-faced Fudo is conspicuous. These miniature altars are seldom reproduced in works of art and even if pictured are not described. For example, there is a manju zushi of Aizen Myo-o in the *Iconography of Northern Buddhism* by Mrs. Getty, and another circular shrine of the same deity is reproduced by V.-F. Weber in *Ko-ji Ho-ten*. The examples I have seen were produced during the Tokugawa or Meiji eras, (between 1615 and 1914). This would mean that they were made in the last 350 years, and most examples available on the market are probably not over 100 years old. They are still being created by revivers of the old skills.

These little shrines, including those made recently, are very difficult to find even in Japan. Dealers are not particularly interested in locating such illusive items. If one does become available, it is usually kept by the shopkeeper for his own collection. As the demand has never been great and the supply is comparatively non-existent, some modern wood carvers have begun producing these lovely objects. Generally speaking, the modern work is not as fine as the older examples. There may be an exception in the case of ivory. The little shrines made in the last ten or twenty years look well, unless examined under a magnifying glass. Theoretically, at least, a modern example of very high quality, and by a distinguished carver, might be just as valuable as a genuine antique.

One of the most interesting pocket shrines in my collection contains a figure of Aizen Myo-o. Although this deity has a rather ferocious appearance, he is actually a God of Love. His one visible similarity to Cupid is the fact that he carries a bow and arrow.



AIZEN-MYO-O

Aizen Myo-o should never be considered an evil spirit, however, for he is an embodiment of the great Sun Buddha, Dainichi Nyorai. He is extensively venerated in esoteric Buddhism and it is believed that he can destroy all evil spirits and the wickedness in the human mind. As a personification of love, he transcends all limitations, regenerates all destructive conduct and causes men to live in amity together. His body is usually of a reddish color. He has three eyes and six arms, and wears a headress shaped like a lion. His face has an angry look, because it is always necessary for him to cause terror in the hearts of demons. His dwelling place is in the sun, often represented by a large red disc behind him. He sits on a pedestal of red lotus flowers, which in turn is supported by a vase-like ornament. In addition to the bow and arrow, his hands hold a lotus flower, disc, holy bell and thunder bolt. Although he is generally represented alone, this deity actually has a retinue of 37 attendants. From the vase beneath his throne, coins are falling to suggest his benevolent protection and his willingness to assist the poor and destitute.

In the manju zushi shown here, Aizen Myo-o is represented carved into the lower half of the shrine. The work is beautifully executed and the color of the wood is of dark brown. His vase, from which flow precious pearls, rests upon a lotus leaf and is carved on the inside of the lid. The outside of the shrine is a fine example of embossed lacquer work. On the lid is an intricate and beautifully executed dragon, and on the lower half a ferocious looking tiger. Both have inlaid eyes and the work is exquisitely executed.



NICHIREN

This shrine is believed to date from about the middle of the Tokugawa Period (1725-50).

My pocket shrine associated with the beliefs of the Nichiren Sect is quite spectacular. The figure of Nichiren is carved on the inside of the lid, and conveys a good impression of both the appearance and temperament of this militant priest. He carries the roll of the Lotus Sutra in his right hand, while in his left hand he holds a shaku, a flat baton or sceptre, usually carried by distinguished men of nobility or high spiritual authority. The other half of the shrine shows the vision scene from the Lotus Sutra. In the center is a pagoda which has descended from the sky. Inscribed in the center of the Pagoda Tablet is the great Nichiren formula, *Namu Myōō Renge Kyō* (Homage to the Scripture of the Lotus of the Law). In the Lotus Sutra it explains that while Sakyamuni (Gautama Buddha) was preaching his great sermon on Vulture's Peak, a tremendous Pagoda of indescribable magnificence rose out of the earth and suspended itself in the sky. From within the pagoda came the voice of Prabhutaratna, a Buddha who had been extinct for countless ages, but who had taken an obligation to return to existence when Sakyamuni preached the great discourse of the Lotus Sutra. The extinct Buddha then invited the living Buddha to sit beside him in the pagoda in the sky. This is the scene represented on the interior of the pocket shrine. The arrangement is commonly seen on the altars of the Nichiren Sect. The quality



FUDO-MYO-O

of the workmanship in this example is considerably better than average, but the shrine is quite recent. The clouds in the background of both halves are in blue and red, edged with gold. Nichiren's robes are heightened with areas of red. The outside of the shrine is in polished wood and without ornamentation.

Among the most popular icons of Esoteric Buddhism are those which depict Fudo Myo-o, who is the first and leader of a group called the Godai-Myo-o, or in Sanskrit the Five Vidyarajas. These rather awesome images give solemnity and unworldliness to altars of the Shingon Sect, and there is a famous group of them in the Kondo of the Toji Temple in Kyoto.

Fudo Myo-o is depicted with a rather menacing expression. His left eye is squinted and his eyebrows contracted. A braid of hair hangs down over his left shoulder and he wears a red robe which sometimes has a dark brownish hue. In his right hand Fudo holds a ritual sword, with a thunderbolt hilt, and a long keen blade. In paintings the sword may have an aura of flames and a serpent twisted around the blade. In his left hand the Myo-o holds a looped rope resembling a lasso. The ends of the rope are ornamented with the heads of thunderbolts. The figure is seated upon a pedestal made of blocks. Some say these blocks are precious stones, but ac-

according to others, they symbolize logs of wood arranged for a funeral pyre. Fudo may have a halo but more often an immense flame rises behind him, the tongues of fire agitated as though by a powerful wind. He may be represented alone, but has a retinue of eight attendants. These are more apt to be depicted in painting than in statuary, but two pages—Seitaka-Doji and Kongara-Doji—wait upon him, as shown in some pocket shrines.

Those unacquainted with Tantric Buddhism do not find Fudo Myo-o especially attractive, but the devout regard him as a monument of integrity and benevolence. He is a manifestation of the great Sun Buddha Dainichi Nyorai, the personification of infinite light and wisdom. As Fudo, infinite reality presents the stern expression of those universal laws which cannot be transgressed. Creatures who set in motion by their own deeds the retributational aspect of karma, must expect to reap the harvest of their own delinquencies. Thus the law of compensation is not only a manifestation of the Sovereign Good, but is also the defender of the faith. The sword of Fudo divides the false and true. It is the sharp blade of enlightened will which cuts through the delusions of the mortal mind. The rope is to "bind and unbind". It ties up the passions, and like the halter of a horse controls the spirit of the animal propensities. Gradually by discrimination the rope also binds man to those principles which guard him and contribute to his final union with the consciousness of the Cosmos. Fudo, therefore, is the flame that burns out dross, the alchemical fire that transmutes all base elements into the gold of true enlightenment.

Our pocket shrine shows Fudo as traditionally depicted. The design seems to be based upon an Icon said to have been carved by the great Shingon Saint Kobo Daishi, the founder of the Sect. The robes of Fudo are of a reddish color, with an intricate design worked in gold. He wears a small open lotus on the crown of his head, as the symbol of the unfoldment of his spiritual perception. He is not seated upon his pedestal of geometrically arranged blocks, but upon a rocky throne rising from the great ocean of illusion. On the inside of the lid are his two favorite attendants, Seitaka-Doji and Kongara-Doji. The word Doji signifies a young man in adolescent years, and both of these attendant divinities are repre-

sented as boyish acolytes. They are placed against a plain gold background, having halos about their heads, and are supported by rocks rising from water and decorated with star symbols. The outside of the shrine is in dark brown lacquer with the rimbo or Wheel of the Law in gold on the front. This shrine is an exceptionally fine example of a modern treatment of a classical and much respected subject.

Another Fudo pocket shrine should be noted and is reported to be over 200 years old. Here Fudo and his two attendants are arranged as a triad, with Fudo as Dainichi and his companions as forms of the Bodhisattvas Monju and Fugen. The key to the symbolism might be enlightened will, supported by and manifesting through unfolding wisdom and beauty. In this shrine the background is formed of a design of fine gold lines. The inside of the lid has a similar decoration, but no images, and the outside is in plain Tamenuri lacquer.

Mention has been made of Kobo Daishi as the founder of the Shingon Sect. This great priest, whose posthumously bestowed name means Great Master of the Law, was born in 774 A.D. In 804 he went to China to study with the Seventh Patriarch of the "True Word", which is the meaning of the name Shingon. Kobo Daishi was a universal genius, whose abilities included architecture, agricultural irrigation projects, the construction of highways, the reform of language, painting, sculpturing and many humanitarian projects. He was the teacher of three Emperors and the founder of a school for the education of poor children. At the end of his life he is said to have retired into his own tomb at Mt. Koya, where he remains to this day in meditation awaiting the advent of the Lord Maitreya.

It is appropriate that he should be honored with pocket shrines, for in popular veneration he is regarded as a Bodhisattva. Our shrine of him is an especially interesting example of religious portraiture and is of considerable age. The wood is extremely light in weight and there is still the lingering scent of scandalwood. The outside of the shrine is in natural color, and on the inside of the lid is the Shingon religious symbol of consciousness. Kobo Daishi holds in his right hand the goko or thunderbolt with five prongs.



KOBŌ DAISHI

In his left hand is a rosary. Beneath the cushion upon which he sits, and which symbolizes his teaching chair, his shoes are quite visible, and beside him is a ceremonial ewer, a kind of vase with a spout used in baptismal rituals. The impression of the composition is strong and dignified, suggesting the recondite nature and strange aloofness of Esoteric Buddhism.

The pocket shrine of Dainichi Nyorai reproduced here shows a variation of the manju type. In this case the shrine is in the form of a lotus bud. It is carved from a dark reddish brown hard wood and shows a fine grade of workmanship. It is considered to have some antiquity and has excellent detail. The icon presents Dainichi in his most traditional form, with his hands in the mudra of the superior and inferior conditions of being. He wears the type of crown peculiar to Shingon symbolism and he is backed by a double halo, one part behind his head and the other encircling his body.

Dainichi is the Japanese name for the Tathagata Maha-Vairocana and is venerated in Esoteric Buddhism as the Universal Dharma (law) Body of the Supreme Buddha. Actually this body is colorless and formless, but as this places the concept beyond human comprehension or communication, the supreme state of



DAINICHI NYORAI

Dainichi has been suggested by the hand posture, which in this case emphasizes the function of universal integration. As Buddhism does not recognize a personal God, the emphasis is upon a universal principle which is the source of all Truth, Wisdom, Love and Strength. In Japanese Buddhism, this abstract being is the Vairocana Buddha, of which Dainichi is a form or expression.

On the inside of the lid of this shrine is the spell-letter or monogram of Dainichi, and when the two halves of the case are united, they form a perfect lotus bud, with carvings on the outside to enhance this effect. This is a noble example of Buddhist religious art.

The figure most frequently found in pocket shrines is Amida Nyorai, the Japanese form of the Amitabha Buddha of India and Tibet. This icon is easy to identify because of the hand posture. Both hands are in the lap with the thumbs touching and the fingers curled so that each hand seems to form a circle. The shrine pictured here is typical of the Amida style. The Buddha is seated in the meditation mudra with a nimbus behind his head, and a background of crossed horizontal and diagonal lines. He is seated on an open lotus which in turn is supported by clouds. The figure is in natural wood, darkened by age and the robes are touched with designs in



AMIDA NYORAI

gold. As usual, the curled hair is in a deep shade of blue. In this instance the wooden shrine has been placed within a case of gilt bronze. The lid of the case has an open lotus engraved into the metal, and on the inside of the lid is a rather crude representation of Kannon Bosatsu. Amida Nyorai, as the Buddha of Infinite Light, is the most popular image in the Japanese Buddhist pantheon and is venerated by nearly all the sects. Amida is the principal subject of veneration in the Jodo and Shin Sects. After attaining Buddhahood countless ages ago, Amida made forty-eight vows to save all beings and bring them to eternal enlightenment in his Western Paradise.

Of all the icons of Northern Buddhism, Amida is the most comprehensible to Western People. He comes very close to being a Saviour Deity, but it must be understood that he is not considered a god. It is presumed that he has evolved through all the lower degrees of existence, until by the perfection of his own virtues he has earned the right to grant the supplications of his followers. Amida manifests himself in nine different forms. All are similar except for minor variations in the hand postures. When he appears



KOKUZO BOSATSU

in the full panoply of his powers, he is accompanied by a retinue of Holy Bosatsu.

In art, Amida is usually presented as a gilded figure and may be standing or seated. In formal imagery he is usually shown alone, but in early examples he is attended by two Bosatsu, Dai Seishi with his hands together in prayer, and Kannon who carries the lotus throne to receive the soul of a dying believer. The most famous image of Amida is the great bronze Buddha at Kamakura, and in pocket shrines he is presented in this form.

A similar shrine of Amida has the Sanskrit monogram for this Buddha on a white disc, resting in an open lotus flower on the inside of the lid. The outside of the shrine is ornamented with a design of lotus flowers, worked in gold and colors upon a background of black lacquer. Still another example has the outside of the case ornamented with a double thunderbolt, on a background of reddish brown lacquer.

