

JOURNAL

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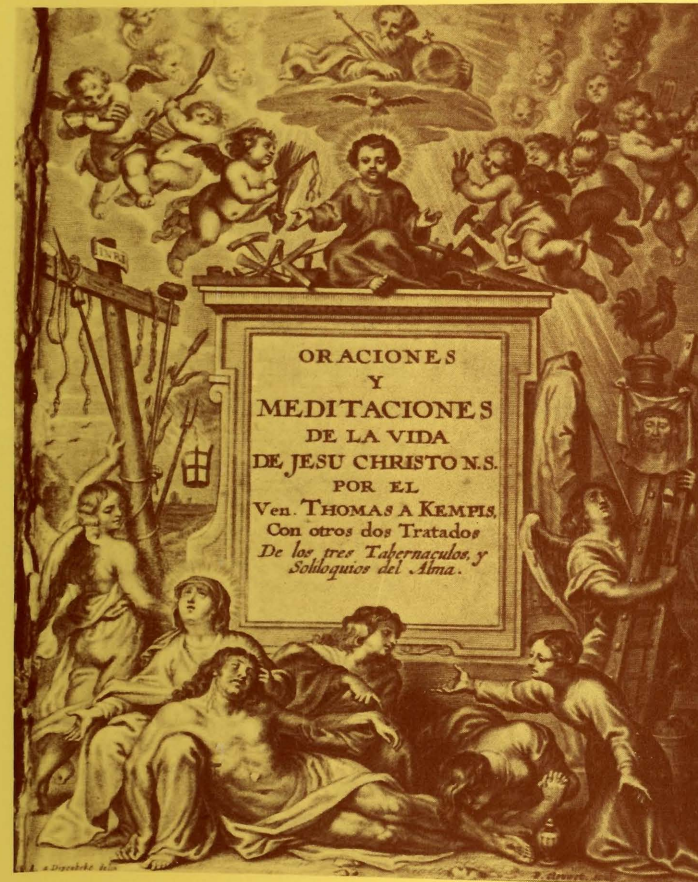
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Most of the reproductions of the early books, manuscripts, and objects of art which appear in this magazine are from originals in the collection of the Philosophical Research Society.

About the Cover: Title page of the *Oration and Meditations on the Life of Jesus Christ*, by Thomas a Kempis, Brussels, 1661.

As we gather to celebrate the holy season of Christmas let us give special thanks for the revelation that has been given to all of us in the year now closing. We have received a new realization of the importance of world peace, national unity, racial tolerance, and religious insight. We fully appreciate the fact that the human dilemma is the divine opportunity. For a moment at least we behold a new order of life coming into a world which has too long betrayed the noble destiny for which it was intended. Under normal circumstances we would have continued to make the old mistakes and centered our minds upon the fulfillment of personal ambitions. Let us be especially grateful that we now have an awareness that a universal reformation is necessary to survival.

Not only do we recognize the desperate emergency which has been developing, but we have come to realize that within each of us is a spiritual resource which can help us to cross safely the Red Sea of selfishness and suffering which we have created for ourselves.

Christmas is always a promise of the gifts of God to the world he has fashioned. We are told that the Eternal Parent who loves his children chastizes them when necessary. The need is now great, and we are all privileged, not only to recognize the corruptions we have brought about, but the remedies by which human society can be restored to its God-given potential.

Along with Christmas and the gifts we share with loved ones, let us be mindful of the transmutation that is already changing the world for the better. Give us the strength to continue this improvement during 1988 so that competition may be transformed into cooperation and the conflicts between nations and races shall cease forever. If we think and live this way, by next Christmas it is possible that we can unite together and give God a Christmas present—the fulfillment of the hope for world peace.

Manly P. Hall



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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TABLETS OF THE LAW?

At the present time the Western churches are gravely disturbed about the moral issues for which they have no ready solution. The Church of England is struggling with the issue as to how much of modern sin should be condoned, and how the clergy should react to the immoralities increasing among the members of the Protestant denominations. The attitude of forgiveness of moral delinquencies is being interpreted as forthright acceptance that sin and salvation have formed a workable partnership.

The prelates of Canterbury and York are not in solid agreement on a number of issues. The younger generation, if too strongly reprimanded may simply break away and discard even the appearance of conformity which has also been a cause of concern for some time. With many faiths to choose from those least concerned with religious ethics may ultimately attract the younger generation. At the moment prospective remedies simply appear as too little and too late. There should have been a closer working partnership between education and theology. While we ignore moral values in the daily transactions of secular affairs, temptations are strong and sermons are weak, but it does not seem necessary to assume that the battle is lost and corruption will conquer the earth.

There is a strong possibility of creating a working partnership between religion and science. With all its shortcomings there is a

realistic side to biology and physics which is almost theological. In other words there are many cases in which the physical sciences support religious convictions, but there is prevailing hesitancy to examine this area. Actually science and theology are partners in the avowed purpose of building a safe world and a healthy race of people. It should be apparent that the same laws underlie both spiritual and secular purposes. If we cannot keep universal law we will certainly suffer and perish, and what we now regard as the proper subject for higher learning is to build a code of conduct which conforms with the requirements of both God and nature. Enthusiasm for this concept is mild to say the most. We think of physical phenomena as a world in itself to be conquered by the instruments of science, but religion is more or less an aberration acceptable to those who have discovered science to be inadequate to the common needs of humanity.

When pharaoh refused to liberate the Israelites from bondage in Egypt the Lord sent plagues as punishment for disobedience. It would seem that we have inhabited this planet long enough and suffered sufficiently for the mismanagement of our own affairs that we should be mindful of the eternal laws which guard and guide both planets and people.

After we found remedies for a number of common ailments, we gave thanks to the pharmaceutical houses for the pills, capsules, and injections which took care of a number of our common ills—almost everything but the common cold. During this same period, we have been waging war, encouraging gangsterism, condoning crime, and bringing down upon our heads the wrath of heaven, or whatever it is that administers heavenly wrath.

It seems perfectly reasonable that we should have a world which we fashion to our own taste and conveniences with no regard for any rules except those which we make for ourselves. Little by little we have dropped from our program of progress any factors which would trouble conscience or, better still, reject the very theory of conscience. So we open the morning paper, turn on the radio, tune in the television, and settle down to the bad news. Everything is wrong and, as they used to say in the old church, “the devil is loose

in the land.”

Actually many churches seem to be flourishing and new religious institutions appear almost daily, but they are not forming a solid front against delinquency. Now religious organizations themselves are open to severe censure for their indifference to the social disaster. While they are rescuing a few sinners, iniquity sweeps over the world and even those of good intentions are losing the means with which to support the virtues they wish to preserve. There have been many strange happenings since Cheops carved his name onto the monuments of ancient Egypt. Most histories deal with war, rape, crime, and plunder which are generally regarded as inevitable by-products of progress. We look with a vicarious kind of pain at the miseries of the past, but our own present plight is by far the worst in recorded history.

The drug traffic endangers the health of the present generation and an immeasurable future. New diseases are springing up and still the emphasis is upon a cure and not a prevention. We are constantly announcing a new scientific miracle to counteract forms of illness which we should never have had in the first place. We hope to cure alcoholics and drug addicts but have no effective ounce of prevention which will not adversely interfere with the expansion of the profit system. Prevention applied at the proper time costs very little, but the treatment is one of the heaviest expenses that society is expected to bear. It is no longer a case of a few dishonest individuals exploiting the innocent. The innocent are slowly disappearing and nations are masses of human beings most of whom are cheerfully exploiting each other.

We have heard that there has been an outbreak of bubonic plague in Africa. It used to be that this disease was spread by four-legged rats, but now two-legged rats are becoming an important equation. Earthquakes break out on every hand and communities already weakened by poverty, ignorance, and lack of sanitation are further afflicted by natural catastrophies. Nuclear weaponry, which is the number one absurdity of all time, seems to prove that many thousands of years of human suffering have not diminished our desire to decimate each other. Crime has increased until not enough prisons

can be built for the incarceration of those criminally inclined. Much of this crime is a direct result of a society which no longer rewards or respects honesty or religious training. Now to all this we have added AIDS and the Anglican clergy is not quite sure from the victims of this ailment whether they should be condemned or condoned. It is suddenly feared that compassion in these cases will help speed the spread of the pestilence.

Pharoah tried everything to continue the enslavement of the Israelites, but when his own son died, he neither repented nor relented, and the armies of Egypt were finally engulfed by the waters of the Red Sea. Quite a bit of symbolism suggests itself. It might be even suggested that we are on the edge of a Red Sea. It is a relief to realize that Nostradamus predicted rather clearly that the twenty-first century would be a definite improvement over the twentieth century. He felt that a considerable body of humanity would come to realize that they are on the road to extinction and must change their course before it is too late. There is one optimistic thought and that is that even the smallest virtues are compatible and work together, whereas vices can never form a lasting partnership. They turn on each other and in some mysterious way the honest man who is hidden among them is steadfast to the end.

It is not fair to say that antiquity was overburdened by its own virtues, but it was limited by opportunity. Now, an earth which already carries over five billion human beings on its back requires more skillful management and directives than it has received in recent centuries. We must seek and find the laws which govern existence. The rules that are revealed throughout creation from infinite space to the smallest conceivable unit of energy have rules peculiar to themselves. They did not invent a declaration of independence, but naturally and inevitably fulfilled the destiny for which they were intended. Properly used, the laws of destiny can transform this planet from its present doldrums into a pleasant and purposeful abode of a righteous people.

Our universities and all institutions for the improvement of the young and protection of the aged should become aware of truths neglected for ages. Instead of constantly trying to adapt universal

laws and energies to the enrichment of our material ambitions, we should study the purpose of existence. It is not just what we can gain by education but what we can give to the management of our planet that is of vital importance. When we attempt to investigate nature's laws and purposes we are bitterly disappointed. Practically every ambition that motivates modern living is selfish, self-centered, and destructive of natural resources. To us the planet is a sphere of opportunity in which we can do exactly as we please or would wish to. We have no interest in the waste of natural resources. The fact that forms of life are becoming extinct goes unnoticed and it is taken for granted by each generation that a considerable number will die in war, perhaps a larger number will perish from poverty and malnutrition. Diseases will claim rich and poor alike and we will be exploited by corruption until the government collects our inheritance taxes.

The rate of suicide among younger people has increased considerably. They have faced a world that talks about nothing but the extraordinary privileges it can bestow, but has no time for those who need understanding, sympathy, strength, or religious insight. I have been asked many times what life means to the average individual. It is a little worse now than in the remembered past. Psychologists are becoming increasingly concerned about the damage done to children by selfish and avaricious parents. Very few young people are really learning to live well from parental example. The infringements of financial need now place most of the emphasis upon the family bank account. The additional money to be expended principally on luxuries is in many cases the result of social influences. We must have all possible luxuries and feel that the money we spend on them will also benefit the children. This is also questionable.

Young people who are born to play are most likely to land in the divorce courts, possibly several times. All values are measured in money, and wealth has become a primary virtue—a belief that will never be justified. If it was true that the great depression of 1929 was actually a financial disease, we are now having a recurrence on a much larger scale. Everything that might make a strong, sincere, and honorable citizen seems to be fading away. We used to read good

books, but now we are drenched with penny dreadfuls. Music, art, and literature are being daily debased. Why is this so? Are we actually voluntarily and irresistibly returning to the jungle? And even if we get there, will the jungle accept us?

In the eighteenth century we developed the political concept of liberty, but we specified liberty under law. Without self-discipline there can be no liberty. For a time nations threw off yokes of tyranny and became free and independent commonwealths. In some cases we simply destroyed preceding governments and executed their leaders. We have also created a goodly number of free states in the present century, but now the grand old problem comes back. These little nations which gave all for liberty and put statues of their liberators in the public square, are doing everything possible to take each other over in dictatorships and tyrannies. The little nations might be likened to small children, not secure enough to take care of themselves, but striving after a meritorious goal. Before they can achieve it they will be invaded by powerful neighbors and countries eating each other; may continue to make history while the system survives. As natural resources become more difficult to find, prices will increase accordingly and we will hear all kinds of strange noises involving the use and abuse of great wealth. Here is another plague which actually finally took over Egypt for the enrichment of the Roman Empire. No one was satisfied while there was an opportunity to gain by foul means the private property of another person. Croesus was told that a soldier with better iron would take away his gold and so it happened. Now we know that better nuclear armament will end the importance of better iron.

All these experiments and useful improvements will cover the earth with death and misery. How does it happen that we can read about this, see it happening before our very eyes, know that there will be more of the same tomorrow, and complacently go along contributing to our own undoing? The modern plagues sent by the Lord upon the Egyptians are not examples of divine indignation. They are the simple, natural, and inevitable consequences of breaking the basic rules of the universe to which we belong. No one is picking on us. We are simply attempting to exploit each other with the hope

that all will turn out well.