One of the most interesting pocket shrines in my collection depicts the Kokuzo Bosatsu. When I heard that the shrine was available, I made a special trip to Karuazawa, where I secured this unusual item. The Bodhisattva is carved into the lower half of the shrine and the background is stained to a dark brown shade, caus-

ing the figure to stand out in strong contrast. The inside of the lid contains a beautiful detailed carving of the Sanskrit monogram for Kokuzo, highly stylized.

Normally this Bosatsu is presented as a gracious being seated in meditation, ornamented with jewels and garlands, wearing a diadem as shown in the illustration. Kokuzo holds in his left hand an attribute consisting of a radiant triple pearl, supported by an open lotus. He may also carry a sword in his right hand, but in this example the hand is simply extended downward showing the palm. The carving is of very fine quality and the natural wood has been touched with areas of decoration in gold, which is especially prominent in the nimbus behind the head. The outside of the shrine is of natural wood, undecorated.

Kokuzo Bosatsu is associated with the principle of wisdom. He represents or personifies the innate or inherent wisdom abiding in space, which fashions all the planets, creates the stars, and maintains the orderly procedure of cosmic processes. He is therefore a witness to all the Buddhas and he preserves and redeems creation by revealing the undeniable evidence that space, together with all its progeny of worlds, is the revelation of infinite consciousness. To gaze upon the heavens is therefore to experience Kokuzo in the heart and mind.

Pocket shrines of Kannon Bosatsu seem to be rather scarce and those available are of recent workmanship, even though they may be based on older specimens. Samurai preparing for battle nearly always carried some religious charm or talisman. They found it convenient to place a pocket shrine in their helmets, and as a consequence, this class of manju zushi is referred to as the helmet shrine. The one reproduced here is a modern copy of an older work. The Bosatsu Kannon is shown standing and is of the type called the Juichimen Kannon. The word juichimen actually means eleven headed, but because the Japanese objected to the Tantric multiplication of full size heads, these are represented in miniature as decorations on the Coronet of the Bosatsu.

Kannon also carries a lotus flower in a slender vase, such being the normal attributes of this icon. In the background lotus petals are falling from the sky. Kannon is draped in East Indian fashion and wears the ornaments of a Bodhisattva. The inside of the lid is



KANNON BOSATSU

decorated with a solid red disc supported by a gilded cloud, and this design is also surrounded by falling lotus petals. The shrine is colored black on the inside, with the exception of the ornaments of the Bodhisattva. The outside is without ornamentation.

Kannon is the spiritual son of the Buddha Amitabha. Because of his extreme benevolence and infinite compassion, he can take on the appearance of any of the six forms of existence, and has authority over all the worlds. In addition to the six forms, Kannon also has thirty-three feminine manifestations, probably of Chinese origin. The infinite love and wisdom of Amida are personified in Kannon, who therefore becomes not an intercessor but an actual manifestation of that infinite mercy, which in due course and in harmony with universal law, brings all creatures to peace and perfection. Kannon can take upon himself the appearance of animals, birds and even insects. There is no form of life visible or invisible to which his compassion is not available. He is therefore beyond question the most popular figure in Northern Buddhism.

Among my recently acquired pocket shrines is one in the form of a lotus petal which contains two images. On the inside of the lid is Kichijoten, while the pride of place is assigned to Bishamonten. Kichijoten (Sri Devi) is a Goddess of Fortune of Indian origin, who became a popular member from the Buddhist pantheon. She lives in the celestial palace in Animanda, the region ruled over by her brother Bishamonten. The Goddess is supposed to be a flawless beauty, although this is not immediately obvious from the shrine. She is richly adorned, wears jewelry and garlands. Her right hand

is extended palm outward in the Abhyanda Mudra, while in the left hand she holds the cintamani or wishing gem.

Bishamonten (in Japanese Temonten, and in Sanskrit Vaisravana), is one of the four Lokapalas, the four Maharishis who guard the corners of the world. Bishamonten is guardian of the North and is usually depicted as a grim faced warrior, holding in his left hand a stupa or small reliquary tower. By this symbol it is to be understood that he is a defender of the faith, and director of Buddhism throughout the world. He was especially venerated by Shotoku Taishi, the first great Patron of Buddhism in Japan.

This shrine brings together these two closely associated figures, the guardian King of the faith and the gracious Goddess of happiness. The interior is in natural wood touched with gold and with traces of green on the base which sustains the two figures. The background seems to be of cut gold—a method of decoration in which the Japanese excelled—and the outside of the case is lacquer containing tiny flecks of gold. This shrine is believed to be about seventy-five years old.

One of the most beautiful miniature shrines in my collection presents the image of Ko-o Bosatsu. This icon is found in the Shin-gon Esoteric Scrolls and is usually accompanied by two small demons. These are not shown in the shrine. The Bosatsu is represented with the right hand resting on the knee, palm outward, and the left hand supporting an elaborate lotus stalk. The canopy especially distinguishes the Ko-o concept. The inside of the lid is ornamented with a Kongo banner supported by a lotus pedestal. The background of both the shrine and the lid is filled in with a geometric design laid down in cut gold. The outside of the shrine is lightly carved to symbolize a lotus bud. Ko-o Bosatsu is one of the less familiar forms of Kannon and is referred to in the old texts as Ko-o Kannon. It is believed that this image is especially identified with graciousness, thoughtfulness and consideration for the needs of mankind. Ko-o recites a thousand prayers each night for the salvation of all that lives. The age of the shrine is uncertain, but the quality of the workmanship would suggest that it was done in the late years of the Edo Period.

We have already mentioned that the pocket shrine can take the form of an Inro or Netsuke. As an inro, it would be suspended



KO-O BOSATSU

from the sash, in the form of a small rectangular case, lacquered on the outside, and sometimes decorated with religious symbols. The toggle, which served as a kind of fob to hold the inro in place, is called a netsuke, and has always been a beautiful and delicately carved object. As the Japanese wore no jewelry, the inro and netsuke were major articles of ornamentation. Normally, the netsuke was not directly associated with the miniature shrines, but there were exceptions, and we have two examples. The one shown here is an ivory netsuke in the form of a lotus bud, which opens to reveal an image of Amida Nyorai. The cords which hold the inro are attached to a cloud-like decoration on each side of Amida, pass through a hole in the lid and are then available to be fastened to the inro. The inside of the lid of the netsuke is decorated with symbols of the Sun and Moon, and on the outside there is a Sanskrit monogram for Amida. This example shows some indication



AMIDA NYORAI (Ivory)

of age, and might date back to Meiji. Another example of a netsuke shrine is made of wood and not decorated on the outside. When the two halves are put together it forms what appears to be a simple button, intended strictly for utility. Thus the netsuke belongs to the manju classification. When opened, however, it reveals a beautiful little figure of Kannon Bosatsu, seated on a lotus and carrying an open lotus flower. This appears to be quite old and possibly dates back to the Edo period and is of a type seldom seen.

This essay is limited to shrines I have personally seen or owned in recent years. It is probable that nearly all the popular images venerated in Japanese Buddhism may be found as pocket shrines. Included also are the venerated founders of various Sects, Arhats (Saints), and numerous defenders of the faith. Shrines also exist in which there are no images, symbols or inscriptions serving as

subjects for meditation. Such devices are usually regarded as charms.

Some sects substitute miniature paintings protected by cardboard covers for the more elaborate shrines. These small folders are made elegant by the addition of brocade bindings. It must be assumed, therefore that in popular worship the Japanese Buddhists follow the world-wide custom of carrying small objects of religious importance as acts of piety or as protection against the numerous evils of the times.

As the present discussion is not concerned with age or value, it has seemed best to indicate the existing range of these miniature altars. As they are not signed, most of them are evaluated entirely on the quality of their workmanship. Dating is hazardous at best. Comparatively recent examples which have received considerable wear or rough treatment may appear to be old, whereas others which are genuinely antique, are in superb condition, simply because they have been cared for and protected as treasures of the family. These miniature shrines would have been far more widely collected had their subject matter been secular. It is only in recent years that Western people have developed an appreciation for Buddhist antiquities, unless they are classical examples dating before the 15th Century. As prejudice against religious artifacts subsides, these beautiful little examples of devotional art will receive the respect and admiration to which they are entitled.



An Unusual Definition

According to the philosopher Heraclitus "The most perfect soul is a dry light, which flies out of the body, as lightning breaks from a cloud".

The Makers of Fashions

Diophantus, the son of Themistocles, once boasted that "what pleased him also pleased all of Athens; for whatever he liked, his mother liked; and whatever his mother liked, Themistocles liked; and whatever Themistocles liked, all Athenians liked."

Alchemical speculation was a strange and fantastic phenomenon of 16th and 17th Century Europe. Very little is actually known about the circumstances leading to the sudden emergence of an extensive literature dealing with the transmutation of metals and the discovery of the universal medicine. The principal exponents of the system manufactured a number of pseudo historical accounts affirming that David and Solomon, the Kings of Israel, dealt in magical arts and that the transmutation process was known from the time of Semiramis, Queen of Babylonia.

Most ancient names of philosophic and religious renown were called upon to support the concepts of the metaphysical chemists, so we learn that Hermes, Aristotle, and Galen and Avicenna, the Arabs, had written extensive tracts, which unfortunately could no longer be found.

The early 17th Century alchemical writers constantly referred to their noble progenitors in the art, but seldom advanced any tangible evidence to support such claims. Modern writers have noted that practically every revered religious teacher, renowned philosopher, or respected scientist recorded in ancient history, was secretly an alchemist regardless of his other occupations or preoccupations.

Several extensive catalogs of alchemical collections in the libraries and museums of the world have been published, but are for the most part scarce. European book dealers have also issued lists of rare manuscripts and printed works, dealing with various phases of alchemical speculation. Although many aspects of the subject are obscure, one thing is certain. The demand for books dealing with the theme has never subsided, and rare volumes have become very expensive, and are quickly sold when they appear on the market. Even in days when printing was a slow and tedious process, alchemical tracts literally flooded the market and a number of massive tomes, which must have been very costly to produce, appeared in England and on the Continent.

If the authors engaged in strange and wonderful doctrines, their illustrators excelled them in originality. Thousands of curious symbols, remarkable devices, and cryptic emblems, were inserted into

the printed texts. These pictures were mostly copper engravings, and were the productions of skilled artists. The theory seemed to be that such symbols revealed most clearly the obscure meaning of the accompanying text. In some cases, however, the illustrations were an independent work and in at least one case, the *Mutus Liber*, the pictures told all, and there was no text.

For some reason printed copies of important works were never sufficient to meet the prevailing need. A large part of the literature appeared in the German language, and a few of the scholarly works were issued in rambling Latin, extremely difficult to read at the present time because of grammatical corruptions. Some rare alchemical manuscripts in Greek are also known, and of course the most popular works had a tendency to ultimately appear in English.

To provide individual chemists with the information they needed, the printed books were laboriously copied by hand, and the majority of the existing alchemical manuscripts are actually versions, translations, or improvisations derived from printed material. The drawings were also faithfully copied, but the quality of the artistry became progressively more rustic.

The alchemical literature was divided into a number of classifications. Many texts were open letters to unknown masters of the Hermetic arts. A struggling chemist would prepare a brochure, which he published and distributed, in the hope that it would fall into the hands of one of the alchemical adepts presumed to be wandering about Europe in some disguise. As there was no way of directly contacting these men, it might well be that the humble supplication of an aspiring chemist would be answered in due time.

Another class of books was the thinly veiled chemical diary. The author wished to communicate the results of his experiments. Some writers admitted that they had been attempting the transmutation of metal for thirty or forty years. They had made interesting discoveries and had come very close to their goal, but in books of this type, the author usually admitted that he had not fully succeeded.

Another somewhat pompous and pedantic group of essays affirmed complete success. The transmutation had been accomplished, the universal medicine had been compounded, and the elixir of immortality had been concocted. The story then unfolded according to

a definite formula. The Hermetic artist possessing the priceless secrets wished to communicate them in the true spirit of Christian charity to those of good character throughout the world. Because the wisdom of the few must not be cast like pearls before swine, the instruction was set forth symbolically or allegorically and only those of godly spirit could discover the secret instructions. After this the text rambled along for two or three hundred pages, making little or no sense to the uninitiated or even to those of high attainments in the field of chemistry.

It was this dilemma that brought about a heated controversy that extended itself through several hundred printed works. In these, the writers condemned each other enthusiastically and insisted that the various theorists were issuing catch-penny publications, to capitalize upon the cupidity of the gullible. In this way these deceivers manufactured gold, by taking it from the pockets of their neighbors.

The controversialists in turn gave rise to the apologists. A number of deeply sincere and gently worded defenses of alchemy were duly published. These pointed out that although there might be misrepresentation, it was certain that genuine adepts did exist and that the accomplishment of the Magnum Opus (Great Work) was possible. The authors then championed their favorites and explained why the chemical arts originated in heaven and therefore could not be regarded as contrary to the creeds of existing religion.

By the middle of the 17th Century, a kind of frustration had set in. The appeals to secret adepts remained unanswered or at least such was the general belief. With Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood, science began its triumphant rise. Alchemy survived and made many contributions to the advancement of science and industry, including the discovery of illuminating gas and the formula for high-grade porcelain. The literature of higher chemistry now took on a strongly mystical quality. The older authors were reexamined, and it was concluded that the real labor was the regeneration of humanity. The transmuting power of mystical regeneration was the universal medicine for all the ills arising from ignorance. In this mystic approach, the texts and formulas of the principal writers and the wonderful pictures which ornamented their volumes, were regarded as subjects for meditation. The Master

of Masters, Elias the Artist, appeared not in mortal form but as a spirit, coming in dreams and visions to reward the faithful chemist for his years of earnest questing.

Rather early in the 17th Century, during the very hey-day of alchemical enthusiasm, the Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of the Rose Cross made its appearance. The controversy concerning the authorship of this slight volume has never been completely solved, but the German theologian Johann Valentin Andreae has been considered the most likely candidate. The older Rosicrucian tracts, numbering several hundred, were curious combinations of mystical preoccupations, Lutheran orthodoxy, Swiss socialism, Neoplatonic illuminism, Arabic philosophy and European alchemy. After a number of years in which the promises contained in the Rosicrucian Manifestoes remained unfulfilled, the perpetuation of Alchemical mysticism seems to have been entrusted to Jacob Boehme and his illustrator George Gichtel. The engravings which illustrate the earlier editions of Boehme's writings, were prepared posthumously, but are among the most beautiful and inspiring of the alchemical symbols. Some are said to have been designed by Peter Paul Rubens.

After the rise of the Rosicrucian cycle, many secret societies of Europe were influenced by the symbolism of alchemy, and the other mystical arts that flourished at the time. For practical purposes early Freemasonry formed a liberal partnership with the esoteric groups and no clear line of demarcation was discernible until the great Masonic Congress was convened at Wilhelmsbad. It is this meeting that was attended by the elusive Comte de St. Germain.

Interest in alchemy endured all the vicissitudes which resulted from the rise of material science which chose to deny its flamboyant ancestry. Two later writers attempted a restoration of the inner meaning of Hermetic speculation. One of these was General Ethan Allen Hitchcock and the other was Mrs. Mary A. Atwood. The writings of General Hitchcock on esoteric alchemy are extremely rare, but Mrs. Atwood's book *A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery* has been reissued several times, from the extremely scarce original printing. Once it became obvious that alchemy had a place in the descent of the esoteric tradition, it was also noticed

that the old diagrams and symbols of the European engravers had a startling resemblance to the mandalas of Tantric Buddhism and the Meditation Sects of India. Perhaps the alchemists were right when they claimed that their art had descended to them from the Mystery Schools of ancient Egypt. The recognition of the validity of archetypal symbolism and the contribution of alchemy to man's discovery of his own soul, have been indicated in *Psychology and Alchemy* and *Alchemical Studies*, both by C. G. Jung. Thus after centuries of misunderstanding, scientific scepticism, political persecution and religious harrassment, alchemy finds itself vindicated. The old masters of the art were wiser than it has been believed.

George von Welling in his rare alchemical work *Salt, Sulphur and Mercury* (Frankfort and Leipzig, 1760), expounds philosophical alchemy and illustrates his doctrines with several unusual diagrams. In my copy most of these diagrams are hand colored. According to von Welling, the Hermetic Art is the secret key to the three mysteries: The Divine World, the Human World and the Natural World. To understand one is to comprehend the meaning of all three, and the laws of the universe apply equally to all levels of the three-fold creation. Those who can perform the physical transmutation, possess the secret of the universal reformation of mankind and society. Furthermore, they have the key with seven prongs, which will unlock the door of the "shut-palace of the king." Human thought is transformed by mental alchemy. Man's emotions are transmuted by psychic alchemy, and the human spirit is united to the mystery of the God-head by Divine alchemy.

Thus the spagyric art is the universal science, the one knowledge which includes all essential learning, for the art of arts and the science of sciences, is the uniting of all divided parts, the restoration of perfect unity in a world suffering from the illusion of diversity. All material knowledge is but the shadow of the heavenly wisdom, and man must discover in the end that his every function is symbolical of the essential purpose for which he was intended.

The transmutation by which base metals are changed into the purest gold and by which all corruption gives birth from itself to the incorruptible, these are but veiled statements of the real purpose of alchemy. The chemist must fulfill the command of the Master and become perfect in the lonely art of regeneration.

The old chemists whose little houses faced upon the Street of the Goldmakers in Prague, were considered mad-men by their self-righteous neighbors. Occasionally some alchemist was put to torture by an avaricious prince in the hope that he could be compelled to reveal his secrets. But the knowledge which was most useful was the least desired. Men wished to be rich but few there were who desired to be wise. If we are willing to admit that Alchemy was a kind of Yoga and that the complicated instructions left in the old books dealt with the mysteries of meditation, the whole subject becomes comprehensible. We must remember that there was very little religious persecution in Asia. Occasionally, there was religious strife among the villagers, but for the most part, those of advanced mind practiced their convictions in comparative safety. This was not true in Europe. From the days of the Roman Empire those of unorthodox beliefs were forced to act with the utmost discretion. To admit any interest in heathen beliefs, or practice any rites or ceremonies which did not conform with prevailing practice, was to bring down the terrible wrath of the Holy Office. The most practical solution was to feign madness and what could be a more convincing proof of insanity than the search for a universal medicine, the very concept of which violated the solemn pronouncements of the physicians of Basel and the faculty of Mount Pellier. A man was fortunate in those times to suffer no punishment more severe than ridicule.

The first edition of the *Fame and Confession of the Rose Cross* appeared as an appendix to the *Universal Reformation*, written by Trajano Boccalini. In this tract the purpose of the secret empire of the sages and savants was the transmutation of human society. Man must build for himself a just and enduring commonwealth, in which all differences arising from selfishness and arrogance are resolved and the disputes of nations reconciled. The Holy Art was based upon the Will of God and when the world was truly reformed, Deity would become the final ruler of man's Empires.

As in the world around man, so in the world within him. The heart and the mind must be united in an Hermetic marriage, and from the union of wisdom and love there could be generated the Divine Infant which personified the Philosophic Stone. It was

this same stone that the builders rejected, that should be raised up to become the head of the corner. The alchemists therefore declared that the life of Christ as contained in the Gospels, was a veiled account of alchemical processes which would result in the projection of the Messianic Stone. Lest the Prophets of old should fail to receive proper credit, the Hermetic Masters also affirmed that the secret method was perfectly revealed in the Song which is Solomon's.

Von Welling and that great chemist Basil Valentine, Monk of St. Benedict, both affirmed that those who sought the secret of the Red Lion must realize that it was compounded from the very substance of man's own consciousness. For man to attain immortality, the causes of death must cease within himself. These causes are the discords which man sustains in his own nature. As there can be no peace in a nation in which factions destroy the public good to advance their private interests, there can be no healing of the sickness of the human soul until ignorance, superstition and fear are transmuted into wisdom, faith and love. This is indeed a great labor and after ages of instruction by both word and example, mankind has been unable to perfect this Great Work.

At this time man's life is under the leadership of a mental power which is referred to as The Thinker. By degrees the intellect has become the absolute autocrat. What man thinks is assumed to be the truth, even though his conclusions must be revised or reformed almost immediately. Unless the mind can be completely regenerated there is little hope that the person in the body can escape from the corruptions arising from the perversion of the rational faculties. Alchemy, therefore, declared that the false ruler must die and his death was signified by a process of corruption and putrefaction, followed by incineration, until nothing remained in the bottom of the alchemical retort but the ashes of self-will.

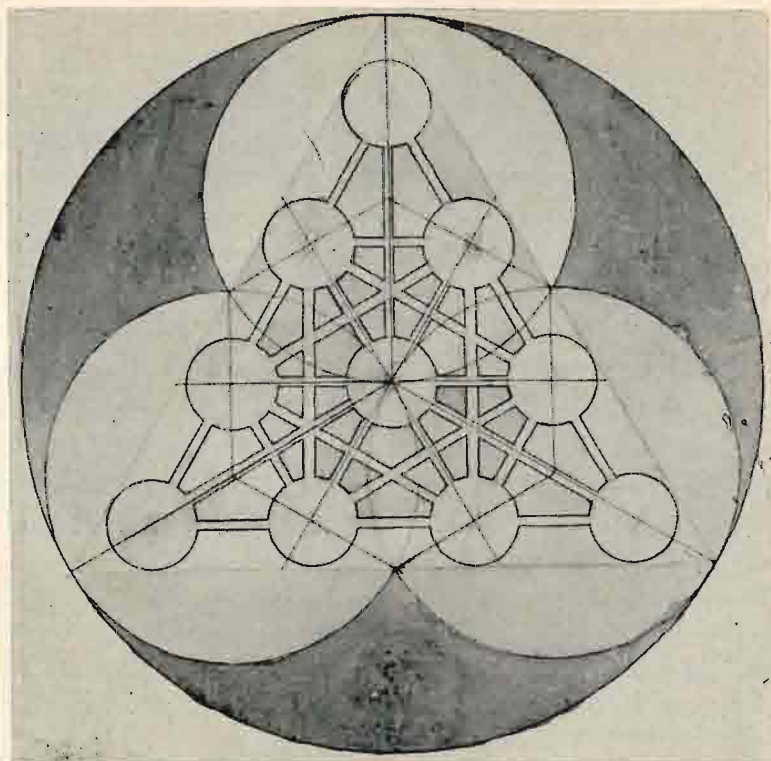
How should the mind be persuaded to abandon its virtually impregnable position and voluntarily die, that through death and resurrection it might come in the end to everlasting life? Incineration was a destruction by fire, a burning out of dross. The mystics assumed that the flame was a symbol of spirit, and being enthroned in the human heart, this flame was life, and this life was the light

of men, as described in the opening Chapter of St. John. The fire of dedicated aspiration could alone overcome the tyranny of the mortal mind. Love could burn away reason, and the empire of illusion could fall into a strange and terrible combustion. This in substance has always been the mystical position. The mortal mind must give way to the Divine mind. In the search for wisdom man must discover the mortal danger of his own ignorance. Here the preserving agent was identified with humility, detachment from all vanity, and the realization that man's estate is helpless except he be raised up by the grace of the Divine within himself.

The human magnetic field is the alchemical vessel in which all the mysterious processes occur. It is here that the cycles of distillation are set up and these rotations are the repeated meditations, the continuing disciplines, by which gradually the whole body is truly filled with light.

Another great Master of the Hermetic Mystery was Raymond Lully, who gave much time and dedication to the perfection of a method for the precipitation of the heavenly medicine. He finally met a martyr's death, but will be long remembered as a true son of the art. Lully also realized that chemistry was but the outer structure of a spiritual mystery. All knowledge is accumulated for one of two purposes. It is either dedicated to profit in this world or to principle in the eternal world. Whenever a scientist or artist is satisfied in the material achievement, he has fallen short of true mastery. All chemistry which deals with any phase of physical existence is but a veil and those who are content to explore only the physical level of the world are falling short of the real labor suitable to the human purpose. To explore the higher realms, the alchemist must renounce all mortal ambition and become as a little child. He can no longer follow the leadership of self-centered intellect. He must transfer his faith from his own ego to the Divine Spirit residing unknown in the deepest part of himself.

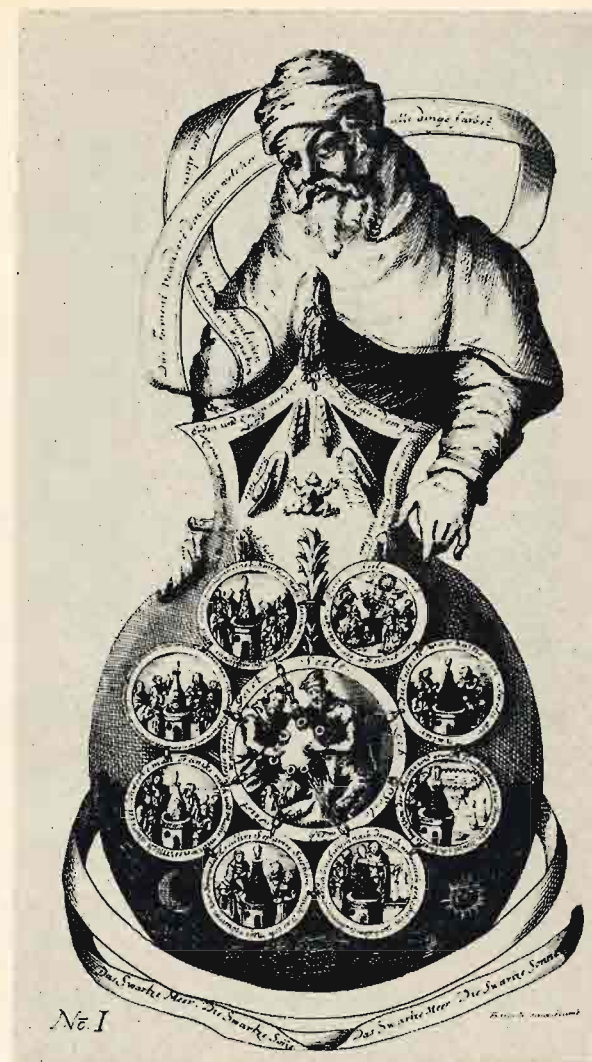
On April 16, 1934, the celebrated English auction house of Southeby auctioned the library of M. Lionel Hauser, who was for many years Secretary General of the Theosophical Society of France. This sale was one of the most remarkable in modern times. Monsieur Hauser had a large group of manuscripts dealing with alchemy, cabalism, and illuminism. I was represented at this auction



The Cabalistic Tree of the Sephiroth from a manuscript formerly in the Hauser Collection.

and secured a number of choice items, including an illuminated manuscript in French, which was reproduced in the London Illustrated News.