We can sympathize with those trying earnestly to solve our immediate difficulties without interfering with our concept of "business as usual." All we need is an honest world in which all the selfish evildoers become honest of their own accord, and that government select to office noble persons ethically incorruptible. To have such people we must produce them. If we wish the soil to give a good harvest, we must give it time and care and a certain amount of knowledge. We are already trying to pick a new candidate for the next presidency of the United States. Between now and then a number of other countries may rise, fall, or remain the same. Each in its own way, these various nations are looking for an honest man who is honest enough to take good care of those who elected him into office. If we were to be asked where we could educate a group of leaders who would be true to their jobs and their constituencies, keep the laws, and guard the rights of the citizenry, where would we find them? We have tried almost every type, weighed them in the balance and found them wanting—too much. It is obvious that if we want good leaders we must produce them. The laborer is worthy of his hire. Executives should be properly compensated, but those who pay the bills should get what they pay for. A country that is willing and able to remunerate its legislative personnel should have reliable, substantial, civic-minded legislators for whom the country's good is the primary consideration.

It must always be remembered that every circumstance that can arise in society has its own laws and is subject to them. Unless we establish the rules regulating things or processes we will always be in trouble. For example: When we buy an electric toothbrush we get with it a sheet of instructions telling us how to achieve the maximum value of this special product. When we buy an automobile an elaborate manual explains the proper function of the car, how it should be maintained and under what circumstances it should be serviced. Even an electric egg beater requires a passing moment of attention. It is assumed that a doctor has been educated in his professional responsibilities; the same is true of a lawyer. An artist must understand the proper mixture of colors and a musician must be able

to interpret the value of the various notes of a musical score. The better informed we are and the more conscientiously we keep the rules bearing upon our own lives and the maintenance of our commodities the better off we will be.

We learn, usually from sad experience, that it is possible to damage an expensive piece of equipment through ignorance, carelessness, or downright indifference. The same is true of life. The human body is a delicate instrument subject to immutable laws. Within the body all the parts and members have their own autocracies—rights, privileges, and constitutional responsibilities that cannot safely be ignored. In short, we live in a universe that has complete authority over the parts of itself. It will give useful service as long as it is used properly, but there is no possible way that its procedures can be violated without trouble, and the worse the violation, the greater the trouble. We take it for granted that the human being is lord of all he surveys, but he has proprietorship only over the rules that he obeys. The cosmic power provides a guarantee that is valid only if the printed instructions are fulfilled.

In our present human environment the best book of instructions that we have is the scripture of our faith. It tells us the warranties that nature provides for the use of its various products and facilities. If the warranty is broken by the consumer, all rights are forfeited. We do not live on a sphere which bestows the right of the individual to abuse the property to his heart's content. He never actually has ownership, but a lease that can be forfeited if its terms are violated. If our lease on life requires that we live together in peace, if we break the peace our rights of usage are cancelled. The hundreds, yes thousands, of involved and inter-involved conditions that make up human living each has a rule of its own. Money, for example, is not actually ours to use as we please. It is given for us to use as we should. Otherwise the financial system will sicken and die. We are provided with everything necessary for a reasonable existence, but each commodity also has laws which provide for its survival. Animals have their rights, so do trees, and even rocks. Everything that exists is an unfolding unit of life fulfilling its part of a lawful plan.

What the Bible describes as the seven plagues simply describes broken rules and the suffering that comes from them. Privation is not a law of nature, but irrefutable evidence that humanity is not taking care of its own. A great war is a fatal illness that can destroy a nation or group of nations. Exploitation devitalizes the natural energies of a people. Most of the important rules can only be maintained by moderate living. We must share together that which is available and efforts to advance our own fortunes at the expense of common good is a chronic illness passing into a critical state. What we wish to emphasize is the danger of fooling with an elaborate mechanism which we do not understand and intend to use only for selfish ends. If it explodes in our faces or disintegrates into a mass of rubbish, the blame is with the person or persons not qualified for his chosen labor.

The Ten Commandments are just as applicable to world affairs as they are to the moral conduct of individuals. An old theological question arises as to whether a benevolent deity is responsible for all the miseries of humankind. Philosophy implies that deity is not vengeful nor tyrannical. Universal life does not cause tragedy or disaster, but even if the entire population of the planet united to nullify some simple universal process they could not succeed to the slightest degree. All that would happen is that a broken law unless corrected would continue to plague humanity from one generation to another.

It might be wise therefore to recognize that most disasters are the consequences of violating the vast pattern of infinite purpose. When it becomes apparent that trouble is in the making there is not much use in amending the constitution or rewriting the bylaws to protect a dishonest nation. If it is wrong, correct it properly and completely, or settle back and endure the results of a false hope.

We are now preparing for the twenty-first century during which time we are going to solve transportation, locomotion, nagging economic inconsistencies, housing, education, medicine, law, science, and we hope entertainment problems. How are we going to do all this? We are going to have new inventions which will enable us to continue false policies so that we can pass them on to the twenty-first century. The main objective to all worldly seeking, is to con-

tinue indefinitely into the future the false policies that we think we enjoy at the moment. All will be solved, but nothing will change. It should not take a Ph.D. to realize that there is something decidedly wrong in this type of thinking.

We have had plagues since the dawn of history. We prayed God for deliverance from the great plagues of Europe which in some cases took half the population of a country. It followed the licentiousness of the Romans and a world of petty conquerors, slaughtering and enslaving their way to power. After these were epidemics of civil strife and revolutions, by which a new tyranny replaced an old one. All this time there were earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, and whole cities disappeared in a single night. The afflicted prayed to God for forgiveness and wandered about the earth. Those who survived restored the procedures that had devastated their land.

Now we have a situation which threatens the very foundations of human institutions. Determined to live in a world adjusted completely to our own pleasures and profits, we are still failing to read the instruction book that came to us in the beginning. We like to deny the validity of the ancient prophets. Some have insisted that the old manuals were only invented to restrict by their moral codes the modern excesses of conduct.

On the first page of the universal manual we are told that the cosmos was a product of divine workmanship, and the instructions must be obeyed if things are to function properly. If the machinery is abused or neglected all warranties are violated, and when this happens things are bound to go wrong, for the eternal power that fashioned all things alone knows the fullness of its intention. We gather, however, that natural, happy, constructive, cooperative, adventuring together on a beautiful planet with everything that man needed was the purpose held in the Divine Mind. Ignorance got us all into trouble, but a moderate amount of ignorance contributes to learning. When we see that it does not work we then have the right to readjust our habits. Instead of that, we are striving desperately to outwit the power that gave us being, and it is quite understandable that our conspiracies should fail.

The ancients recognized seven planets, each of which had a

positive and a negative aspect. The misuse of the powers of the planets, according to the old Chaldean astrology, loosed the seven plagues from which we all suffer. Saturn is complete orthodoxy and will continue to support prevailing policies as long as possible. According to Jupiter everything will be so grand and great that we will overlook entirely the fact that it all stands on a molehill. The sun resolves to create an aristocracy that is the wealthiest and the most gorgeous that has ever been seen. Mars is going to conquer everything and unite all the peoples of the earth in one man-made nation that has nothing in common with the divine purpose. Venus would give the whole creation two coats of the most expensive paint on the assumption that if we save the surface we save all. Mercury will intellectualize the subject and there will be a holocaust of assorted solutions with great emphasis upon change, but with business going on as usual. The Moon governs the ebb and flow of populations. The sixth billion is on its way, but no one knows apparently which way it is going. These problems seem tremendous to us, but in the great scheme of things the truth of the matter is that while trying to live, we never read the instruction book.

Where living creatures are involved many mistakes are auto-corrective. We suffer a little, learn a little, grow a little. Nostradamus promised that at the end of the twentieth century there would be a great change in human affairs. The facts of life will become so obvious that they cannot be denied and we will outgrow some of our fondest fallacies. Public health will improve, and humanity in general will have a broader vision of the rules governing the course of human destiny. Religions will take a new attitude towards the divine mystery of life and education will finally get around to doing a little educating. And on this glad note we will close this article.

Social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit. . . . Otherwise, all our efforts will be futile, and our social edifice will be built, not upon a rock, but upon shifting sands.

—Pope Pius XI

THOMAS A KEMPIS

Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471) was born in Germany. He had taken religious orders, but never accepted the rites of the church to disturb the tranquility of his inner life. He became identified with The Brothers of the Common Life. This meant the rejection of worldly wealth and honors and the dedication of life to the service of the poor. This organization gained considerable standing at a period when the church was suffering from delusions of grandeur. The Holy See was well on its way to control of the material world, but there were many educated Christians who believed that the holy life was fading away and the example of Christ was being generally ignored.

In a sense, therefore, Thomas a Kempis contributed to the Protestant Reformation and the rise of the materialism which he had bitterly rejected. The most famous of the writings of a Kempis was *The Imitation of Christ*. In this sense "Imitation" is used to signify total obedience to the teachings and conduct of Jesus. The book itself is divided into four sections, each of which contains a number of pious admonitions. There is no thread of story, and a Kempis has nothing to say about his own life or the circumstances which led to his total rejection of the physical world. Most writers dealing with the life of a Kempis have assumed that the tremendous pressure that maintained his piety could have indicated that in his early years he may have practiced the vices of his time.

He has been included among the "Quietists" because of his complete separation from the mortal world with its griefs and grievances. There was no conflict with materiality for it had completely ceased to be a factor in human existence. It was as though the quietist simply closed his eyes, lived within himself his allotted span, and passed from this world with his eyes still closed. A Kempis was not a judge of the world nor did he criticize the vices of his neighbors or attempt to reform them. Such conditions had simply ceased. In the

place of mortal confusion a Kempis found the companionship of his soul with the soul of God—all that was necessary or desirable.

He experienced complete internal happiness because he had chosen to live forever in the immediate experience of the Divine Presence. It did not mean that he was without pity for the needs of the poor. He did what he could to assist them, but never permitted any physical circumstance to assume the proportions of a reality.

The material world is a fantasy, a kind of waking dream. Nothing is what it seems to be and there is no peace, salvation, or consolation in any material achievement. All physical careers and policies must end in pain. Once this is known from experience there is no further interest in anything that exists only for the moment. In a certain way a Kempis was a Christian Zen. Reality is experienced only within the soul of the true believer. Obviously such a concept finds little favor with those absorbed in worldly ambitions. In spite of this, *The Imitation of Christ* has been for centuries one of the most treasured and widely read Christian religious books.

For one thing, although his decisions are severe, a Kempis builds into this book the only practical answer for the Christian dilemma. It has been studied by the rich and the poor, the great and the humble, and it has influenced millions of lives toward the nurturing of the graces of the spirit. We gather from this book that religion cannot justify on any basis wealth and fame as compatible with the teachings of Jesus. As accumulation itself is a worldly fantasy there is no solution resulting from giving the wealth to a church or any other charity. As long as there is a modified materialism which is accepted by the Christian faith, the battle of the creeds will continue and millions will suffer and die for causes which can never be justified.

In those days the concepts of the universe were largely speculative. A Kempis recognized that God had created a world and natural laws arising in the Divine Spirit were kept with fullness of virtue and grace, and materiality as we use the term today would not have existed. If however human minds attempt to exploit the labors of Divine Mind, the end would be suffering for all concerned. It hap-

M. Kempis
LA IMITAZIONE
DI CRISTO

DI
TOMMASO DA KEMPIS

Nuovamente dal più corretto Originale
Latino in Italiano tradotta

PER OPERA
DI

ENRICO ENRIQUEZ
CARD. DI SANTA CHIESA,
E DI MOLTE FIGURE ADORNATA.

Esse Imitatores Dei sicut filii carissimi
Ad Ephes. cap. 5. vers. 1.



I N V E N E Z I A,
P R E S S O G I O: A N T O N I O P E Z Z A N A.

MDCCCLXXXIX.

Con Licenza de' Superiori, e Privilegio.

The Imitation of Christ from an edition published in Venice in 1789. The text is illustrated with small engravings much in the spirit of the old emblem books.

pens, however, that human beings by emphasizing the values of the material world have burdened life with war, crime, and a variety of inept religious and financial institutions. There is no way of mending the problem, according to a Kempis, except by washing the slate clean, and obeying without question the will of Deity as preserved in the Gospels. There is only one rule and one kingdom. God is

the ruler and the kingdom is a manifestation of His will and purpose.

Due to material conditions the average person gradually comes to feel that he is the victim of some evil destiny. He may believe in a devil or attribute his miseries to the corruptions of institutions, but as the old Arab proverb sums it up, "Man is born, man suffers, and man dies." There is no way by the use of man-made devices to alter the inevitability of mortal processes. To escape them one must transcend them and a Kempis believed he had done this by accepting God as the only reality, the scriptures, the only source of knowledge, and his own soul as his personal link with the Divine. He could not improve the works of Deity, but if he accepted them completely and without question a mystical contentment arose within him and he placed his destiny forever in the keeping of the one God.