Shortly after the sale I went to Paris, where I had the pleasure of visiting with Monsieur Hauser, who was a cultured French gentleman, much interested in the entire cycle of transcendentalism in France and Germany. Several dealers had attended the auction and by visiting their shops, which included Maggs & Company, and Marks & Company in London, and Dorbon-Aine and the shop maintained by the Chacornac Brothers in Paris, I was able to gather in a number of additional items from the Hauser sale. Among these finds, were the manuscripts written by the disciples of Eliphas Levi and a number of works on early numerology.



The opening section of Ripley's scroll from the book by David Beuthers, published in Hamburg in 1718.

It became obvious that there was a strong philosophical tie between the various schools of early modern chemistry and transcendentalism.

I reproduce here a symbol from an 18th Century Hermetic Manuscript, formerly in the Hauser Collection. It shows the Cabalistic tree of the Sephiroth with paths connecting the ten radiant



Frontispiece from *De Arte Divina et Sacra*. This work sets forth the alchemical mystery using the symbolism of the Book of Revelation.

discs and the whole design in the form of the Pythagorean Tetractys, or the pyramid of ten dots. This could be considered a key to the Universal Mystery and also a representation of the elaborate paths leading to the regeneration of the human soul.

There is an interesting printed book by David Beuthers on the universal and particular aspects of the Great Work, published in

Hamburg in 1718, and also from the Hauser Collection. It contains a series of unusual engravings, which combine to form what is called The Great Hieroglyphical Scroll of George Ripley. We reproduce the opening section of the scroll, representing the alchemical adept holding a retort within which eight seals are shown, seven of which originate on the surface of a book, undoubtedly the Holy Bible. The eighth seal is not connected with the book, but is supported by links to the adjacent seals. While the number seven is common in Western Alchemy, an arrangement of eight elements is rare and seems to suggest a tie with Asia, where eight is the most important number, as in the Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path, which leads to the perfect enlightenment. In this engraving also, the alchemical adept appears to wear a turban. Possibly this is an association with the Arabic Schools of Chemistry, which were largely associated with the revival of chemistry in the Western world. Although Beuthers reproduces the entire series of engravings, his book actually contains no reference to them, and they must be regarded as mandalas or meditation symbols, suitable to be interpreted without words.

Speaking of the association between Alchemy and the Bible, we might mention a curious manuscript *De Arte Divina et Sacra*, etc., claiming to present the whole of the Divine Art without enigmas. The work was written on 47 folio leaves, about 1780, and contains an elaborate hand-painted frontispiece, showing the Book of Revelations with its Seven Seals. There can be no doubt that the concept presents the Hermetic Universe, represented by the Deity Mercury, surrounded by symbols of the planets, and carrying the sacramental cup. On the opening page of the text the work is dedicated to Jesus, Mary, Joseph and the Holy St. Anthony. The author was obviously a very pious person, although his name does not appear. The alchemical symbolism is used to veil the cultivation of spiritual virtues for the regeneration of the human soul. This belongs to a group of manuscripts which appeared first in printed form and were then copied for the private use of philosophic chemists. These copies were circulated among the elect and had great sentimental as well as metaphysical interest.

One of the most intriguing volumes in our collection is the new compendium of alchemy, published under the title *Pandora* by



The Hermetic Androgyne from *Pandora* by Joh. Michaelis Faustii, Leipzig, 1706.

Joh. Michaelis Faustii in Leipzig in 1706. My copy has the numerous and fantastic plates, hand colored, and is from the Library of Mrs. Atwood with the date 1859. The volume also contains the bookplate of Thomas South.

Those who are interested in parallels between Eastern and Western symbolism, will be especially interested in this volume,

which is magnificently adorned with figures suggestive of Oriental deities. The example we show here is quite typical of the astonishing artistry. In the center is a human figure with two heads and the wings of a bat. The body is androgynous and over the crown is a six-pointed star. Beneath the figure are dragon motifs and two trees, one of the sun and the other of the moon. The plate is entitled "A Rebis", signifying putrefaction. The word rebis, associated with riddle, means in this case a diagram to be solved by study and meditation, because it conceals some deep and secret meaning. This is so close to the Oriental philosophy of mandalas, that it is almost impossible to doubt that it was designed like the Oriental symbols for the transmission of esoteric knowledge.

The Alchemists seem to have realized that the human mind generates symbols in the process of externalizing its subjective pressures. Symbols may be received into consciousness as archetypes or what Boehme called "seals", stamped upon the substances of objectivity. Such symbolism is universal, and implies a continual flowing of a directed power from the inner life of man toward his outer sensory mind. The individual who fails to transform the symbolism within himself, projects the symbols as literal realities into his physical sphere of activities. This is a kind of idolatry and one cause of the abuses everywhere noticeable in the literal explanations of natural phenomena.

The rebis pictured here reminds us of one of the philosophical truths of the alchemical tradition. In the production of the Stone there are three principal elements, salt, sulphur and mercury (body, soul and mind) which cannot be united unless they are first deprived of their bodies and reduced to their most essential spiritual principles. This involves putrefaction, for these philosophical elements must be born and die and raised from the dead again. Otherwise they cannot be united in the consummation of the Great Work.

Psychologically we can interpret this requirement as signifying that man cannot attain Divine Wisdom unless first he renounces his material attitudes and addictions. Truth cannot be built upon error, nor can the mind be regenerated while in the midst of its own erroneous processes. For spiritual science to be released from

its material prison, this prison must first be completely demonished. Only when sincerity restores in man his own childlikeness can he fully comprehend the meaning of the words of Jesus to the effect that those who enter the Kingdom must enter as little children. To renounce the pride of mind, to acknowledge the fallacy of intellectual procedure and to realize that worldly wisdom has nothing in the wisdom of God—such realization is the beginning of regeneration. We must destroy the false structure and free ourselves of every fallacy, prejudice and conceit, before it is possible for the mind, soul and body to become one being. When such a union is achieved, there is no longer a conflict, and this union is suggested in the meditative disciplines of the East. The sincere disciple retires into the most Holy Place and there contemplates the works of God and the laws of nature without any impulse to compromise or corrupt the Divine Plan. When purification is complete, then we fulfill the alchemical axiom, "The fire must burn in water and water supply the fuel for the philosophical fire." This is not the ordinary water, but what is referred to in Genesis as The Waters which are above the Firmament—the heavenly dew of the Cabbalists. The fire is not that which survives upon material combustion, but like the ever burning lamp of the Rosicrucian Initiate, this fire endures in a vacuum, ever replenishing itself, and the wick of the lamp is made of salamander's wool—asbestos. This was the fire of pure love, which never exhausts itself, destroys nothing, but is forever warm and enlightened, providing that tiny flame by which the old Adepts read the book of life in the silent hours of the night.

In this case also the mercurial agent plays an important part. Mercury is the binder, the reconciler. It makes possible the fusing of all other elements by allowing them to pass through its own body. For this reason some of the Christian Alchemists considered Hermes or Mercury, as a symbol of the Christ principle. For none could come to God except through the Messiah. Mercury then is the great magical agent. It is a principle resident in time and eternity, by means of which the ultimate salvation of all that lives is assured. There is no doubt that Mercury was associated with the human mind, and considered as the reconciler of opposites and

dedicated to the final unification of the Aristotelian Dichotomies. As long as man believes in spirit and body, life and death, good and evil, truth and error, virtue and vice, he is bound to a universe which can be experienced only by the lights and shadows of acceptances and rejections. Everything is relative and comparative. There are no certainties, only ever changing opinions. To escape from this the mind must disentangle itself entirely from its allegiances to man-created knowledge and return to the wisdom which abides forever in the Nature of God.

As Alchemy began to drift toward association with the rapidly growing fields of biology and physics, it was assumed that the Hermetic Arts reached maturity through the material sciences. This was not true and can never be true. Science built much upon alchemy, for the chemists in their centuries of labor made numerous discoveries in the field of medicine, chemistry, the working of metals and the creation of synthetic gems. The material sciences simply reaffirmed the supremacy of the human mind separated from its spiritual source. As the body of scientific knowledge grew, so did man's admiration for the wonders of mental procedures. The end was inevitable. The intellect was overburdened. It was not only required to continually advance its rational powers, but must accept into memory the overwhelming burden of accumulating facts and theories. It seems probable that in time mind will be so overtaxed that it can no longer survive the pressure of man's self-centered demands. We see this in education where the present trend is resulting in severe fatigue and is probably one of the reasons for the intellectual rebellion of the present generation. We can continue to store up facts and still remain unenlightened.

The true light is a kind of inner comprehension, which can perhaps be best described in a Buddhist concept. Many blind men sought to know the nature of reality by exploring the shapes and sizes of physical objects. They reasoned and argued together, refuting each other's claims, but as all were blind, not one of them suspected that he suffered from any special limitation. It was obvious to these blind men that all nature was blind and that blindness had been bestowed so that men without sight could rule the world. After these sightless ones had written a great textbook

by carving the letters into the surface of stone in a kind of braille, suddenly their eyes were opened. In that instant they realized that their former boasted knowledge was a delusion. Having seen the true universe they had no longer any faith or interest in the fashionings of their own blindness.

In alchemy, the universal medicine is that which restores the sight of the spiritually blind. The great sickness is ignorance and the great medicine is that which restores man's spiritual health. Once man sees, once the all-seeing eye in the blazing triangle of Cabalistic wisdom has been opened within man's own consciousness, materialism fades away. Then indeed the phantoms of sleep are no more. The fears that beset the night are dispelled by the dawn of truth, and the conflicts of human opinion are resolved by the certainties revealed by the mystical experience. This is the secret tradition in alchemy. Its meaning is not less today than it was long ago, and we may expect to see a strong revival of alchemical research, especially on the level of philosophical psychology.



Courtesy at the Custom House

The wife of a soldier stationed in Europe was returning to the United States after a year's absence. She stood in the midst of a stack of baggage with a six-month's old baby in her arms. The Customs Official stepped over and said politely: "Have you acquired anything while out of the country?" The young lady pointed demurely at the baby. The Customs man smiled and declared gallantly: "There is no duty madam on original works of art":

Philosophical Diet

Pythagoras admonished philosophers to abstain from beans. His meaning was they should stay out of public office, for in those times ballots to elect officials were made with beans.

A Gusset No Doubt!

Lysander is credited with the saying "Where the lion's skin will not reach, it must be pieced out with that of the fox".

The Uninvited Guest

Once when Julius Caesar was at supper, the discourse turned to the subject of death and what kind of death was the best. Caesar then said quietly "That which is unexpected"!

Health Hint

One day a physician said to Pausanias, the historian, "Sir, you are an old man". Pausanias answered with a smile "And that my friend is because you have never been my doctor".

SEARCH FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Man has always been a creature of extremes and as Oswald Spengler pointed out, the patterns of human conduct are repetitive and predictable. For some years the trend has been toward the gratification of physical ambitions. Man has invested his hope in the creation of an enduring social system which will make existence in this world pleasant and profitable.

In order to hasten the material progress of mankind, educational and industrial leaders have sacrificed idealism to the cause of utility. The result has been a sequence of complications which is becoming increasingly harmful to all concerned. As problems multiply and the individual discovers that his hopes for security are not being realized, he is developing a number of anxieties and frustrations.

These have led to a major change of prospective. Suddenly it becomes obvious that there is an urgent need for idealism and a restoration of ethical and moral values. In substance humanity, as a collective body, is moving from a materialistic to a spiritual concept of life, as Spengler predicted. In this sense, spirituality becomes synonymous with all that is gracious, kind, charitable and constructive in man's concept of his own purpose and destiny. To be spiritual no longer implies a detachment from worldly concerns. It is now interpreted as a structure of principles, which are essentially true and proper, upon which an enlightened society can build a cooperative commonwealth, capable of surviving the test of time. Even as the human spirit must function through an appropriate physical body, so the political structure must be ensouled by a consciousness, strengthened by meditation, vision, dedication and prayer.

In common usage, spirituality is the antithesis of materiality, and it has always been assumed that the cultivation of spiritual graces exalt the individual and elevate him above the material state with its transitory phenomena. The meaning of the word spiritual has changed greatly in the course of time, but even now definitions are vague and uncertain. It is usual to divide the universe hypothetically

into the realms of God and Caesar, and to assume that there are obligations appropriate to both these spheres of influence. To break the laws of God is sin, to break the laws of Caesar is crime. So far as religion is concerned, a sin is the greater evil, because it endangers the safety of the immortal soul.

Modern man in search of fuller meanings for ancient terms is inclined to think of spirituality as a state of grace, appropriate to those who have cultivated the noblest of sentiments and have practiced the highest ethical and moral virtues. The good life is therefore the spiritual life, but unfortunately even the word *good* has no universally acceptable definition. As our purpose is not controversial, we may as well cling to an idealistic concept of spirituality. By this, a spiritual person is one whose conduct is regulated by the highest religious or philosophical code available to him. Usually such a code is embodied in a theological system, but it does not follow that various sects and creeds must have different standards of conduct. In the Jewish-Christian Bible the Ten Commandments constitute not only a spiritual code, but also the foundation of Jewish secular law. This subject is deeply explored in both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds.

Spirituality gradually takes on certain practical aspects. We can say therefore that harmlessness is more spiritual than harmfulness. Any thought, emotion or action inconsistent with the divinity which dwells within us, or in our fellow creatures, may be considered as unspiritual. Probably this is the most important implication of the term "spiritual" in modern living, and in turn is associated with joy as opposed to sorrow, peace as opposed to war, and kindness as opposed to cruelty. It should always be borne in mind that spirituality has never been considered as an attitude of the mind alone. It must be revealed through appropriate conduct.

Some have taken it for granted that spirituality can be bestowed by a sacrament or guaranteed by an affiliation. The thought here is that the believer enters into a state of immortal security, and is assured of divine protection in this world and beyond the grave. The Bible tells us that words without works are dead, and that professions of virtue are not proof of integrity.

We now regard a person as spiritual when he lives above the level of those common imperfections which detract from the splendor of human nature. The good man may not be perfect, but he is striving after the improvement of both character and conduct.

If spirituality is a natural endowment, it exists as a potential, which must be cultivated by dedication and self-discipline. Some feel however that it is an acquired virtue, which must be earned by consecration and prayerfulness.

It seems to me that spirituality is closely related to regeneration, or as the Alchemists called it "transmutation". It is the dedication of faculties and powers of the human being to the Will of God, and the service of his fellowmen. The mystic renouncing self-will, accepts without reservation the sovereignty of the Divine Will. It is appropriate to ask how may we know what God requires of man. A Rosicrucian of the 18th Century declared that Deity gave man three books, through the study of which the state of spirituality could be attained. The first of these books is The Universe, wherein are exhibited all the wonders of the Divine Plan. The second book is Holy Writ, the Scriptures which set forth the two dispensations, one of Justice and the other of Mercy. The third book is man's body, in which the superior powers of nature combine to form a miniature of that vast plan in which we all exist. It is not difficult to translate this concept into useful recommendations. The universal plan is spiritual, because it arises in the Divine Consciousness, is sustained by the Divine Mind, and perfected by Divine Love. That which is contrary to the authority of the Infinite Will must result in pain and disaster.

By Divine Writ I would interpret any of the great spiritual revelations which have inspired men to live together in amity and cooperation. All of the major theological systems agree on what constitutes ethical maturity and moral virtue. Those who live as closely as they can to these rules will accomplish important mystical and psychological changes in themselves, and these changes in turn advance spiritual insight and contribute to peace of soul. It must always be remembered that spirituality results from growth and that this growth in turn makes further enlightenment possible.

The human body provides man with his most immediate environment. The mind governing the body can be a benevolent

ruler, or a selfish and ignorant despot. Whenever man's conduct is contrary to the normal functions of the human body, this conduct breaks faith with the laws of nature and the Will of God. Every destructive attitude and emotion injures health. Therefore it is obvious that man is intended to think and live constructively, and to cultivate optimism and a charitable attitude toward all living beings. Even though society willfully violates the basic laws of health, it cannot change the Divine Plan. That which disobeys natural law brings upon itself sorrow and pain. Disobedience was man's first sin and it will be his last. When man ceases to disobey, sin and death will no longer be rulers of mortal existence. Milton refers to them as the last great enemies.

The more philosophically oriented religions are inclined to consider spirituality as synonymous with integrity. Older scholars were reluctant to accept spirit, as apart from consciousness, as the motivator and interpreter of living. Thus spirituality was conceived to be the greater good and this in turn as that which was best for the greater number. This always implied that collective security should take precedence over individual security. It became a virtue therefore that the individual should sacrifice his own wishes and desires when these came in conflict with the needs of the collective. This often required self-sacrifice and assailed the authority of self-interest, self-centeredness and selfishness. It was proper to accept humility and detachment from worldly ambitions as testimonies to spiritual maturity.

Philosophy has always been suspicious of the first personal pronoun. It has warned of the dangers of self-will as rebelling against Divine Will. Worldly pomp and circumstance are contrary to the security of man's inner life, and the advancement of a physical career nearly always required some type of compromise in which character is sacrificed to expedience.

In olden times sincere persons sought to escape the contamination of worldliness by taking vows of poverty and renouncing self-will. Unfortunately, these resolute determinations did not always prove effective. The conflicts between the aspirations of the spirit and the ambitions of the flesh continued, and for lack of some legitimate outlet for internal pressure the individual often becomes

neurotic. From this we learn that growth is a simple and orderly process. The thoughtful person becomes better by understanding more, and by converting himself to a higher code of character. When he tries to force the mind or emotions to renounce what they have not outgrown, the consequences can be disastrous. There are many levels of spirituality and it is not necessary to aspire beyond our abilities. The good life begins with the cultivation of simple virtues. These require some self-discipline and a measure of dedication. Later if we take the first step wisely, we can proceed at whatever rate is consistent with our ability. It has been said very wisely that the longest journey begins with a single step. It is my observation that truth seekers, lacking patience, dash on indifferent to the normal requirements of kindly living. Determined to force growth with esoteric exercises, they discover, often too late, that they are not ready for advanced instruction. We can liken the attainment of simple virtues to the grades of primary education. The child will hardly expect to enter college without graduating from high school. Spiritual wisdom is more difficult to acquire than any form of worldly education. Illumination is far beyond the highest academic degrees. The whole search for truth rests on the foundation of the good life. This must come first.

What is the good life? The Neoplatonists tell us that it is simply that standard of personal virtue which distinguishes the human being. A man without such virtue is described as a beast in a world of men, and the one who has attained is described as a man in an animal world. The Greeks were not convinced that man is born into this world as a human being. Actually, his humanity comes only after he has attained spiritual insight. Having thus elevated his consciousness he has achieved the heroic state, as described in the writings of Homer. The hero is a demi-god and a super-man, who has transcended worldliness. Having fully developed his spiritual graces, it is said of him that he is raised up by the Gods to become a constellation in the sky.

The Neoplatonic Ladder of the Sages ascends by seven rungs, its upper end pointing toward the Jewel of Seven Stars. In the first step, man is obligated to rites of purification. He must preserve the cleanliness of his body, both outwardly and inwardly. He

must refrain from any intemperance that would stupify the senses, or obscure the vision of the mind. He must cleanse the heart of all viciousness and passion and non-tranquility. He must love the beautiful and seek ultimate union with The One. There must be in his heart no anger nor hatred, and he must be driven by no appetites that will disfigure the soul. Beyond this, he must quiet the impatience of his own mind, devoting his life to learning and giving instruction by conduct and example. To him the intellect is no longer a conspirator, scheming against the happiness of others. It is a champion of good causes, ever ready and willing to sacrifice itself in the defense of truth.

It might seem that such attainments are all that can be asked of any mortal, but they are only the beginning. They establish character by temperance and make available a disciplined code of conduct, thus preparing for the unfoldment of spiritual graces. Moral rectitude is a pedestal which shall some day support the splendid image of the godly sage. Never mistake the pedestal for the statue, nor try to carve the figure until the base is firmly set.

Western man especially is too impatient in his search for God. He wishes to accomplish all and this impulse itself reveals many of his shortcomings. Even a moderate attainment of integration on the level of consciousness will solve most of the problems which perturb us. We can live happy and useful lives, building good karma for the future and paying with gracious patience the bad karma we have brought from previous embodiments. Bear with kindness what cannot be changed, but make no new mistakes that will bring a harvest of pain in the future.

To me spirituality is not abstract or some strange state to be discovered only by mystics in contemplation. It is the life of honor. The individual does that which is right and just because no other conduct is acceptable to his own consciousness. He is not trying to be good. He is keeping those rules which are most certain to protect his character under all emergencies. Others may call him spiritual, but he knows himself only as a sincere seeker after a better way of life.



Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

NOTES ON SHARITO

Nearly all the religions of the world have venerated the relics of their saints and martyrs, and have preserved such sacred remains and objects in rare and beautiful reliquaries. In some cases personal effects of holy ones, such as fragments of clothing, religious jewelry, or even ancient pictures, have been considered appropriate objects for veneration. Among Western people relics are generally kept in cathedrals, churches or chapels and have seldom been regarded as appropriate to private worship in the home.

Among Buddhist nations reliquaries have symbolical importance and are treasured by followers of both the Northern and Southern Schools. The preservation of holy remains is sanctioned by the account that sepulchral monuments were built over the relics of the historical Buddha Gautama and his more illustrious disciples. Pagodas and towers, some of great height and splendor, are to be found in most Asiatic countries where Buddhism is now prominent or flourished in past centuries. Some of the greatest religious monuments can be seen and studied in Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia and Japan. With their general tendency to adapt the religious artistry of other nations to their own esthetic preferences, the Japanese modified older forms which reached them from the mainland, and this practice has greatly enriched the architectural splendor of Japanese temples and monasteries.

Architecturally considered, the surviving forms of Buddhist reliquaries are the pagoda and the tahoto. A pagoda may rise in three,



Memorial Stupa presented to the Japanese Empire by Chulalongkon, King of Thailand.

five, seven or more levels, each with its own roof in the form of extending eaves, and sometimes auxiliary roofs called *mokoshi*. In the center of the building stands a tall mast, usually a single tree trunk. The upper end of this mast rises above the highest roof, and passes through a decoration of nine rings, and terminates in a finial, usually in the form of a blazing pearl. The pagoda is a detached tower, suggesting the campanile of European churches. A pagoda may be of considerable height and outstanding examples are 150 feet tall, including the spire.

The *tahoto* is considerably less pretentious and conceals beneath its square roof a semi-circular dome, similar in shape to a Buddhist ritual bell. A short mast also surmounts the roof, from which rises the customary spire with its rings and finial. There are excellent examples of the *tahoto* at Ishiyamadera and Mt. Koya. This style, rather reminiscent of the Tibetan stupa or dagoba, is favored by the Japanese esoteric sects.

About 1900, Chulalongkon, the King of Thailand, presented to the Japanese empire an authentic relic of Gautama Buddha and a golden image of this great teacher. In 1904 an appropriate stupa was erected to enshrine this relic at the Nittaiji Temple, located on the Kakuoizan Hill, in the city of Nagoya. This reliquary is now visited by many pilgrims, although not well known to foreign visitors. The accompanying photograph shows the present condition of the monument, which is in the style favored in Central Asia. I was able to take this picture, although the precincts were closed at the time. My appreciation is extended to the custodian for his special consideration.

In Japan reliquary towers, regardless of size, are called *sharito*, from the Sanskrit word *shari*, meaning relic. Miniature examples ranging from three to twelve inches in height, some slightly larger, are fairly numerous in Japan. Most of them are in the general shape of pagodas or *tahoto*, but others may be in the traditional style of family shrines. I have been able to secure a large number of interesting examples, which reveal not only the artistry, but the ritualistic importance of these small reliquaries. They are made of various material. Those most frequently seen are on wood, or gilt bronze. Crude examples molded from rough clay have been excavated from ancient sites. *Sharito* are also made of glass or carved from rock crystal. Small examples may be placed on a domestic altar to receive veneration as part of the Buddhist way of life. Several such miniature towers are National Treasures, or Special Cultural Properties. These are magnificent works of art belonging to ancient times, with lavish ornamentation and remarkable beauty of design.

Literature on the subject of the *sharito* is not abundant. But we can mention the brief description appearing in "*Ko-Ji Ho-Ten*" by V.-F. Weber, reprinted by Hacker Art Books, New York 1965. His remarks, translated from the French, may be summarized as follows: The most usual shape of the *sharito* resembles the *go-rin* or grave marker, composed of five superimposed shapes, a square, a sphere, a pyramid, a semi-sphere, and a blazing pearl. The same design can be recognized in many of the votive lanterns in temple gardens. Small *sharito* are preserved in miniature chapels, placed

on the Butsu-den or family altar in private homes. The shari most likely to be found in these miniature shrines resemble rough pearls or uncut moon stones. They may be spherical or oblong and differ considerably in size, although most of them are about the dimension of a small pea or bean. According to Buddhist tradition, shari are found in the ashes of holy persons who have been cremated. Some authors are of the opinion that these shari seeds are actually cartilaginous masses which have been solidified as the result of cremation.

Similar stony particles are also known in Tibet, and there are several important Lamaist mortuary monuments which are believed to exude these small stones through their walls. Such "Buddha seeds", as they are sometimes called, were collected by Tibetan pilgrims and preserved in small relic cases.