It seems to me that Thomas a Kempis is telling us that this physical earth, the planet where we are all huddled together, was originally the Garden of Eden. God intended human beings to live a simple and gentle life, enjoying the bounty of nature and the beauties of the planet without the pressures of ambition and accumulation. The history of mankind is a long complicated amount of futility. Nothing actually lasts except the soul which is within it. Empires fall, nations crumble, and private citizens abide only for a little while in the land which the Lord God gave them. Success is a fantasy, and in the long run of things the great and the humble lie side by side in the same earth. Why then should we make such a vast project out of a situation in which there can be nothing but final frustration?

If we trace the burdens which now afflict us to their beginnings, we must inevitably discover that humanity is the cause of its own suffering. Heaven did not divide nations, but it did create a variety of interesting types of human beings. All of them, however, are subject to the same futilities regardless of location, language, or color. When Napoleon or Hitler waged war millions died for leaders who followed them to their graves. Actually the sound and the fury were without substance or meaning but constituted the hope of a tyrant who wished to be remembered as a conqueror of the world. Under the spell of dictators and despots millions of human beings marched



The devout woman experiences the immediate availability of divine strength and consolation.

forth to die on some distant battlefield for causes of no consequence.

In his introduction to *The Imitation of Christ* Irwin Edman writes that a Kempis was content to be God's fool, but he is no man's fool. In Section three, Chapter 25, a Kempis discusses four things which bring the great peace. The mystic says that the truthseeker must protect himself from his own willfulness by choosing to accept a discipline from another rather than to attempt to rectify his mind by recourse to his inner egotism. The wise man chooses always less rather than more. To choose more is to develop the habit of accumulation, or to turn the attention to mortal concerns rather than centering the consciousness in the Divine Purpose. Speech should be brief and meaningful. Aimless speech leads to conflicting opinions, antagonisms, and misunderstandings. It is better that general conversation be of general interest, otherwise it will not hold the attention of thoughtful persons. When asked for advice it is always best to have recourse to the divine revelation and to strive ever for the extension of grace according to the wisdom of the faith. Every wanderer comes in the end to need a staff upon which to lean. Let that staff always be the presence of God and the examples of devout persons who have gone before.

We are just beginning to feel the simple wisdom of Thomas a

Kempis. We note with increasing anxiety the depletion of natural resources without even a vaguely intelligent notion of the tragedy we are causing for ourselves. We live precariously on the edge of nuclear weaponry and resign ourselves that some major catastrophe is inevitable. The crazy quilt pattern of modern progress did not originate in universal laws. A Kempis was probably a learned man in his own time. He had the simplicity of truly deep thought and the mastery of the language necessary to write his book, *The Imitation of Christ*. Unfortunately it is not possible to communicate the wisdom of the ages to a self-deluded people who have made a virtue of their own ignorance.

Even moderate reading, as Lord Bacon testifies, is enough to prove conclusively that our way of life is basically wrong and that the goals that we are striving to accomplish are impossible fantasies. We cannot win the aggressive schemes to which we give most of our attention. Why not then accept defeat graciously and take advantage of the natural benefits which we are striving to destroy? The answer would seem to be the cultivation of the simple life. Our needs are few, but our desires continue to corrupt our good intentions.

Why is the simple life something we fear and which we are resolved to avoid at all costs? Could it be that we are afraid of ourselves? We fear a kind of quietude which might cause us to think. We are willing to labor and worry and bring numerous disasters down upon our heads in order to have yachts, country homes, palatial hotels, and office buildings which reach far higher than the towers of great cathedrals.

Why must we have these things? One nuclear bomb could destroy centuries of handiwork and the labors of countless skilled artisans. Is it necessary to pollute our oceans with electronic wastes which even the hardiest fish cannot survive? We are now looking for a cure, but it must not interfere with the accumulation of poisonous materials. The dread of war hangs over our heads, and half the planet's surface is locked in mortal strife, but it is simply assumed that this is an inevitable consequence of progress.

A Kempis intimates to us that procedures that end in death and misery have no right to be considered progressive. We demand that

our legislators maintain the so-called high standard of living regardless of consequences. Why not settle back and refuse to be part of a nightmare which has resulted from human beings carefully nursing their faults and failings instead of correcting them?

As the human race seems to have no intention of mending its ways, the responsibility lies with enlightened individuals. They cannot force their enlightenment upon others, but they can correct their own faults and live in harmony with nature's original purpose. We can start first by curbing our ambitions. By searching within our own natures, reading the daily paper, or watching the news on TV, it becomes obvious that the ambition to rule other nations, annex their lands, or enslave their population is not conducive to peace on earth and goodwill towards men. Why not be content with the good earth which provides us with all our needs unless we exploit its abundance, enjoy companionship with our families, and allow the human body to function without stress or tension? A peaceful heart and a contented mind would cut the medical bills in half or better, reduce crime, and permit us to enjoy the length of days which the Lord has promised to those who keep the rules.

Along with ambition a Kempis gives thought to accumulation. The earth belongs to God, and the fullness thereof is the bounty of God. We try desperately, not only to own our own homes, but everyone else's home that we can take over on some pretext such as foreclosing the mortgage. That which has been given to us free, we sell to each other at the going rate which is getting higher every day. We have invented also a medium of exchange which we commonly call money and we are probably indebted to the Phoenicians for this idea.

The financial system was not given to us from the clouds of Mount Sinai. It is an invention of our own with everyone trying to get their hands on as much of it as possible. Accumulation is possibly the greatest source of crime. We feel that poverty is the great evil and wealth the ultimate good. Everything is so geared that the necessities of life are only obtainable by those who have the proper financial resources. In the divine code we are all supposed to earn the necessities and modest luxuries by personal labor, thrift, and the



The Mystery of Christ brings comfort and consolation to those heavily burdened with worldliness.

control of our appetites for luxuries and non-essentials. Money is no longer a medium of exchange, but is the principal purpose for human existence and what we call the good life.

A Kempis also disentangled himself from the pressure of religious exploitation. Remembering that the Messiah had no place to lay his head, a Kempis had nothing in common with great cathedrals, and the clergy in its robes of gold and silver. In other words he expressed what is now becoming increasingly popular—that religion should not be big business. The family could worship together in their own home and contribute good deeds to the needy. It was also possible that a very modest church building with no decorations except the cross could be a quiet place for meditation and self-searching.

A Kempis did not believe that affiliation could in any way compensate for a selfish life. It might be good to remember that in the beginning men worshiped heaven from the crests of mountains and the depths of valleys. Nature was the great church, the only sanctuary that could renew itself and still not require a heavy upkeep. Actually, the meditative life requires solitude. That is one of the reasons why it is carefully avoided. The religious experience is a dedication to the human needs and the rescuing of the soul from the illusion of worldliness and materialistic enterprises. In the course of ages

millions of thoughtful persons who have suffered much from worldliness have found the little book *The Imitation of Christ* as a source of an inner security they had never known before.

There is also a strong emphasis upon meekness. The Master declared the meek to be blessed and when it is cultivated, pride fades away. What we call pride has a number of dependent miseries. We try to maintain an attitude of superiority which often verges toward pomposity. We want other people to think that we are better than we actually know ourselves to be. We like to assume an attitude of wisdom, and if we have unusual wealth we want it to show so that it can be envied by others.

Little by little pride can lead into debt or cultivation of corrupt friends because they appear to be successful. I think that a Kempis proved, at least to his own satisfaction, that genuine meekness cleared his life from much of the burden that sophisticates must bear. He did not have to prove anything, there was no need to deny what others said, the battle of wits was outgrown, and peacefulness reigned supreme. No one could really claim to be good and this term was reserved for God, but those who live the simple life become as near to God as is possible in the world of flesh.

The universe in which we live seems to be the manifestation of a great silence. Things happen in nature, but there is no argument, and the wise person, living as close to God as possible, enjoys the spiritual unity with the infinite love of the power that fashions all things. As long as we argue even with ourselves or feel impelled to convert others to our believings, we fall short of the Divine Teacher. The physical world in which we live speaks a special language of its own. It tells its story in the natural growth of living things, great and small. Nature is forever teaching, but never preaches. Inwardly the soul is an infinite quiet within the heart. It never speaks in the language of the marketplace, but conveys meanings by moods and the gentle impulses of conscience. It reacts constructively to those living the imitation of God using the model of Christ as the supreme example of that which desires nothing, but gives all.

It is likely that the little book of Thomas a Kempis will have a major revival as conditions here grow increasingly complicated.



Those who have attained perfect meekness of spirit experience the Holy Trinity which abides with them and in them through all the years of life.

Populations will increase and ambition and accumulation will become deadly ailments. We must all unite for a common good which transcends the selfishness now ravaging the earth. We can wonder how a Kempis would feel about the age of industrial science which burdens us today. The glib term "progress," even this word is a synonym for fantasy. The great discoveries of the Greeks are now ancient history. The Roman Empire is preserved in a book, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Gibbon. Many children today in school have never heard of that author. Progress is not to be measured in armament, treaties, or parliamentary debates. There will never be a computer great enough to solve our problems, but if we should build one close to it, it will be the greatest problem of all. There is only one way that progress can be measured, and that is by peace in the world and the human heart.

Progress is not a building of greater armies or more destructive weapons. These are actually relapses into savagery, regardless of what we please to call them. There must someday be a Tubal Cain who will pound all swords into plowshares. Only that which is good has reality. This world is the pronaos of the temple of eternity. We are all waiting to depart from this little molehill to a larger field which was prepared for us before the beginning of time. A Kempis was

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BEAUTY

Some thirty-five years ago in my regular trips to New York City I nearly always spent at least one evening in the Roerich Institute. The penthouse was reserved for lovers of Tibetan art and discussions of world philosophy. One evening Talbot Mundy, Claude Bragdon, one of the Roerich boys, and I became involved in the problem of beauty. With the exception of a few occasional remarks I sat quietly improving my mind. My very good friend, Claude Bragdon, had written a little book which was published under the title *The Beautiful Necessity*. Bragdon was an architect and the discussion posed the problems of symmetry. He pointed out that harmonious proportions were not only attractive to the eye, but were actually vital elements contributing to the endurance of public building and private homes. The same laws apply to the inner lives of human beings. Thoughts and emotions can be symmetrical or asymmetrical, and when they fail in both beauty and order they undermine values both physical and metaphysical. Buildings come to look tired and individuals are afflicted with neurotic tendencies.

In his essay *On the Beautiful*, Plotinus, the Neoplatonist, reveals his participation in the universal mystery of harmony. He writes: "The soul borne upwards towards intellect puts on a marvellous beauty. Intellect, and that which comes from intellect, is the beauty which truly belongs to her and is not foreign to her; because, when united to it, and then only, is she truly soul. Wherefore it is rightly said that the beauty and good of the soul consist in her assimilation to God; for it is thence that her beauty comes and the gift of a better lot than her present one."

As Plotinus pointed out, the beauties of the physical world are perceived and contemplated by the sensory perceptions, but Eternal Beauty is seen by the single eye of the soul. When this is awakened, the splendor of unseen things transcends all the beauty of the

mortal world. We must try to explain what Plotinus intends when he speaks of the soul. To most of the Greeks there was a triad of spirit, soul, and body. Spirit is ultimate divinity or causal life; soul is the highest part of man's threefold disposition or nature; and body includes everything from the mental nature down through the physical structure with its various processes.

At this time we shall interpret these terms according to Neoplatonic mysticism. Evolution is a process by which personal consciousness is raised to union with the soul and together they are ultimately united in the Divine Substance.

The term mysticism is in common usage today, but not with the meaning originally intended. To fulfill the concept of Plotinus a mystic must gradually overcome the dichotomy which separates the physical life of the individual. Materiality prevents the expression of the soul and does not permit its victory over material concerns. Most mystics have outgrown the pressures of mortality and have raised themselves to a condition of internal peace which cannot be disturbed by physical circumstances.

Today, a mystic is one who follows a mystical tradition or belief. He venerates Jacob Boehme, William Law, or Francis d'Assisi. He defends very strongly the mystical virtues, but in matters of decision, continues in his own accustomed ways. For example: A friend asked me if a wealthy person could be a mystic? Obviously the answer is, yes, but with certain modifications. An individual whose primary concern in life is wealth or accumulation is almost certain to compromise integrities in the cause of gain. If he violates universal ethics as these refer to mysticism, he cannot be a mystic. We notice a problem that is becoming a detriment to the evolution of the human soul. Nearly all who have advanced along the road of the inner life have been poor in terms of material goods. They have had to so discipline their natures that they could not allow selfishness or self-interest to dominate their lives.

A rich mystic must be one in whom the sense of possession has been completely transmuted. If he has wealth he can be no more than its custodian, and throughout his life he must dedicate his efforts to using his worldly goods for the advancement of society and

not for personal gain or distinction. Very few accomplish this end. Many wealthy people are philanthropic and find their pleasures and fulfillments in supporting worthy causes. While the sense of ownership stands and the individual gains personal pleasure instead of gratitude he has not transmuted this finer sense, but has merely refined it a little. The mystic owns nothing, not even his own mind or body. He lives to serve not by considering service a special virtue, but the true mystery of internal fulfillment.

Take another example: ambition. No person seeking fame, distinction, honor, or high estate as the prime motive for living can be considered a mystic. The only reason physical distinction is permissible is when it provides the opportunity for another expression of complete selflessness. Fame nearly always brings with it a kind of personal pride which may cause the person involved to compromise his ethics to maintain his worldly status.

When we go to school we are taught that through education we shall be able to increase our fortunes. Having gained a position recognized in medicine, law, or science, the fortunate ones build on their reputations fully convinced that their proper destiny is to reach a pinnacle of reputation and then depart from this world. To the mystic education provides forms of knowledge which create usefulness and in every case knowledge which is thus accumulated must be used for the public good alone. We can extend this thought, for the only justification of knowledge or skill is to advance the common good. To use an ability merely as a source of enrichment in physical terms is contrary to both divine and natural laws. One of the reasons why the world is in such a serious dilemma is because the citizens are devoted to their private interests, willing to advance themselves rather than to protect the common good.

Now to a more modest explanation. Thousands of people today are joining mystical movements, reading books on the subject, attending meetings, and mingling together for mutual benefit. Before these people can call themselves mystics, the motive for which they are seeking an extension of consciousness must be unselfish, impersonal, and the first concern should be the reorganization of their own lives. We can join anything we wish so far as names are con-

cerned, but those who are members in name only have no understanding of the benefits of enlightened living. Various motives appear about as complicated as those which cause the sufferer to go to a psychiatrist. No person who is using some type of religious belief or discipline can afford to maintain an animosity, a grievance, a prejudice, or an intolerance.

Those who are seeking consolation for the grievances of living must correct these grievances themselves. Why should we ask God for help in situations in which we are personally to blame for the trouble? Such a truthseeker goes merrily on his way, breaking his home, neglecting his family, failing to support worthwhile community projects, and perfectly content to believe that he is on the verge of cosmic consciousness.

Frequently people come to me—mostly in the doldrums and bitterly aggrieved. Why should they have to like people they dislike or forgive faults in others which are similar to their own, and feel that selected religious reading will clarify the situation? The mystic must first outgrow and overcome by enlightened effort every negative, destructive, critical, or unreasonable attitude he possesses. Now granted this is a large order, and very few people can accomplish everything that this program implies in the course of a single lifetime—that is why we have many lives in which to do it.

Buddha gives us the right answers. The long journey that leads home to unity with Divine Truth begins with one single step. It begins with the first enmity we permit to die, the first animosity we solve. It goes on involving friends and relatives, both living and dead. Some are still moping over ancestors that have been dead for years, others have never been able to mend a broken home or win the confidence of their own children. Some of these corrections are not easy nor can they be accomplished in a few days, or even a few years, but each sincere effort resulting in a constructive inner experience is another step in the journey home.

Not long ago we had an advanced alcoholic who had made a ceremonial allegiance to a religious organization. He was still drinking heavily and his doctor had given him solemn warning. It never occurred to this alcoholic that his bad habit had anything to do with

his religious life.

In the days of my beloved Grandmother there was a gossip who was the terror of the neighborhood. She lived only to distribute bad news, real or imaginary. At the same time, she was a pillar of the church and had installed a fine stained glass window in memory of her husband. She gossiped against him even after he was gone to his eternal rest. This did not mean that she was not a good, devout woman. Her wrong attitudes just did not have any meaning religiously. They are habits or traits of character which will be sheltered from the cradle to the grave.

Claude Bragdon was fully convinced that there is not a destructive attitude that does not set up some negative vibration in the compound structure of the human being. We already begin to recognize that dispositions can destroy, but here again we have our feelings, our moods, likes and dislikes, and heaven and earth must accept us as we are. It is perfectly possible to remain unregenerate for a long time, but this contributes little to the unfoldment of the inner life.

Claude Bragdon was much involved in church architecture as we have noted. He liked to build a place of worship which would inspire the worshiper to raise his consciousness at least a small degree above the common level of his daily activity. Bragdon liked the small church that was in some way a perfect mathematical formula. He held that the more beautiful mathematics involved in the building the more inspiring the edifice. Nature is very exact. It never overlooks the unfoldment of a virtue and is constantly urging everything to a fuller expression of its own internal life. You can build a church according to rules of symmetry and have in the end a radiant jewel properly suitable to be a place of worship which is not ostentatious or overdone, but has a gentle, kindly, spiritual atmosphere of piety. He was further certain that while we cannot all build churches, and there is really no need to, we can all perfect the sacred shrine in our inner lives. In every way we can strengthen beauty, sustain peace, and continue good works as long as we live.

As a reward the physical body may not be handsome, but will have a glow about it which will be strangely and beautifully radiant. Every part of the person shares in this improvement, has a much

more peaceful life, and discovers other kindred spirits thus strengthened by the same atmosphere of serenity. A mystic makes a serious effort to change himself. There is some reputation to be gained by teaching, but much more by becoming. It is sincerely to be hoped that those who are seeking a better way of life can actually weed out some of the weaknesses in themselves. All around us individuals are breaking the rules set forth in the Scripture, "Love ye one another." In nations we do not find love, in races there is eternal separateness, every attitude is contested and everyone seems to think that solutions lie in some kind of revolution. The only revolution that will help in the present situation is human kindness which can lead in the end to divine revelation. There are more people going to the churches now than in many past years. We are seeking some consolation of the spirit, but to have it we must permit the divinity within ourselves to come forth and bless our daily labors and consecrate them to the world's good.

It does not happen that most of us admire the plate glass and concrete steel school of architectonics. Every year thousands of tourists travel to Europe or Asia to enjoy the charm of great cathedrals, beautiful temples, and stately mosques. We enjoy the quaint charm of London's byways and the miscellaneous street cafes of old Paris. When I went to Germany some years ago I made generous use of my camera. Many buildings were old and tucked in odd spots, but there was always charm, an elaborate sign hung over the front door, or a curious latticed window overshadowed the street. If these old cities were all modernized it would certainly diminish the tourist trade. We go to see something different and if we are satisfied with the same as always, we stay at home.

A friend of mine who was an architect was driven to distraction. He would receive a budget upon which to base a figure of total cost. He told me that in one case the sum appropriated was six million dollars, and when he asked what they wanted to spend on artistry and decor, the usual answer was five to ten thousand dollars. Really they did not care what it looked like as long as the offices were rentable and the elevators ran on time.

Bragdon more or less used modern architecture as one of the

diseases which are destroying the humanity in man. We cannot have a happy world unless there is beauty. The shaded streets of London, the canals of the Netherlands, and the parks of France lift the spirit for a few moments at least from the deadly monotony of modern design.

Another builder who chanced to cross my path noted that modern construction is extremely expensive. When the Romans built the Coliseum they expected it to last for awhile and it is still a prime asset of the Italians. My friend said that in a hundred years modern buildings would probably fall down or require demolition. Steel is not the permanent material we suspect. Actually it rusts inside the concrete, and even a moderate earthquake could finish the natural destruction. We are simply creating a new kind of slum. The poverty rows of fifty years ago have mostly faded away. Now we have multi-million dollar slums where it is no longer possible for children to play in the street or neighbors to chat happily on a park bench. While he never said so directly, at least to me, I suspect that Bragdon sincerely believed that modern architecture is contributing to the degeneration of mankind. We all need inspiration, and it is not necessary for our churches to resemble the New York Stock Exchange, or for that matter for the Stock Exchange itself to have such a gloomy and foreboding appearance. The more sky we cut off above and the more earth we pave below, the less of nature is available to us. If nothing else, we need the potted rubber plant that used to adorn thousands of Eastside fire escapes.

We might also note that clothing is very closely related to architecture. Little by little we have lost the knack of pleasant appearance. The combination of skyscrapers and the traditional hippy uniform is almost too much. We will not abolish crime, restore home life, get rid of riots on the street, and lower the suicide rate until we do something to lift the human soul from the deadly monotony of waste and want.

Even in the congestion of modern living, many countries with comparatively small land allotments have protected beauty and preserved the dignity of art and religion. In many of the more congested cities of the world there are still flashes of beauty, and effort

to preserve the dignity of life from the deadly monotony of business as usual.

In an age of condominiums, space is limited and the instinct to beauty is often further debased. The world we accept on the outside we now take for granted as normal and the front parlors of expensive homes are getting to resemble the lobbies of banks and hotels with too much luxury and little or no taste. As I have mentioned in other places, the Greeks solved the problem by exiling and imprisoning architects and builders deficient in cultural instinct.

A recent study has emphasized the vital contribution of individual and collective appearances to the consciousness of persons. All shapes and forms, have rates of vibration and their designs are reflected into the human brain. Here they are classified and the valueless are discarded. The brain then accepts the fragments of true beauty, grace, and dignity and passes these images on to the soul which rejoices at perceiving the likeness of itself in other things. We cannot afford to take beauty out of living. If we do, we reject that which most enriches and ennobles character. It has often been noted that wealth is no remedy for bad taste. Extravagance does not bring rejoicing to the human soul, it only bears witness to the great disappointment which is spreading throughout the land.

The ideals we were discussing in the penthouse of the Roerich Institute have been forgotten by many. In fact most of these gentle souls are no longer with us, but they were right. Without beauty we will have no virtue, and without virtue we will have no beauty. All the good things of life which raise us above the endless pressures of the marketplace are fragments of eternal beauty. We think of a variety of crimes which we feel deserves immediate punishment. The great city is a vast misdemeanor, but in the course of time the soul will rise from the inner depths of human nature, and we will begin to restore beauty, and as a result think better, feel better, act better, and pay our taxes with a better grace.



Griping about troubles: "If you could kick the man responsible for most of them, you wouldn't sit down for a week."