It is understandable why sharito are not the most popular type of art objects among persons who are unacquainted with Buddhism and may be reluctant to acquire relics of this kind. Actually, it is probable that most of these relics are symbolical and are not actual remains. Also, the relics have frequently disappeared in the course of time and small stones have been substituted. This does not detract in any way from the religious significance of the reliquary. After all it signifies that the monument was built to enshrine the ashes of the founder of the faith.

The shrines themselves are so beautifully constructed and their place in the descent of the Buddhist faith is so completely free from morbid associations, that they are objects worthy of research and artistic appreciation.

Relics have always been considered to have magical properties. They serve as charms against evil and were powerful agents in restoring the sick to better health. Though such reverence has long been regarded as a superstition, modern psychological research has demonstrated beyond doubt the value of faith in the treatment of disease. It is difficult to deny the healings recorded in the shrine at Lourdes and the Church of our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

The sharito may be combined with other religious elements and are even found in the forms of Inro or Netsuke. The accompanying illustration is an outstanding example of sacred artistry. The wood carving represents a lotus bud and leaf rising from a base in the



SHARITO IN THE FORM OF A LOTUS BUD AND LEAF.

form of an everted lotus leaf. The upper part of the bud opens and within it is a seated figure of the Amida Buddha, against a background of gold leaf. On the inside of the front section of the bud, here shown separately at lower left, is a written monogram of Amida. The partly curled leaf below the bud is a box, the lid of which opens, and it is here that the shari or soul seeds are preserved. They have been removed for photography and will be seen at the lower right of the base. The lotus stalk with its bud and leaf lifts out of the base and becomes the scepter or baton of a Buddhist abbot. This combination of shrine and sharito is 10½ inches high and approximately 200 years old. Pictures of such items are occasionally reproduced in old books, but the actual articles are difficult to find.

Another very interesting sharito consists of a miniature cabinet with doors at the front. The inside of the doors and the face of the



TYPES OF RELIQUARIES USED IN HOME OR FAMILY WORSHIP.

interior cabinet are ornamented with religious symbols. It is evident from the design that this sharito belonged to one of the esoteric sects. The sharito itself is a circular glass case with two horizontal shelves. This is set into the face of the cabinet surrounded by a design of flames, with a canopy above and a three-pronged thunderbolt below. On each side of the sharito is a Buddha supported on a lotus-form pedestal. The elements composing this particular piece are somewhat obscure. Parts of the reliquary are from 400-500 years old. Other parts appear to be restorations of a later date. The doors may originally have belonged to a different cabinet. As assembled, however, it shows the original intent and is of a type seldom seen.

Our next photograph shows three examples of Buddhist reliquaries. The one on the right is a baked clay or ceramic piece, probably intended as an altar decoration. The inscription is in an obscure dialect and the piece is believed to have originated in Indo-China. It is of a shape suggesting a mortuary urn. The second example is a tall cabinet-like pagoda in black and gold lacquer, the doors decorated with conventional designs. The central section containing the

relics has a glass panel in front and back. It is quite elaborate and was probably designed in the late Edo Period. Pictured at the left is a pagoda stylized to signify the three regions of the universe and the classical Chinese triad of heaven, earth and man. Instead of a relic, the middle section contains a small seated figure of the great Shingon priest Kobo Daishi. In this case the image itself becomes the sacred relic. The example is probably about 100 years old.

If the faith of the believer is strong, the sharito with its holy relics, can be truly a tower of strength. The weak and faltering mortal can experience a revival of courage, and those who have wandered from the path of virtue may be called back to their religion. The person in desperate difficulty may be sustained by his belief that the little stones in the sharito are radiant with spiritual power. Convinced that he is in the presence of a virtue beyond his own, he experiences a new serenity and peace of mind. Young and old therefore have a deep veneration for these little towers and the sacred relics which they contain.



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In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *It is my desire to make a project of studying your various writings and would appreciate suggestions as to which of your books should be studied first? I have most of your writings but not a complete set. Please do not list material that is not available.*

ANSWER: It may be well to remember that I have been writing for nearly 48 years. During this time I have also been a student seeking to enlarge my own understanding. Through long contact with persons in nearly all walks of life, it has seemed expedient to present my beliefs and conclusions in a simple and direct way with emphasis upon immediate utility. It should also be remembered that world conditions have changed greatly, and that it has been necessary to keep as contemporary as possible. In a sense, all my writings are merely a systematic recording of my own explorations in the areas of comparative religion, philosophy and psychology. So far as I know, however, my basic convictions have not changed, and I hope that no serious inconsistencies will be found in our publications.

My writings are divided into three general groups. The first consists of books and booklets prepared as comprehensive studies or essays dealing with a special theme. The second is made up of the articles prepared especially for our Journal. The first five volumes of the Journal were issued long ago under the title *The All Seeing Eye*. Our present publication has appeared regularly since August 1941 and is now in its 29th Volume. The name of the Journal was originally "*Horizon*", but in 1959 it was changed to the *P.R.S. Journal*. Most of the articles were my own contributions

and represent specialized research projects or self-help material, useful to individuals desiring to live more wisely and happily. The third consists of notes of lectures, which in recent years have been prepared in mimeographed form and issued monthly. To these may be added material prepared for outside publications, recordings and the tapes of my various lectures, which are preserved here at Headquarters.

We would strongly recommend that those wishing to plan a program of related reading should secure a copy of my brochure "Great Books on Religion and Esoteric Philosophy". This includes a general survey of the literature in our field by other writers, and beginning on Page 64 is a list of my own articles and books arranged conveniently under appropriate headings. For example, if you wish to know all of my major essays on health, psychology, reincarnation, or symbolism, you will find them gathered alphabetically under their proper headings. There are 37 headings, and these provide a rather complete outline of the scope of our interest.

Included in this listing are most of the essays which have appeared in our Journals. By the use of this handbook, you can organize a reading program, if you are especially interested in some field where I have written extensively. Most of the back issues of our Journals can be ordered from the Society, if you wish to complete your files.

If you are not acquainted with our work or our approach to Philosophical subjects, it might be well for you to secure first the Recording which I made some years ago "My Philosophy of Life". This is also available in printed form, if you do not have a record player. This may help you to decide whether you wish to continue with our literature.

It must be assumed that most persons becoming interested in research and study are motivated by an urgent need or a strong basic conviction. Some may wish to understand Christianity better, in order to restore a dynamic faith in the religion of Western man. Others may be inclined to Eastern wisdom and wish to explore the mysteries of Zen, Vedanta or Taoism. Still others would like to reconcile many faiths and discover essential truths common to them all. It is nearly always best for the student to decide what

he really wants to know and then search for the required knowledge. A specialization of this kind may gradually lead to a more generalized program.

For those whose first interest is in a general survey, our large volume *"The Secret Teachings of All Ages,"* covers the descent of idealistic and metaphysical philosophy from Thales to Bergson. The religions of Greece and Rome, Egypt, Islam and the Central American Indians, are considered, and there are sections on Alchemy, Hermetic Philosophy, Cabalism, and Rosicrucianism. There are also many symbolical illustrations and an extensive bibliography. The book was published in 1928 and is now available in a reduced photographic reprint. The year after the original publication, I gave a series of lectures as a commentary on this book and these lectures were later issued in a separate volume entitled *"Lectures on Ancient Philosophy."* In the group of comprehensive writing, along specialized lines, can be mentioned *"Twelve World Teachers,"* *"First Principles of Philosophy"* and *"Reincarnation, the Cycle of Necessity"*. These approach their theme from the standpoint of comparative religion and philosophy.

We also have a Survey Course for Home Study, based upon the introduction to *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*. This introduction is also available in a number of the Regional Libraries for the Blind.

Most self-help articles are in booklets or in the Journal. They can be found by referring to the handbook already mentioned under the headings "Psychology" or "Para-Psychology".

It has always been my feeling that a program of studies should include consideration for the Arts and Crafts of mankind, as these have revealed the spiritual convictions of humanity. In the Journal especially are comprehensive studies in the artistic achievements of both Eastern and Western Nations, and our recent book *"Buddhism and Psychotherapy"* emphasizes the healing power of beauty, and creative self-expression. It has not been our purpose to write extensively on the development of extra-sensory perception or the release of spiritual forces working through the physical body. The only book we have done in this area is *"Self-Unfoldment."* In this work every effort has been made to present a simple form

of meditational discipline, which cannot result in psychic complications. We can recommend this to those who wish to strengthen the devotional side of their nature. Less personal, but suitable for quiet meditation, are the notes of two lecture courses, "The Zen of the Bright Virtue" and "The White Bird of Tao." These are available in typescript form with a substantial art paper binding.

Neo-Platonic Mysticism has always seemed to me to have great value for modern man. It is based upon a mystical interpretation of the Platonic writing and developed simultaneously in Egypt, Rome and Greece, in the early years of the Christian era. We have two volumes forming a set: *"Journey in Truth"* and *"Pathways of Philosophy."* These trace the descent of the Neo-Platonic ideal from Plato to the beloved American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. There is much in these volumes which can be useful in organizing an idealistic approach to living, without theological involvement.

Some time ago I became greatly interested in the study of the human body as the miniature of the universe. Our principal text in this field is *"Man, the Grand Symbol of the Mysteries"*. This led naturally to the application of ancient concepts to the health difficulties of our time. To meet this aspect of the study I prepared a book *"Healing the Divine Art"*, which was divided into two sections covering the theory and practice of metaphysical healing.

Assuming that you plan to explore our writings with some thoroughness, I would suggest that you start with *"Twelve World Teachers"*. After you have read the stories of these founders of philosophies and religions, it may well be that you find one especially attractive. If such a sympathy arises, you can proceed with our various writings bearing upon this teacher and his ministry. If my own studies are not sufficiently complete, you will find in the outline brochure mentioned at the beginning of this article, a list of other publications by various authorities in their fields, which we believe to be authentic and understandable.

None of my writings are presented dogmatically. We make no claims to infallibility, nor do we imply that we have been privileged by some special revelation. It is our desire that each student should

learn to think for himself, and to help him we offer for his consideration our summation of that idealistic concept of existence, that has inspired enlightened and dedicated human beings for more than 25 Centuries.

It might be that you will like to estimate the growth of my own thinking through the years. "*Volume One of Collected Writings*" by Manly P. Hall contains reprints of several of my earliest writings, including my first published book "The Initiates of the Flame", which appeared in 1922. My second book "*The Lost Keys of Freemasonry*," published in 1923, is still available as a separate work, and has passed through a dozen editions. In the fall of 1923, I made an extensive trip visiting a large number of foreign countries in Asia and Europe. My reflections upon this occasion also appear in the first volume of my Collected Writings under the title "38,000 Miles of Impressions".

Another way of becoming acquainted with our writings is to subscribe to our Journal, which is issued quarterly, and in which 25 or more original essays appear each year. If you live in the area, you might gain the best insight into our work by visiting Headquarters, or attending lectures. There are many approaches possible, but if it is likely that you will read only two or three of our publications, perhaps "*Twelve World Teachers*" will suggest continuing through "*First Principles of Philosophy*" to a somewhat deeper and more comprehensive text, "*Lectures on Ancient Philosophy*". I have always considered this as my basic textbook.

If you live outside of the Los Angeles area, you will find that most larger Public Libraries contain some of our writings, and they can often be secured through the cooperation of State Libraries. It might be good to read a little and decide which books satisfy your immediate needs.

On the back cover of each issue of the P.R.S. Journal is a list of our Local Study Groups. If there is a Local Study Group in your area, you might enjoy associating with its activity. The members are usually studying one of our publications and at least some of our writings can be examined before and after meetings.

The Society offers two correspondence courses on the general subject "*The Basic Ideas of Man*". The first series examines the teachings of such great thinkers as Socrates, St. Paul, Buddha,

Plato and Aquinas. In each case an aspect of their instruction which has immediate practical value is stressed. The second series of lessons deals with the nature of consciousness, the attributes of the human soul, the contemplative life, and the adjustment of understanding to the ultimate realities of existence. Each course is designed to require one year of work. The necessary texts are included with the lessons, and the papers are graded by a qualified educator.

There is also a series of lessons by which my book "*Lectures on Ancient Philosophy*" can be approached systematically, and students are encouraged to submit lessons for grading. It follows that a good comprehension of our material can be gained if the student is willing to devote the time and effort to study.

My approach to man's heritage of learning is based upon a sincere conviction that the knowledge necessary for the living of a good life is available to man if he is sufficiently concerned to explore the great systems of spirituality, morality and ethics. By adhering to those instructions which have stood the test of time, and which are not shrouded in mystery or distorted by fantasy, we can all learn to know that there are sufficient answers for all necessary questions. Realizing from the beginning the importance of an East-West viewpoint, I gradually blended the Neo-Platonic disciplines with those of Mahayana Buddhism. There are so many points of sympathy between the Platonic and the Buddhistic Schools that they provide a splendid program for self-unfoldment. This phase of my thinking underlies the book "*Self-Unfoldment*".