—Oren Arnold

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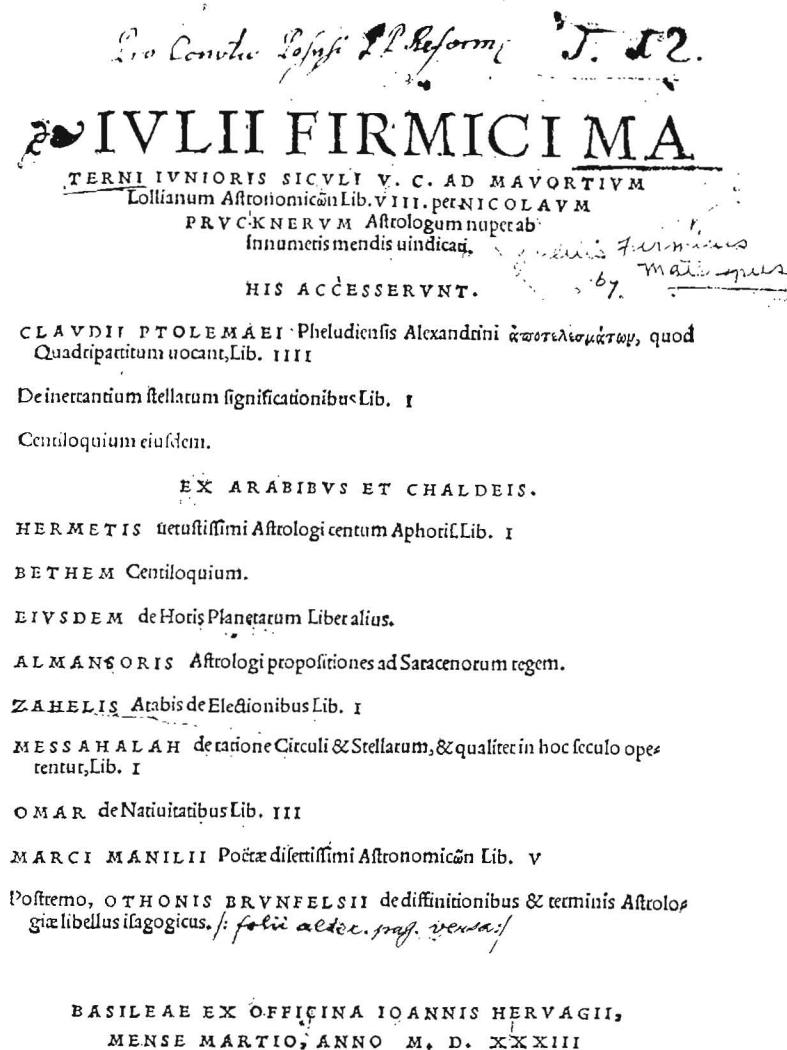
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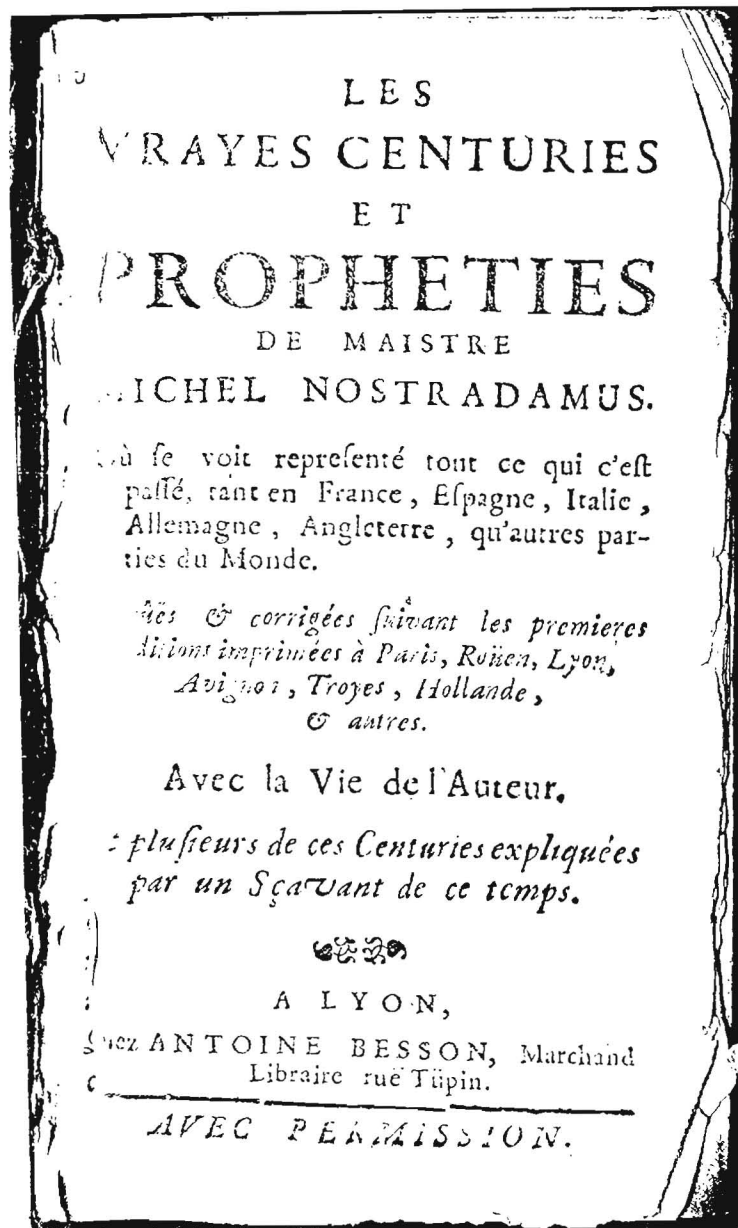
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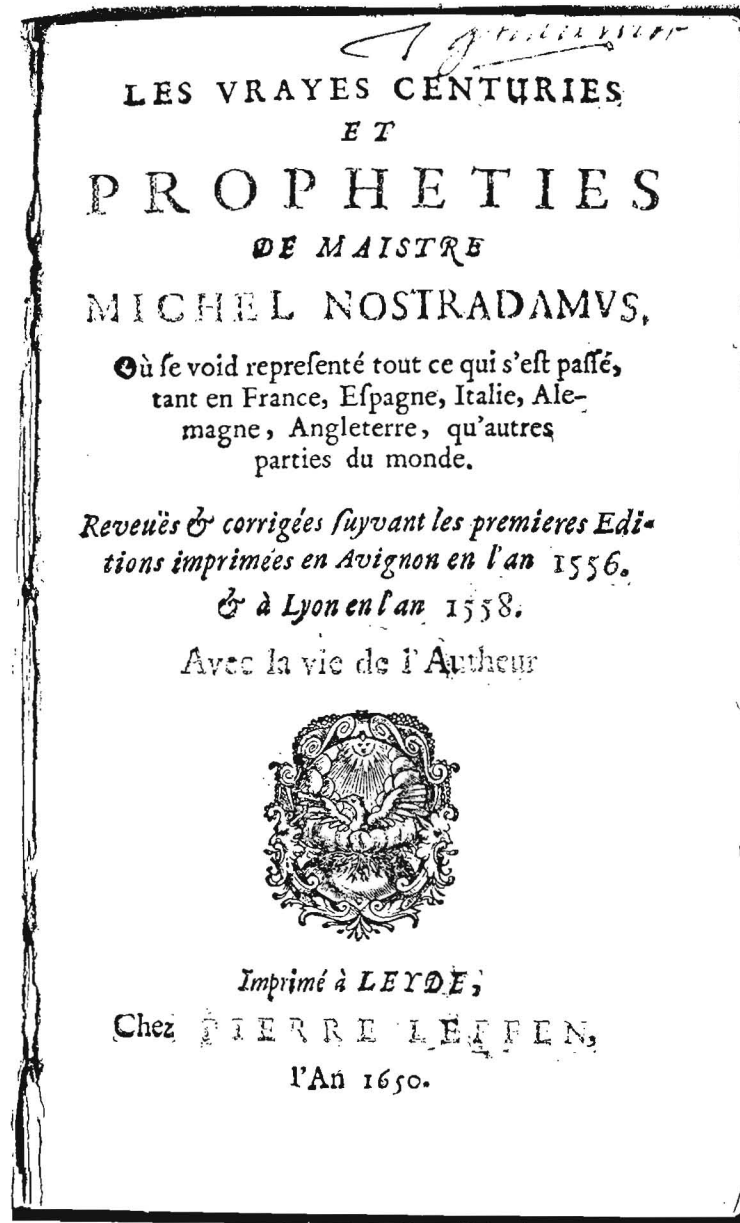
Mezzavacca, Flaminio, *Otia sive Ephemerides Felsinae Recen-*



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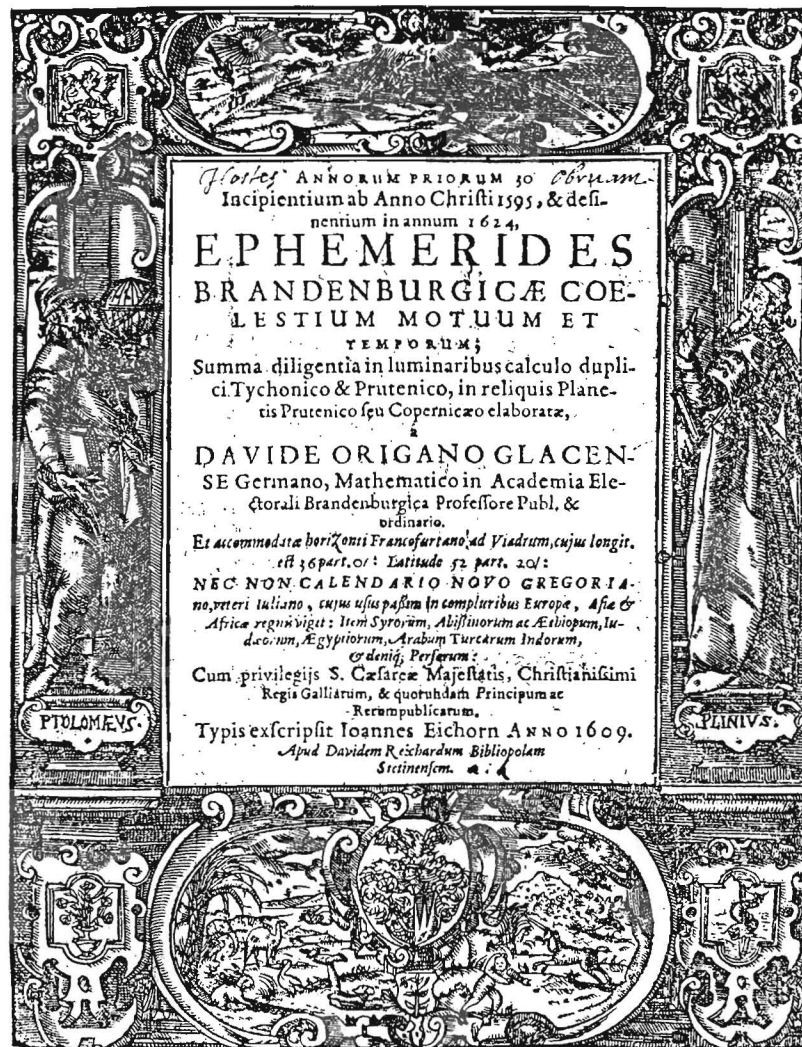
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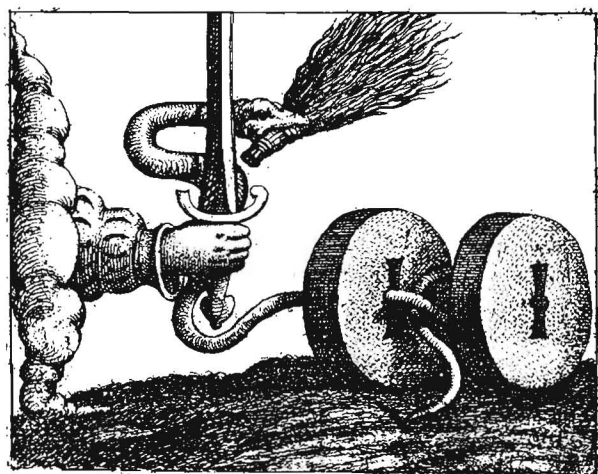


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FIGURA I.



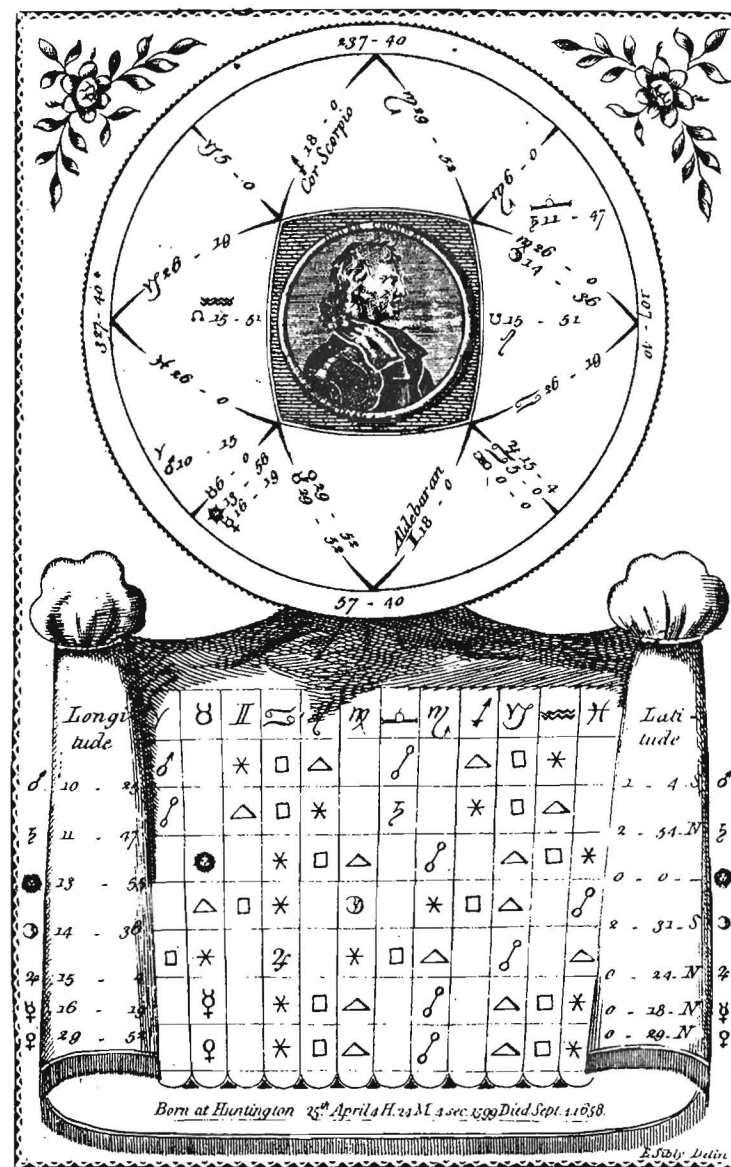
IN omnibus rebus est externa quadam nota, qua deprehendimus ea, quae oculis non sunt subiecta hoc est interna. Sic & natura rei suos, rursus & magica suos habet, quos signat, sic & tu signum tuum proprium circumfers: vorandi enim studio flagras, atque expetis eos qui tecum nonnihil commercij habent. Terque quaterque beatus is omnis est, perpetuaque fruiturus quiete, cui omnino nihil est quod agat tecum: si verò sint qui tecum commune quiddam habere desiderant, pulchritudinem tuam, ac decorem tuum plusquam iustitiam & integritatem requirunt.

A

Prophetic emblem from the 1536 edition of the *Prophecies of Paracelsus*.

of the 1536 printing is from the library of Thomas South, the father of Mary Atwood, well known for her contributions to alchemical mysticism.

Partridge, John, M.D. *Supplement to Placidus de Titus; containing the Nativity of that Wonderful Phaenomenon, Oliver Cromwell*, London, 1790. John Partridge wrote extensively upon astrological mat-



Engraved frontispiece with the horoscope of Oliver Cromwell with interpretation by Mr. John Partridge. From *Supplement to Placidus de Titus*, London, 1790.

ters, especially the Placidian system. By the end of the eighteenth century, hatred for Oliver Cromwell had subsided, and he had emerged simply as an historical personage. Had it not been for this fortunate time lapse, Partridge would scarcely have dared to refer to Cromwell as a "wonderful phenomenon." This little book has a nicely engraved frontispiece with a likeness of Cromwell placed in the center of his horoscope and an elaborate aspectarian below. Gardner appears to have entirely missed this item which includes a discussion of the *Primum Mobile* of Placidus de Titus.

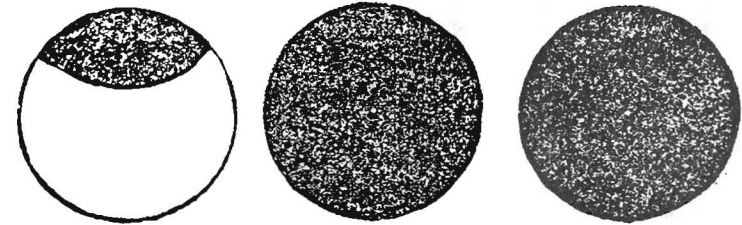
Regiomontanus (Johann Mueller) (1436-1476), *Ephemerides* for the years 1494 to 1505 printed in Black Letter. At the beginning of each year is a diagram of the eclipses. In 1475 Regiomontanus was summoned to Rome by Pope Sixtus IV as a consultant in the plan for calendar reform. It is questioned as to whether Regiomontanus died in one of the epidemics of the plague or was poisoned by rivals. It is said that tables calculated by him were used by Columbus on one or more of his voyages.

William Salmon, Professor of Medicine, was born in 1644 and his interests extended from the study of the starry heavens to the practice of medicine and an historical approach to the speculations of alchemy. His engraved portrait at the beginning of *Horae Mathematicae Seu, Urania, The Soul of Astrology* includes his heraldic arms and the volume is dedicated to Sir Richard Barker, Knight, one of His Majesties' physicians in Ordinary. The title of the book suggests deep contemplation which is supported by the last line of the description on the title page, "The whole Work a new thing, the like never yet extant."

In his discussion of comets, Salmon leans heavily upon the speculations of Paracelsus. A contribution of Aristotle is in substance that a comet is made of elementary matter, raised from fat and thick exhalations, then lifted up into the upper region of the air, and set on fire. At the end of Salmon's *Medicina Practica*, London, 1692, is an advertisement for a most excellent balsam which accomplishes miraculous cures. It dissolves sand and gravel in the body, takes care of fluxes of various kinds, stops noises in the ears, prevents infections from wounds, etc. It is only sold by Dr. Salmon, the author

Anno Christi dñi	1494	Ephemerides
Curus numerus	13	Quadragesima
Curus solaris	19	Pascha
Littera dominicalis	e	Roqationes
Inditio	12	Ascensio domini
Intervallum	6 hebdo. 4. dies	Descentio coelestis
Septuagesima	26 Januarij	Aduentus domini

Eclipsis solis	Eclipsis lune	Eclipsis lune
d. h. m.	d. h. m.	d. h. m.
7 4 12	21 14 38	14 19 45
Medietas	Medietas	Septentrio
o 44	1 46	1 48
Puncta quattuor:		



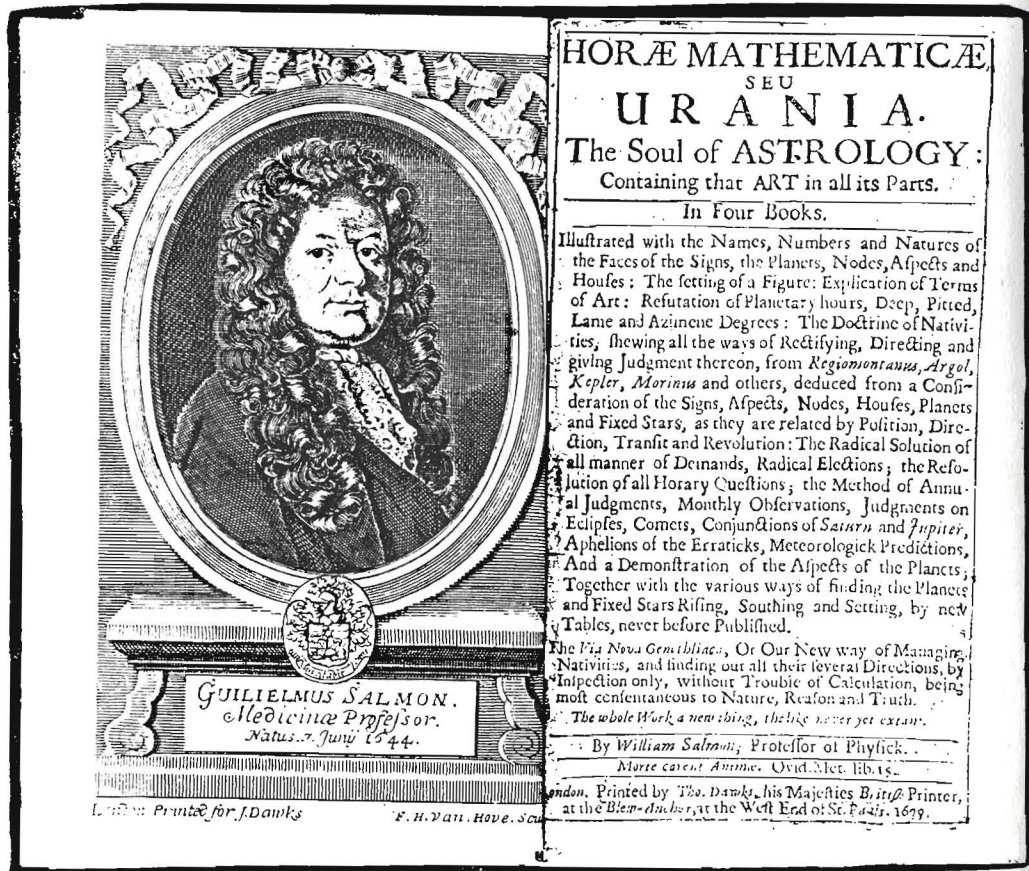
Saturnus a 19 Junij ad finem Octobris retrogradus.
 Jupiter ab initio anni ad 19 Aprilis retrogradus.
 Mars hoc anno regressum non habebit.
 Venus ab 11 Martij ad 24 Junij retrograda.
 Mercurius a 6 Februarij ad initium Martij: item a 5 Junij ad 27 eiusdem: et a 29 Septembris ad 19 Octobris retrogradus.

b i

First page of an ephemeris for 1494 published by Regiomontanus.

of the book, at his house at the Blue Bal by the Ditch-side near Holbornbridge. The price is twenty-four shillings by the pound and an ounce for eighteen pence.

Sibly, Ebenezer, *A New and Complete Illustration of the Occult Sciences, or the Art of foretelling future events and contingencies by the Aspects, Positions, and Influences of the Heavenly Bodies*. In 4 parts. There is a fine frontispiece and numerous copper plates. Sibly had intended to become a physician and in 1792 graduated from King's College, Aberdeen. He became fascinated with astrology but,



Portrait and title page of *Horae Mathematicae* by William Salmon.

for some reason not entirely obvious, never attained the reputation enjoyed by such men as Lilly, Coley, and Gadbury. It is reported that he evidently did not use astrology in the selection of a wife and to escape domestic difficulties, he retired to an upper floor of his house, where he meditated upon the mysteries of the heavens and had his meals sent in through an opening in the door. The frontispiece of his heavy folio is nicely engraved and is supported by a verse from Psalms xix: 1-5. This plate occasionally occurs nicely colored by hand. He was the first astrologer to calculate the horoscope of



Consider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon & the Stars which thou hast ordained. Psal. VIII. 3.
They fought from Heaven, the Stars in their courses fought against Sisera?
Judges V. 20.

Engraved frontispiece of Ebenezer Sibly's work on the art of foretelling future events from the positions and influences of the heavenly bodies, London, 1785.

the United States of America. C.J.S. Thompson in *The Mystery and Romance of Astrology* writes that from his calculations, "America in time should have an extensive and rising commerce, an advantageous and universal traffic to every quarter of the globe and great prosperity among its people." Sibly even mentions that the French would become allies of the American cause. It would seem that, under these conditions, Sibly is entitled to a larger share of recognition than has been generally accorded to him. It is only in recent years that his writings have come to general attention.

Stoffler, Joannis, *Almanachnouum Petri Pitativeronensis Mathematici, Superadditis annis quinque supra ultimas hactenus in lucem editas Joannis Stoeffleri Ephemeridas, 1551, ad futurum Christianum. M.D. LVI*, Tübingen, 1544. This volume provides ephemerides for the years 1551-1556 and the work includes a portrait of the author. It is noted that Stoffler and Tannsteter differed over the dating of the universal deluge and Tannsteter was victorious.

Tannsteter, Georgii, *Dsus Almanach seu Ephemeridum: ex cometarijs*, Vienna, 1516. This curious little work was written by the astronomer and court physician to Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, and includes twenty-five ways of using the ephemeris for detecting appropriate occupations and the best time for bathing and haircutting. At the end of this short tract is an unusually long table of errata which covers most of the last two printed pages. In the early sixteenth century Johann Stoffler predicted the end of the world and the second deluge. A more learned prophet and star gazer, Georg Tannsteter of Vienna, disproved the calculations of Stoffler much to the satisfaction of all concerned. A former owner of our little volume states that a bookplate of Georg Tannsteter appears in Mr. Dennis's translation of Count zu Leiningen-Westerburg's book on German bookplates. The plate referred to is attributed to Hans Springinkle and is reproduced herewith.

Thurneysser, Leonard (1530-1596), *Historia unnd Beschreibung In fluentischer Elementischer und Naturlicher Wirckungen*, Berlin, 1568. Thurneysser was a leading physician, alchemist, and herbalist. He wrote learnedly on the properties of plants and suffered considerable persecution from conservative physicians. There is a report

ALMANACHNO

VVM PETRI PITATI VERONENSIS

Mathematici, Superadditis annis quinque supra ultimas
hactenus in lucem editas Joannis Stoeffleri Ephemeridas, 1551. ad futurum Christianum.

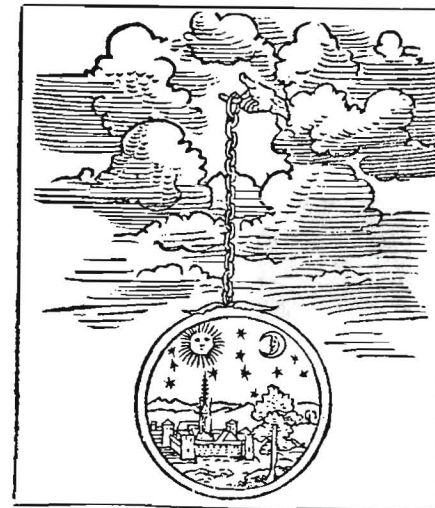
num. M. D. LVI.

Isagogica in cœlestem Astronomicam disciplinam.

Tractatus tres per breues de Electionibus, Revolutionibus annorum, & mutatione aeris.

Item horariae Tabulae per altitudinem Solis in die, ac stellarum in nocte ad medium sexti climatis.

Omnibus his diligentissime recognitis & emendatis.



TÜBINGAE
VL.

M. D. XLIIII.
MOR.

Adest etiam candidissime lector scorsum impressum Ephemeridum supplementum authoris eiusdem, in quo primi mobilis Tabula Ascensionum gradibus, atque Zodiaci per minuta quaeque singulariter inseruientes. Ortus, & occasus, caeliq; meditationes tam stellarum fixarum, quam planetarum latitudinem utranque possidentium. Directionum quoque tabulae cum expeditissima positionis circuli inuestigatione cum latitudine, uel sine. Castigata demum passionis Dominicae, breuisque admodum calendarij reformationis Epitome. Quae omnia unico hic uenali codice exhibentur.

The title page of Stoffler's Ephemerides, *Almanachnouum Petri Pitativeronensis*.



The bookplate of Magister Georg Tannsteter and attributed to Hans Springinklee. From *An Illustrated Handbook of German & Austrian Exlibris* by Karl Emich Count zu Leiningen-Westerburg, London, 1901.

that he committed suicide and it is also said that he was buried in a monastery in Cologne next to Albertus Magnus.