It is also evident that we cannot accept completely and literally interpretations of universal truths, which were prepared to meet the needs of persons living more than 2000 years ago. The general condition of humanity at that time required the formulation of a code of character, which took into consideration world conditions and the approved codes of conduct. It is also true that in the course of centuries, the great schools of learning have been interpreted, reinterpreted and misinterpreted countless times. In the spheres of both philosophy and religion, essential meanings have been obscured by theological orthodoxies or scholastic prejudices. Most forms of essential knowledge have descended to the present genera-

tion as merely opinions to be defended, concepts to be accepted, or creeds to be believed. There is very little vitality. This means that the truth seeker must illumine from within himself the pages of the texts he reads. He will not turn from some ancient teacher because a Greek of 2400 years ago was not certain as to the correct number of teeth in a human head. The more closely we tie universal truths to ever changing scientific opinions or social mores, the sooner we may be forced to separate eternal values from temporal concerns. I have tried to study religions and teach philosophies as they were originally intended in the light of the universal laws which these schools themselves have accepted and promulgated. It makes no difference if followers of faith fall into error, or persecute each other, or exhibit considerable ignorance. If the original principles of a doctrine are sound, they will help those who are willing to live them, regardless of how many others, who pretend to possess insight, may pervert or abuse the beliefs.

It is this point of view, this ever seeking for the good, this instinct to find common ground and to reconcile differences, that really constitutes my contribution. I feel that if others will likewise gain a quiet sympathy for the wonders and beauties of wisdom, they will grow in grace, be better citizens, not only of this world but of the larger universe, and can as the Neo-Platonists said "Face the future with a good hope".



Litigation in the Afterlife

"Our wrangling lawyers . . . are so litigious and busy here on earth, that I think they will plead their clients' causes hereafter,—some of them in hell".

—Robert Burton

The By-Line

Hieron once observed that philosophers when writing of the glory of God always put their own names in their books.

Pre-Zen

There is something Zen-like in the words of Epictetus, who declared that everything hath two handles—the one to be held by, and the other not to be held by.



HAPPENINGS IN THE WORLD

Last Christmas the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Dallas, Texas, discussed the highly controversial issue of the moral and ethical responsibilities of experts in various fields of exact knowledge. Although this subject has been repeatedly revived on such occasions, a new dimension was introduced. There were several among the scientists themselves, who were personally concerned about the moral and ethical responsibility of those who developed and released scientific facts potentially dangerous to the survival of the human race. It is scarcely consistent with factual thinking to be overwhelmed with gratitude for advancements in hygiene, by which human life may be lengthened, and at the same time release for military purposes, scientific methods for destroying the larger part of mankind.

Thirty years ago I discussed this situation with a prominent physicist who insisted that there must be no censorship upon the advancement of human ingenuity. Man must discover everything he is capable of discovering, and scientists should not be held responsible for the destructive uses of their discoveries. By this logic science exists for one purpose alone—the increase of knowledge, and accepts no responsibility for the abuses which may follow. This in substance was the glad tidings proclaimed in Dallas last Christmas.

Science must be honest. It must state only facts and its honor depends upon freedom from compromise and complete separation from all political and social consequences. To question or doubt the pronouncements of the sciences, or the faultless motives which impel them, is to revolt against the "weighty" ones. If Science is concerned with facts, is it not a fact beyond dispute and debate, that so long as ignorance and selfishness dominate human conduct, knowledge will be perverted and skills will be abused, if such perversions and abuses are economically and politically profitable.

Can any human being attain the mental development enabling him to make a major contribution in the field of exact sciences, and at the same time not experience the attitudes and emotions of mature citizenship.

It is useless to say that it is up to the layman to make whatever application he chooses of the knowledge that descends to him from the heights of the scientific Olympus. Is there any reason why we should ask citizens generally to refrain from practices or policies which are detrimental to the public good and then permit the most skillful of our trained thinkers to consider themselves superior to all restraint and self-discipline.

It may seem unpatriotic to recommend that the scientists of the world unite their resources and proclaim their determination to block any further development and use of nuclear weapons or any other type of scientifically developed instruments of destruction. We could therefore begin with some lesser issues, involving nearly every field of activity, in which research contributes to progress. Have we had full and complete scientific facts on the hazards of cigarette smoking? Have the "weighty" ones given us a complete and scientific statement of the effect of alcohol on the lives of our people? Have we been truly and fully warned about the countless medical preparations developed by scientifically trained laboratory technicians? Is there clear evidence that there is no conspiracy between science and industry?

Actually there is a reason why the scientist is suffering from a tarnished image. He has long been respected and depended upon for constructive leadership. He now proclaims his emancipation from any restriction upon his ingenuity. Today when a pharmacist dispenses a dangerous drug he is required to so label the prescription and to give it only under the written authority of a qualified physician. Medicine has learned that you cannot depend upon the public to use drugs intelligently or moderately. The only way to protect the people is adequate regulation and control. Is there any reason why scientific discoveries should be considered as essentially different from any other contribution to society? Should not a dangerous discovery be so marked and proper warning be given to all concerned? If a scientific group continues to produce dis-

coveries which are obviously destructive and dangerous, the activities of such a group should be limited and placed under the strongest curbs and regulations.

Permissiveness has reached a dangerous degree when there is no way of preventing criminals from buying drugs, adolescent neurotics from becoming alcoholics or narcotic addicts, or communities be subjected to dangerous air pollution, because such tragedies are by-products of progress. The worship of new devices and the determination to protect the right of man to create means of destruction, which he is too ignorant to control, are not the proper procedure of a free society. They are the proof of an incredible degree of moral ignorance.

It is greatly to be hoped that the voices of protest within science itself will be heard. The new generation of angry young men, coming into leadership in most areas of knowledge, may finally discover that science does not depend merely upon discovery. The survival of all concerned depends upon the discovery of only that which can be used wisely and constructively. The scientist is first a human being and has a debt to society as well as to knowledge. Perhaps we need a new definition of knowledge. It might be well to consider the term as limited to that which is constructive and harmless, advancing the common good, and protecting man from his own selfishness. If the sciences wish to polish their public images, they must so direct their achievements that they can be admired for their integrity, rather than feared for the terrible skills with which they terrify an already troubled humanity.



A Curious Epitaph

Here lies the mother of children seven,
Four on earth and three in heaven;
The three in heaven preferring rather
To die with mother than live with father.

—In a Birmingham Grave-yard

A Long Time Investment

Many people sell their souls, and live with a good conscience on the proceeds.

—Logan Pearsall Smith



Happenings at Headquarters



During my trip to Japan in May, I was able to attend the closing performance of the Miyako Odori or Cherry Blossom Dance. It has been performed annually in Kyoto since 1872 and was introduced to console the citizens when the capital of the Empire was moved to Tokyo. This most colorful production is presented daily from April 1st to May 10th. There are five performances each day and it is extremely difficult to secure a seat for any of them. The Kaburenjo Theatre in Gion has a large seating capacity and an interesting arrangement of built-in auxiliary seats. The dance play consists of eight scenes representing the seasons. The opening number begins with the cherry blossoms in full bloom. With appropriate stage settings, Summer, Fall and Winter provide a diversity of special effects skillfully handled by those changing and arranging the scenes. The grand finale brings the year back again to cherry blossom season.

The orchestra is divided into two groups, the first is composed entirely of Shamisen players, and the second Features a combination of wind, percussion and other stringed instruments. The orchestra is arranged on both sides of the theatre, near the stage. The stage itself has an unusually low proscenium and there are walkways leading off the stage on each side. In the final scene a large temple gate-way rises slowly and majestically through the floor. The dancers are beautifully costumed, and the choreography is under the direction of Mrs. Yachiyo Inoue, a member of the Japan Academy of Arts. Mrs. Inoue has received many distinctions for her skill and artistry.

It was necessary to wait in line nearly two hours to get into the theatre. Japanese strongly predominated in the audience. The decor of the theatre itself included a magnificently embroidered curtain, and rows of paper lanterns arranged on brackets. All the facilities were completely modern, but a charming oriental atmosphere was preserved. The performance is exactly as it was first given nearly a century ago.

Dr. Henry L. Drake was invited to attend the Menninger Foundation Conference, at White Memorial Camp, Council Grove, Kansas, April 7 through 11th. The theme of the conference was "Voluntary Control of Internal States". The discussion included Disciplines of Extra-Sensory Perception, Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science generally. A congenial atmosphere of honest thoughtfulness and open-mindedness pervaded this Conference.

* * * * *

Dr. Framroze Bode is now on the faculty of the California Institute of Asian Studies, a Graduate school in San Francisco. His name appears on the announcement of courses for the Winter Quarter of 1969 and also for the Spring Quarter. During the Winter Quarter his classes included Iranian Culture, Mystical Philosophy—East and West, and an analysis of Nietzsche's well-known book *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. In the Spring Quarter he gave classes on the "Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of Iran", "Authentic Mysticism and the World's Peoples", and "Life, Times and Teachings of Zarathustra". He also cooperated with Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri in the Sunday morning services of the Cultural Integration Fellowship. Dr. Bode is now on the faculty of the Fellowship, and in addition to his regular assignments, is giving talks on many aspects of Eastern learning. It is fair to note therefore that he is a busy man.

* * * * *

The Summer Quarter of activities at the P.R.S. opened July 13th with Mr. Hall's Sunday morning lecture on "The Karmic factor in Physical Health Problems." Among the subjects chosen by Mr. Hall for the Summer Quarter were "Reading as Therapy", "Life's Most Dangerous Years", and "Victims of Self-Deceit". On Sunday morning September 7th, Dr. Drake took the platform to speak on "C. J. Jung's Seven Sermons to the Dead—Concerning Jung's own Psychology". This is an interesting and highly controversial theme.

On Tuesday evenings Dr. Framroze Bode chose Symbolism as his major theme and approached his subject on the levels of religion and psychology. The series consisted of ten lectures and the



HAKUYU T. MAEZUMI

symbols discussed included "The Dancing Shiva", "The Coiled Serpent", "Mandalas" and "The Great Pyramid".

On Wednesday evenings, July 9th to 23rd, Mr. Hall gave a Seminar of three talks on "The Zen Doctrine of Immediacy", and in August from the 6th through the 20th, he gave three related discussions on the Mystical Significance of Love."

We had the privilege of presenting three guest speakers on Wednesday evenings. On July 30th Dr. Judith Tyberg, Director of the Los Angeles East-West Cultural Center, spoke on "Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy, Psychology and Integral Yoga", which included slides. It is always a pleasure to have Dr. Tyberg with us and her insight into the work of Sri Aurobindo is remarkable.

On August 27th Dr. Douglas Low, who completed his graduate work in the Psychology of Religion and Asian Studies at Clairmont College and U.S.C., presented a most provocative talk on "The Kahuna Teachings of Hawaii—The Priests and Their Release of the Divine Power".

An old friend, Hakuyu T. Maezumi, Director of the Los Angeles Zen Center, gave a Wednesday evening Seminar beginning September 3rd. He has selected the lives of four outstanding Zen teachers, including Bodhidharma, the founder of the Zen Sect, for consideration and interpretation.

There will be two Workshops in this quarter. The first was given on Saturday July 26th, in two sessions, the first at 9:30 a.m. and



Arrangement of dried sea plants by Helene Fairbanks.

the second at 1:30 p.m. On this occasion Dr. Henry L. Drake chose as his theme "Therapeutic Approaches Which Expand Consciousness". There was an opportunity for direct participation by members of the group and also time set aside for questions and discussions.

The second Workshop will be given Saturday, September 27th at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. On this occasion Hakuun Yasutani Roshi will consider "Zen Buddhism—Its Origins, Development and Practice". Yasutani has given his life to study and meditation and in this Workshop will share the experience he has gained in bringing Zen techniques to American students. There will be time for discussion and for actual meditation. Dr. H. L. Drake is coordinator of this program.

* * * * *

The program of Exhibits in the P.R.S. Library is worth very special mention. From July 7th to 27th, there was an Exhibit of the work of Helene Fairbanks, a native Californian, who gained her inspiration from close communion with nature. She made many beautiful pictures by actually mounting sea plants on sheets of

paper. The result resembles oriental flower arrangement, but the pictures are quite permanent and if placed under glass will last indefinitely. This exhibit was also seen throughout the month of August, from 3rd through the 31st, and these showings were greatly appreciated. The September Exhibit, on view between the 7th and 28th, presents an amazing collection of the traditional likenesses of the Saints and Sages of Esoteric Buddhism. Directed in many whimsical ways, these venerable patriarchs inspired the artistic skill of many of the finest painters of China and Japan.

* * * * *

From May 10th to 22nd folks living in Barstow, California, enjoyed an exhibition entitled "A Glimpse of Japan's Art: 17th—20th Centuries". The material was shown at the Gallery in Dana Park, Barstow, and there was an opening reception hosted by Japanese wives, at which Japanese refreshments were served. Mr. Tamoo Ogita was entrusted with the selection of material for the exhibit. He is a Japanese scholar, art historian and appraiser, and has studied in both the United States and Japan.