Weigelius, Valentine, *Astrologie Theologized: wherein is set forth what Astrologie and the Light of Nature is; what Influence the Starres naturally have on Man, and how the same may be diverted and avoided, &c.* 4to. London, printed for Geo. Whittington at the Blue Anchor in Cornhill, near the Royall Exchange, 1649. Lynn Thorndike in his *A History of Magic and Experimental Science* notes that Valentine Weigel in his *Astrologie Theologized* grants the stars vast powers and would theologize astrology by laboring for six days and sanctifying the seventh. Thorndike adds that Weigel considers astrology as synonomous with philosophy or universal knowledge of all the wonderful and secret things of God.

Wharton, George, *The Cabal of the Twelve Houses Astrologically Discovered Collected from that great Philosopher and Physician, Johan, Bapt. Morinus*, London, 1659. In this little work, Wharton devotes sixteen pages to the interpretation and vindication of the natures of the twelve houses of the heavens according to Ptolemy, Kepler, and other exponents of the astrological theory. The rest of the work, under the heading *Gesta Britannorum: or, A succinct Chronologie of the Actions and Exploits, Battailes, Sieges, Conflicts, & other signal and remarkable Passages which have happened in these Dominions. From the yeare of Christ, 1600. (In which the late King Charles was born) untill the present 1659. Being the space of 58 complete Years. Collected by Geo: Wharton. London, Printed by F. Grismond, 1659.* It appears that this chronicle is to be considered as a source work for the use of astrologers seeking to rectify mundane horoscopes. At the end is a list of curious books offered by the publisher and an advertisement of a doctor specializing in surgery.

Zacuto, Abraham, *Almanach Perrpetuuz exactissime nuper emendatum omnium celi motuum cum additionibus in eo factis tenens complementum.* Gothic Letter. 4to. Colon., P. Liechenstein, 1502. A previous owner has laid in a label reading, "Zacutus Ephemeris calculated for the longitude of Cologne, Germany—longitude 6½ E. of Greenwich, covering the years 1473-1503." Original binding



The elaborate hand-colored title page of the first edition of *Historia unnd Beschreibung In fluentischer Elementischer und Natürlicher Wirkungen* by Leonard Thurneysser, Berlin, 1568.

THE CABAL
OF THE
TWELVE HOUSES
ASTROLOGICALL

Discovered,

Collected from that great Philo-
sopher and Physitian, Johan. Bapt.
Morinus.

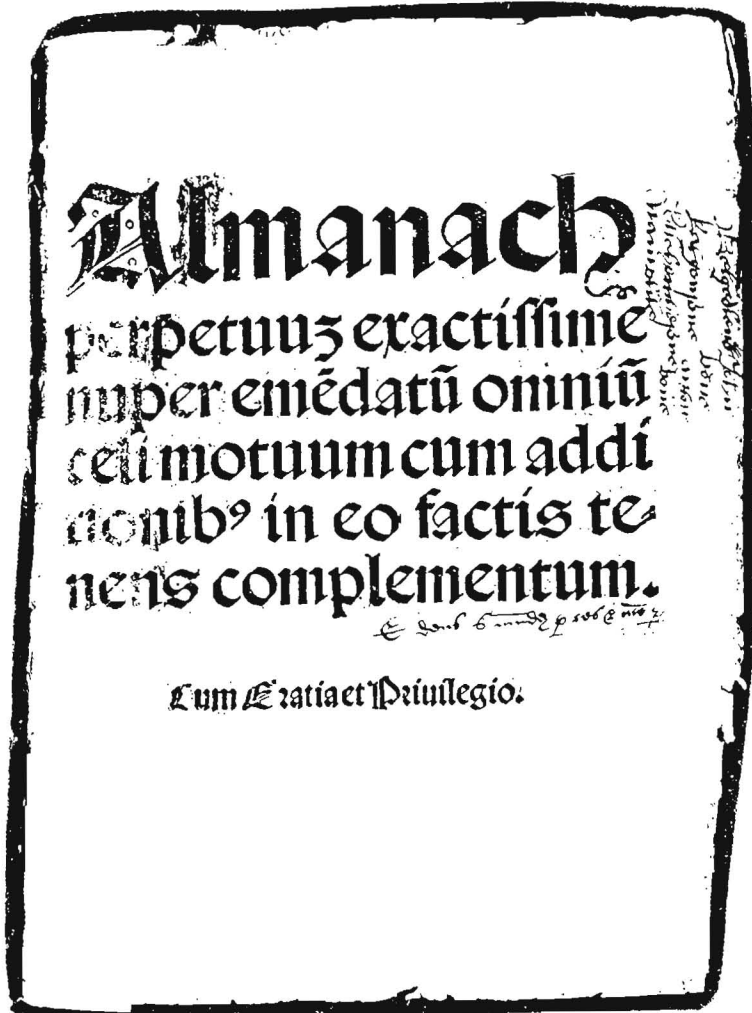
By GEO: WHARTON.

LONDON,
Printed by J. Grismond, 1659.

Title page of *The Cabal of the Twelve Houses Astrologicall Discovered* by George Wharton, London, 1659.

in limp vellum.

In addition to the books listed in the present article, the PRS Library has an extensive collection of more recent astrological works. We will mention *Broughton's Monthly Planet Reader and Astrological Journal*. The issue published in 1864 contained the following prediction concerning the second term of Lincoln's presidency: "Mr. Lincoln will have a number of evil aspects afflicting his Nativity, (I do not think that any of them will begin to be felt until the



Title page of *Almanach Perpetuuz* by Abraham Zacuto. Gothic letter, 1502.

election is past,) they will be in operation in Nov. and Dec. of this year. During these months, let him be especially on his guard against attempts to take his life; by such as fire arms, and infernal machines." Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865. This is an outstanding example of an astrological prediction and there are many such in various books on the subject. Serious students of astrology will find

in our library most of the more important modern texts, runs of valuable journals, and a large collection of horoscopes of celebrities and persons in various specialized activities.

Note: In all parts of this article many of the illustrations were reduced in size to fit the dimensions of the *Journal*.

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Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

POPULAR DEMONS OF ANTIQUITY

Many years ago I knew an elderly lady who had a considerable reputation for her mediumistic powers. The family did not share her beliefs but allowed her to practice her arts with impunity. One day her little granddaughter, about seven years old, came over for a visit. She slipped on the front steps, skinning her knees, and, howling loudly. Grandmother rushed to the door saying, "Good gracious, what happened?" The little girl with tears in her eyes exclaimed, "One of your spooks pushed me." In the history of human thought two forces were locked in what religion usually termed "dualism." There are good spirits available to assist troubled souls, and evil spirits who are the cause of our troubles. The belief in one led inevitably to belief in the other.

It was the duty of the white magician to devise means for neutralizing the evil influences of malicious ghosts. It came to be believed however that it was better to avoid evil than suffer from the consequences thereof. Constructive religious teachings were the first line of defense against psychic difficulties.

Many thought that theological beliefs were contrary to inclinations of the average citizen who wished to compromise his principles for pleasure or gain. Later when troubled by an overburdened conscience, fears and misgivings burdened his life and remorse set in.

While we no longer populate invisible realms of space with imps and devils, there is still considerable evidence that the human mind is dualistic in the contemplation of its own defects. Temptation is now universal and very few have a strong defense against it. As always

self-interest is the prime offender. Medieval art abounds in paintings and engravings of saintly persons, besieged on every hand by monstrosities resembling grotesque insects, and a variety of composita fashioned by artists who borrowed their inspiration from the worst possible sources.

Today there is a swarm of temptation in the form of money, power, political influence, and corrupted morals. We know that these excesses and indulgences will end in misery, but we continue to invoke these spirits of negation.

Some religions still believe in malignant ghosts and strange elemental monsters based upon the old descriptions of the incubus. The conflicts between good and evil have destroyed the tranquillity of daily existence and threatened national survival in all parts of the world. The idea that our sorrows are caused by creatures from the invisible side of life has never proved very comforting. Demonology is associated with a bad conscience. When we know that we have done wrong, there is a lurking suspicion that we will be punished in one way or another.

The church accepted without question a superabundance of evil spirits. Even today the old rites of exorcism are being revived on the assumption that the bewitched person is the innocent victim of diabolic happenings. In this area antiquity lingers on like an unpleasant heredity.

The old grimoires feature the traditional appearances of ghouls and goblins. Among the Chaldeans and Phoenicians there was a vivid imagery. Mr. John C. Ridpath in his book *History of the World* has a kind word for these cults of ancient times. He writes, "In all the Babylonian temples were images of the gods. It does appear, however, that the worship conducted before these images was downright idolatry. The theory of the priests was—as it has ever been—that the mind of the worshiper was fixed upon the deity by means of the symbol."

It was common in ancient times that the gods of a conquered nation were reduced to inferior positions in the celestial hierarchy, or sometimes transformed into demons. At this point in his writings Ridpath also presents a likeness of Beelzebub who has strangely survived from the remote past and plays a curious role in the magical rites of the Middle Ages and occasionally occurs among would-be



IMAGE OF BEELZEBUB, THE FLY GOD.

modern sorcerers. Beelzebub is referred to in both the Old and New Testaments and the references are always unsavory. It appears that the name Beelzebub in the original language means "the Lord of Flies." It was not really an evil being, but more or less of a nuisance. It may have been that in the wastelands of the Near East flies have been unwelcome members of the community since the beginning of time. We can guarantee that they are still in abundance. It may have been that Beelzebub had authority over flies and when properly propitiated brought relief to the native inhabitants.

Here some interesting symbolism may be noted. The buzzing of this insect can be likened to gossip, a real curse in modern society. We trace many ailments and plagues to flies, even though we admit that they perform some useful services. We also note that where poverty is great and hygiene virtually unobtainable, flies are a constant reminder that the well-to-do must always be exposed to the misfortunes of the poor.

Beelzebub has also been called "My Lord who sings," or perhaps more correctly, buzzes, and those who have traveled in primitive areas realize that swarms of these insects are a menace to health. I remember while at the second cataract of the Nile travelers had to wear nettings over their faces and hands. The flies particularly

BELZÉBUT,
Prince.



The signature of the demon Beelzebub recorded in an old grimoire.

liked to invade the eyes and handfuls of them had to be picked off to prevent dangerous infections.

Perhaps Beelzebub is telling us that if we do not improve the living conditions of the poor we may all suffer from the prevailing ignorance. One of the early Church fathers, referring to demonology, said that we should have a kindly attitude regarding tempting demons because it is our resistance to their temptations "that doth merit us salvation."



THOMAS A KEMPIS (Continued from page 22)

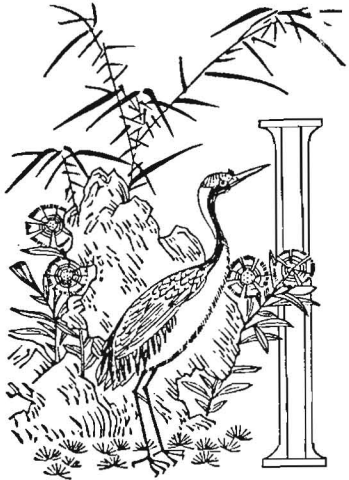
a Quietist who gave his life to watchful waiting—not for wealth or power or recognition, but for the direct experience of God within his own soul. This is why his book has lived. It is merely made up of prayerful experiences, thoughts raised up for a moment to the realms of reality, hopes beginning in faith and perfected in charity.

The little book is well worth the reading, but it is best to choose an hour of deep inner need. In a moment of tragedy a Kempis renews strength in the everlasting truths of faith. He points the way that one must follow if he is to take up his cross and follow Christ. A Kempis sincerely believed that he achieved this but to his amazement he found the cross the lightest burden he had ever borne. He experienced the quiet joy of living without fear, for in the peace of his soul he had given back his life to the Divine Purpose for which all human beings were fashioned.

The meek do inherit the earth, but not a war-torn planet for in meekness the divine garden is still there waiting for the gardeners to come so that all may see and understand the mystery of the divine purpose.



THE HONORABLE SHOSHOJISAN



I was sitting with Mr. Nakamura in his inner sanctum when the tinkle of the little bell on the door of his shop led to an interesting interruption. A few moments later I was introduced to Dr. Ogawa. He was a bit on the formal side, but had been appointed the curator of a museum of Japanese folk art being established in Nara by a retired diplomat who, being a wealthy man recently ennobled in recognition of his distinguished service to the state, had found retirement impossible. To relieve the boredom, he had created a gallery to be devoted to the native

art of Japan, and Mr. Nakamura had provided him with an assortment of rare curiosities.

The situation now called for some subtle diplomacy. Excusing himself for a second, Mr. Nakamura returned with a teapot of a most curious design which he stood on his cherrywood table, explaining, "This is not a badger teapot; it is *the* badger teapot." It seemed to be made of cast iron in the general form of a very fat animal, difficult to describe, but combining whimsy and utility. The spout of the teapot was shaped like the head of a badger with its mouth partly open. The posterior end was rather complicated and the design formed the handle. The badger stood firmly on four sturdy legs.