The Philosophical Research Society cooperated with the groups sponsoring the Japanese Art Exhibit and many of the items on display were from the collection of the Society. We have learned that the exhibit was very well received, and young people especially were fascinated by the examples of Japanese handicrafts. It was a pleasure to cooperate on this occasion.



The View from Pompey's Head

"I say with Didacus Stella, a dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant may see farther than a giant himself".

—Robert Burton

A Subtle Hint

On a certain occasion a young man struck the Greek philosopher Diogenes. Without a moment's hesitation, Diogenes slapped the boy's father.

Taking on Conditions

In his essay *Of The Training of Children*, Plutarch observed "If you live long enough with a lame man, you will learn to limp".



LOCAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES



THE DENVER P.R.S. STUDY GROUP.

We are happy to present herewith a group photograph of the members of the Denver P.R.S. Study Group, which was formed in 1961 while Mr. Hall was lecturing there. This very active group under the continuing encouragement of Mr. Maynard Jacobson, meets the second Thursday of each month throughout the year. The meetings start at 8 p.m. and the study sessions continue until 9:30 p.m., at which time there are refreshments and appropriate social activities. According to reports, some of the meetings do not break up until 11 p.m. or after. The group has just finished a pro-

gram featuring our *Search for Reality*, and expects to turn its attention to Mr. Hall's new book *Adventures in Understanding*. Friend Jacobson has promised to supply more details concerning the programs of this Local Study Group, and the information will appear in our next issue.

We have just received a note from our P.R.S. Local Study Group in Berkeley, California. It would be most encouraging if our program in Berkeley could be brought more directly to the attention of the University of California and members of their families. We have a practical message for confused young people and any of our readers in the Berkeley area are invited to communicate with this Study Group. Please address Mrs. Honor Russell, 2108 Shattuck Avenue, No. 126, Berkeley, Calif. 94704. Friends in other areas can be of help by communicating this information to persons they know in the Berkeley region.

The following questions, based upon articles in this Journal, are specially prepared to stimulate Study Group discussion, but they are equally useful to all readers of the Journal who wish to devote a little extra time and thought to the contents of certain articles:

THE MEANING OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

1. Distinguish clearly between a true mystical experience and a psychological occurrence resulting from stress or pressure.
2. Name two ways in which an individual can protect himself from psychic hallucinations.
3. Why is self-discipline so important to the sincere truth seeker?

SEARCH FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. Define a spiritual person and the responsibilities which he should carry.
2. What are the three books described by the Rosicrucian mystic of the 18th Century?
3. Discuss the Neo-Platonic Ladder of the Sages, and find your own interpretations for this symbolism.

It may be well to remind you that *Adventures in Understanding* by Manly P. Hall is a valuable text for Study Group programs. We hope that you will give this book special consideration.

(Please see back cover for a list of P.R.S. Study Groups)

Library Notes

SHOTOKU TAISHI— THE CONSTANTINE OF BUDDHISM

Part 1

by A. J. HOWIE

It is convenient to introduce an unfamiliar personage by an allusion to someone better known even though the description is far from accurate or adequate. Several writers have called Shotoku Taishi (573-622) the Constantine of Japanese Buddhism. Such comparison is really purposeless other than to agree that each was the effective agent in winning imperial sanction, prestige, and favor for a religious identification. But the motivations of Shotoku Taishi far outshine those of the Emperor Constantine. He was not a recent convert to Buddhist doctrines, but had been a profound student and devout believer from early youth. Further, his success was unique in that although the prime mover, he never became more than Prince Regent under the Empress Suiko, his aunt. Surrounded by intrigue and political factions, he still transcended opposition until he had initiated policies of royal patronage of temple building and taking the vows of Buddhist priesthood.

The introduction of Buddhism into Japan was not a sudden conversion but a by-product of an earlier increasing tendency to cultivate Chinese arts, sciences, language, and crafts. The first transmissions were made through contact with Korea. Preceded by a number of forays during several centuries, the Empress Jingo personally conducted a military campaign in Korea and succeeded in establishing a sphere of Japanese political influence over a territory known as Imna (or Mimana), which was maintained for a long time. Annual tribute was regularly sent to Japan by Pekche. Brinkley, on the basis of consensus among historians on dating reconciliation, assigns a probable dating of the invasion as during 364. According to him, "Japanese historians describe this era as the first period of Japanese national development, for an almost immediate result of the overseas relations thus established was that

silk and cotton fabrics of greatly improved quality, gold, silver, iron, implements, arts, and literature were imported in increasing quantities to the great benefit of civilization." The literature included Buddhist manuscripts, and the arts emphasized Buddhist themes.

The text of the *Nihongi* (Chronicles) and the translator's notes tell of the beginnings of the acquaintance with Chinese culture. There are indications that the Chinese language and ideographs may have been known to Japanese scholars and nobility as early as the beginning of the Christian epoch, but the ability to read and write was probably confined to a few interpreters. There were no schools, and the keeping of records only developed gradually.

In 284 (*Nihongi*) the King of Pekche sent a gift of two horses as tribute accompanied by A-chi-ki (Atogi) to care for them. He was able to read the classics, so the Heir Apparent made him his teacher. A-chi-ki thus became the first ancestor of Japanese scribes (*fumi-bito*). When told that there was a more able teacher than he in Korea, Wang-in; steps were taken immediately to secure his services. The arrival of Wang-in was a most important event in Japanese history because it marked the beginning of acquaintance with the Chinese classics and training in Chinese ideas which have influenced Japanese thought and civilization up to modern times. The *Nihongi* dates this event as the spring of 285, but W. G. Aston, the translator, has studied the chronology carefully and suggests 405 as the more probable date.

At various times Korea sent to Japan weavers, masons, carpenters, physicians, diviners, persons skilled in the mysteries of the calendar, and most important of all, Buddhist scholars. Brinkley notes that a Chinese bonze apparently sponsored by the Emperor Wu, Shibe Tachito, erected a temple in 522 on the Yamato plain, enshrined an image of Buddha, and endeavored to propagate the faith. Although no great stir of interest was created at the time, the name of Shibe Tachito will crop up again.

In 545 Pekche was having difficulties with neighboring Silla and appealed to the Japanese at Imna for military support. Envoys carrying a memorial accompanied an image of Buddha sixteen feet high, a traditional symbolic proportion, for which a written

prayer had been drawn up: "I understand that it is extremely meritorious to make a Buddha sixteen feet high. By the merit which I have now acquired in reverentially constructing one, I pray that the Emperor may obtain exceeding virtue, and that all the land of Miyake (the Japanese territory in Korea) belonging to the Emperor may receive blessings. I also pray for the moral enfranchisement of all living creatures under Heaven. Therefore I have made this image."

However 552 is accepted usually as the date of Buddhism's introduction into Japan when the King of Pekche presented direct to the Yamato Court a copper image of Shaka Butsu (Shakyamuni plated with gold, banners, umbrellas, and a number of volumes of sutras. In a separate memorial he lauded the merit of diffusing abroad religious worship, saying: "This doctrine is, among all, most excellent. But it is difficult to explain and difficult to understand. Even the Duke Chow and Confucius did not attain to comprehension. It can produce fortune and retribution, immeasurable, illimitable. It can transform a man into a Bodhi. Imagine a treasure capable of satisfying all desires in proportion as it is used. Such a treasure is this wonderful doctrine. Every earnest supplication is fulfilled and nothing is wanting Therefore thy servant, Myong, in all sincerity, sends his retainer to transmit it to the Imperial country, that it may be diffused abroad throughout the home provinces so as to fulfill the recorded saying of Buddha, 'My law shall spread to the East.'"

The *Nihongi* records that the Emperor, having heard to the end, leaped for joy and said, "Never from former days until now have we had the opportunity of listening to so wonderful a doctrine. We are unable, however, to decide for ourselves." Turning to his ministers: "The countenance of this Buddha which has been presented by the Western Frontier State is of a severe dignity such as we have never seen before. Ought it to be worshipped or not?"

Sidestepping a decision, he opened the issue to factional support of the Soga clan who seemed favorable, and the bitter opposition of the Mononobe clan as loyal to the traditional gods of heaven and earth whose wrath might be incurred. Because the Soga grandee had spoken favorably, the Emperor decided: "Let it be given to



The miracle-working image in the Zenkoji Temple, restoring the sight of a blind pilgrim.

Iname no Sukune who has shown his willingness to take it, and as an experiment, let him worship it."

The Soga Oho-omi enthroned the image in his house at Oharida where he diligently carried out the rites of retirement from the world, and on that score purified his house and made it a temple. Almost immediately a pestilence broke out and became progressively worse and worse. There seemed no relief. The enemies of the Sogas took full advantage of the calamity by protesting to the Emperor that, just as they had predicted, the pestilential havoc was evidence of the wrath of the national gods because of the worship of foreign deities. They were given permission to destroy the image which they were quick to hurl into the swift current of the Naniwa Canal, and for good measure they set fire to the temple, seeing that it burned until nothing was left but the blackened grounds.

The Zenkoji temple at Nagano preserves this tradition, but not without some inconsistencies. The Japan Tourist Bureau *Official Guide* (1959) describes the image as that of Amida and his followers Kannon and Daiseishi. Mrs. Gordon mentions it as the "Golden Triad". The *Nihongi* records the original gift from Korea as Shaka Butsu. Also the tradition has been elaborated in the *Official Guide*. The image had been made of gold by Buddha himself. It was found and rescued from the canal by Honda Yoshi-

mitsu in 602 and taken to his native village. Afterwards he built a small temple for it at Nagano. After many vicissitudes, it was restored to the Zenkoji Temple in 1598 which is named after the founder whose personal name can also be read "Zenko". Images of the founder and his wife and son are worshipped in the temple along with the images of Amida, Kannon and Daiseishi.

To go back to the records of the *Nihongi*, in the summer following the pestilence, a strange event occurred. Reports came to the Imperial attention of a voice of Buddhist chants from within the sea at Chinu, in the district of Idzuma, which re-echoed like the sound of thunder, and that a glory shone around like the radiance of the sun. The Emperor was impressed enough to send a personal envoy to investigate who reported finding a log of camphorwood shining brightly as it floated on the surface of the sea. The Emperor commanded that a sculptor make two images of Buddha from the log. The radiant camphorwood images were worshipped in the temple at Yoshino at the time the *Nihongi* was compiled. Since then they seem to have been lost track of. The modern *Official Guide* makes no mention of the carvings, nor is any further notice taken of them in the *Nihongi*.

Twenty-five years later, with a new emperor on the throne of Japan, the King of Kudara made a second attempt to introduce Buddhism into Japan. He sent two hundred volumes of sacred books, an ascetic, a meditative monk, a nun, a reciter of mantras, a maker of images, and a temple architect. Ultimately a temple was built to house the newcomers at Naniwa (modern Osaka). In 584 two Japanese high officials returned from Korea bringing a bronze image of Buddha and a stone image of Miroku which were turned over to Mumako, the son of the Soga grandee Iname no Sukune, who had inherited his father's devotion to Buddhism. Apparently he was aware of Shiba Tachito, the Chinese missionary bonze who came to Japan in 522, as it was to him that he turned for help in searching the provinces for Buddhist devotees. They found Eben, a Korean who had been a priest and was willing to resume the stole and perform the sacred offices. He consecrated the daughter of Shiba Tachito and two other girls as nuns. A new temple was built where the image of Miroku was enshrined, and a pagoda for a Buddhist relic which had shown miraculous powers.

The tradition is that this relic—The Holy Triad—appeared miraculously floating over the sanctified food used by the newly consecrated nuns during their periods of meditation and vigil. It was tested on a block of iron by striking it with a sledgehammer. Both the block and the hammer were shattered, but the relic was unharmed. It floated when cast into water, and sank or floated as they instructed it. The relic is said to have strengthened the faith of the nuns, and inspired Mumako to build another temple at his residence in Ishikaha.

Again a plague of smallpox broke out. Physicians could find no remedies that helped. The ravages were horrible. Those who recovered were generally left blind. Again a hue and cry was raised about the worship of foreign gods. The Emperor ordered the suppression of the alien religion and permitted the burning of the temple and pagoda. The remains of the image were cast into the canal. The nuns were stripped of their sacred garments, imprisoned and flogged.

In spite of all this the plague became worse. The Emperor himself as well as Mumako became infected. The popular outcry began to take a new direction. They complained: "Our bodies are as if they were burnt, as if they were beaten, as if they were broken," and so lamenting they died. Old and young questioned privately to one another, "Is this a punishment for the burning of the image of Buddha?"

Mumako not yet healed approached the Emperor: "Thy servant's disease has not yet been healed; nor is it possible for succor to be afforded me unless by the power of the three precious things (the Buddha, the Law, and the Priesthood)." Mumako was permitted to rebuild his temple and reinstate the nuns on condition that no efforts be made to spread the doctrine.

We have only touched lightly upon the violence, political intrigue, and hatred of the times. The Mononobe found Buddhism a convenient instrument of contention with which to discredit the powerful Soga clan. Such was the setting when Yomei, the father of Shotoku Taishi, became emperor. The *Nihongi* records that he believed in the Law of Buddha and revered the Way of the Gods (Shinto), the first time the latter phrase is found.

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