There were several moments of dead silence and it was obvious that Dr. Ogawa was not favorably impressed.

Mr. Nakamura had to overcome considerable resistance. Dr. Ogawa knew that Mr. Nakamura was an expert in the world of art and also a very close friend of the retired diplomat. My friend explained that this badger teakettle had been cast during the Fujiwara period and had already exhibited magical potentials.

Of course, badgers are not malicious creatures and frequently take on the appearance of monks or nuns. They are frisky and playful, but have ways of indicating displeasure. They are frequently found in the grounds of old monasteries and are not above joining some elderly priest in quiet meditation. The first owner of this particular badger teapot had a most curious adventure. He joined the frolicking animal in a few drinks of saki, found himself completely lost, and took three days to find his way back home. A later owner joined a few friends in a libation or two but failed to offer anything to the friendly badger which followed him to the small teahouse. On his way home the intoxicated farmer fell into a ditch and nearly drowned.

It was a long story, but Mr. Nakamura ended on a very plaintive note. For a time the iron teakettle had been the cherished possession of an old Shinto priest. He would sit by the door of his little house talking to the teapot and sharing with it his humble fare. When he knew that his end was near, the priest wanted the teapot to have a good home and enjoy the small kindnesses that it had received from the Shinto priest. So he gave the teakettle to Mr. Nakamura who was certain that the priest, recently deceased, would be delighted to know that his *tanuki* would live on in stately grandeur.

Dr. Ogawa belonged to the new school of Western dominated beliefs, emancipated from all medieval superstitions. The iron badger was obviously a valuable antique and Dr. Ogawa was torn between his allegiances. He said that he would give the matter serious consideration and announce his verdict the next morning.

The curator was due to arrive at nine o'clock, so I was with Mr. Nakamura shortly before that time. The little art dealer recommended that we go out and have breakfast. He explained that punctuality was still comparatively unknown in Japan. When the curator did arrive right on time an hour late he was obviously a shaken man. On the way to his home his rickshaw man was involved in a race between two other rickshaws. One of them locked wheels with Dr. Ogawa's equipage and as is usually the case it started to tip over backwards. A stranger stepped up just in time to prevent the curator from being thrown out of the back of his rickshaw. He admitted, rather sheepishly, that he had decided in his mind on the way home

that he was not going to take the badger teapot. But this incident changed his mind and he accepted the iron teakettle with appropriate thanks.

Before he left, Mr. Nakamura remarked, "Always have a small cup of saki close to the teapot. It seems to contribute to the badger's peace of mind." Dr. Ogawa, still in a state of confusion, bowed and departed with a small weak smile.

A few days later Mr. Nakamura and I were invited to attend the grand opening of the Museum of Folk Art and Artistry. The press had done very well, there was a picture of the building, a portrait of the founder, and an excellent representation of the badger. It had been already noised about that Shoshoji (the badger teapot) was the star of the occasion.

Inside the entrance arch to the museum was a handsome wooden stand which supported an elaborate glass case. This was the place of distinction and, believe it or not, there sat the badger, and in one corner was a small white bowl of saki.

It was inevitable that Mr. Nakamura should receive considerable credit in assembling fine old pieces of haniwa pottery, old tiger's teeth, fragments from ancient kilns, otsu pictures, fabric designs, and excellent early basketry. It was indeed a brilliant occasion. Members of the royal household attended, the local university sent representatives, and the benefactor who had made the occasion possible was present in a morning coat and tall silk hat.

As Mr. Nakamura had expected the badger teapot was the grand attraction. Men, women, and children inspected this old iron pot with attention verging on veneration. One family had a monument to a badger in the garden of their temple. Some of the children even had live pet badgers as cute as baby foxes. As far as it is possible to learn there has been no difficulty at the museum. The badger pot stands in isolated elegance and no one can enter the museum without pausing for the badger's smile of approval. The little bowl of saki is replenished at proper intervals and the badger teapot, which had passed through centuries of strange and confusing adventures, now passes its days in an atmosphere of luxurious indolence.

*In
Reply*



A Department of Questions and Answers

UPSURGE IN METAPHYSICAL THINKING

Question: Can you tell us something about this dramatic upsurge in metaphysical thinking at the present time?

Answer: From a research point of view it is demonstrable that humanity cannot handle its own affairs successfully. The tendency has always been to call upon Deity for assistance. In a stable society religious values are apt to be neglected. Attention is directed toward the accumulation of wealth, fame, and folly. The Old Testament sets forth very clearly that there have always been worshipers of the golden calf who survived only by the intercession of God at the crossing of the Red Sea. The Egyptians had the same disposition, later the Greeks and Romans, and at the times of the great plagues Europe was full of repentant sinners. When human policies fail many human beings suddenly believe in miracles. We may add that at critical moments miracles have occurred in the lives of individuals and in the courts of nations.

The Philosophical Research Society emphasizes the study of unusual circumstances, but does not align itself with religious or political groups. We feel that spiritual commitments are personal affairs and we direct our writings toward helping thoughtful persons to make constructive decisions regarding their spiritual needs.

Many of the present organizations cannot be approached in terms of research. Statements must be accepted or rejected according to personal convictions. History can help to explain most forms of social phenomena. We recall the upsurge of faith at the times of the cycles of the bubonic plague. It was generally accepted by the victims that it was a punishment from God because his laws had been ignored or violated. Most of those who lived and died on the dusty roads of Europe admitted to themselves and each other that they had lived badly, committed a variety of sins and crimes, and well deserved divine punishment.

In those days a pickpocket could have his ears cut off and those who remained honest were serfs of their overlords. Even the Church admitted that a general housecleaning would be beneficial. When we compare the delinquencies prevalent in the Medieval world to those in general practice today there can be no doubt that the human race in general must have a bad conscience. It is not the sin that is worrying the majority, but the punishment that must follow that stimulates the spirit of repentance.

With two major wars in the present century and a serious depression, our civilization has moved rapidly from bad to worse. We like to believe that we are the most noble and progressive group that has ever infested the planet. We live in an intimate atmosphere of murder, rape, and carnage. There seems to be no firm ground under our feet and a major reformation of society and its institutions are urgently necessary. Wars are breaking out everywhere and even the smallest political units are spending a large part of their funds on offensive or defensive weaponry.

When my esteemed Grandmother took her daughters abroad in the 1890's they could travel in perfect safety in nearly all the European countries. Now, a hundred years later, it is not safe to go out at night in one of our major cities nor even to leave a door unlatched along the rustic countryside. Crime rates are rising everywhere and there is no longer sufficient space in prisons to take care of major criminals. We are still proud of something, but we are not sure that our pride is justified. To say the least, the twentieth century up to now is by far the most lawless recorded in history.

We are not sure whether we are being punished by God or by our own delinquencies, but nuclear fission is a reality and we are inventing missiles that could wipe out the human race and most of the other beings in nature. The solid citizenry is doing business as usual. No major institution has wished to endanger its financial future or its international markets by setting an example of common sense. Our schools are carrying on the same old curriculum and Wall Street is managing to survive recent calamities, but has done nothing to correct the cause of them. There are two kinds of private citizens, the big ones and the little ones. The big ones are optimistic, although they have nothing but danger, and the little ones are wandering about the planet, many of them half starved and homeless, or casualties caused by militarists.

There is no doubt, therefore, that at least half the population of the earth is coming to the realization that they must unite to protect themselves against the hazards of the immediate future. It is incredible that the whole world has not risen to protect itself from the tragedies of wealth in a bankrupt society. Having looked around as carefully as possible and finding no hopeful evidence of properly concerned leadership, most people find a spiritual renaissance is their only hope for improvement.

Unfortunately, the faiths of mankind are not united and ready to accomplish a cooperation of effort. Therefore one God has always had difficulty preventing his children from exterminating each other. One by one sincere persons drift away from their churches because they find little to support the truths set forth in the scriptures.

These and similar circumstances have resulted in the rise of numerous small organizations seeking to attract public attention and stir complacency. There is no practical way to estimate the teachings now being circulated for public consideration. The only defense that the joiner can depend upon is his own soul. He has the right to all existing information about organizations and their founders, and to judge for himself the comparative values of fifty or a hundred groups. Many of these teach conflicting messages which add to the uncertainties. We may assume generally that those groups are most worthy of consideration which emphasize the need for the

reconstruction of conduct. We do not need peace, power, and plenty as it was presented in the 1930's. We cannot redeem society by flattery or promises of unique advantages. Salvation is not a commercial project, but a sincere effort to help disturbed persons to regain faith in their God, their world, and their associates.

If organizations predict coming events or major changes in world affairs the thoughtful person will wait until the prediction is fulfilled before seeking membership. There are ways by which one can estimate the validity of a teaching. Many of the churches and independent sects have gotten into trouble with their fund raising programs. This has come to be a considerable scandal involving some preachers who have made extensive use of television. It is just another example of hoping for the best with very little justification.

In America, especially, many non-Christian groups have secure footings and these have absorbed some folks who have been discontented with the church of their former choice. These foreign doctrines have also done some proselytizing, especially among younger people who have never condoned the materialism in which they were raised. We also have noticed that older groups dedicated to mysticism or esoteric thinking have enjoyed a substantial revival. Those which are founded upon appropriate philosophical structures can be relatively safe.

The publishers have been busy and various texts advancing or supporting special revelations are appearing daily. Here again discrimination is important, but unfortunately it has not been taught in the public school system. Nearly any subject which would help a young person to mature his inner resources has been deleted from the curriculum. We seem to believe that there is more safety in computers than there is in righteousness.

There was an old Greek adage that mortals waste their time as though they would live forever, but eat and drink as if they would die tomorrow. While we are talking there are more bombs in the Persian Gulf, more orders for nuclear weaponry, and inducements to buy high yield securities, while the clock of destiny keeps on ticking. This is the real reason why we have had an outburst of strange beliefs. If we try sincerely to do things better and do not charge too

high a price for redemption there can be considerable constructive progress.

The truthseeker should have a long range vision. He should not think of himself only in terms of birth and death. Each of us is part of an eternal plan and we may come back many times to work out the consequences of our mistakes and the gains we have made along the way. We have made physical things most important when in reality they are the least valuable. If we believe in the doctrine of reincarnation, we can gain considerable insight by the study of world history. It has always been the same. Those who have, go down to oblivion and the have nots rise to stations of authority. They promptly make the same mistake and their affairs go badly. There seems to be no way of freeing the human mind from the pressure of ulterior motives. Somewhere hidden behind a pleasant face are secret schemes to advance personal destiny at the expense of someone else. It is said that Phoenicians originated the monetary system and vanished shortly afterwards. They are gone, but the system goes on. To really trace sincerity it is necessary to prove that there is no monetary consideration. The workman is worthy of his hire according to the Good Book, but exploitation can hasten the downfall of persons and institutions.

When I was lecturing at the Pythian Temple in New York City I used to wander out after my talk and meet some of the audience. One listener said, "Your talk was most informative." A small thin-haired man standing next involved himself immediately. "Of course, it was a good lecture. I fed every word of it into his mind—" There was deadly silence. Today the statement would be quite fashionable.

One good thing that will result from the proliferation of religious and psychological organizations is that they will inspire further study in the great systems of world culture that have gone before. Someone will object and say, "If it did not work back there, is there any use in talking about it now?" It always worked back there when it was applied, but it seldom accumulated an enthusiastic following. We have not rejected Christianity because Jesus never really appeared to self-righteous magistrates who dominated world opinion. A truth is no less because it is largely neglected.

We have many religions which have descended to us in one way or another for thirty centuries. With a little study we can find the measure of their success and also their shortcomings. In every case the virtuous person who sought unselfishly to help mankind was penalized principally because he assailed wealth and temporal power, fully knowing that these two factors alone could bring a dozen empires to the dust.

There is something to be gained from watchful waiting. If a teaching has survived for a reasonable period of time it may have special merits. It is usually advisable not to be one of the first to join a newly organized group or sect. By waiting a year you may save both time and money. I once received a handsome announcement of a new organization with rather elaborate literature. Someone came in a few weeks later and asked for further information. I tried to reach the phone number given on the letterhead and found that it had been disconnected and I was later informed that the organization lasted less than six weeks.

One of the best procedures is to visit the headquarters of a new organization and see for yourself the kind of people who are involved and the message they are bringing. We do not wish to interfere with the right of anyone to affiliate with a religious or metaphysical group, but it is usually advisable to satisfy one's self about both the teachings and the teachers.

Nearly all contemporary organizations are in some degree rooted in the past. There may be new interpretations and the re-ordering of old beliefs, but facts are facts regardless of their age. Honesty, for example, is not a modern concept, but goes back to the stone age when each individual had the right to gather the pebbles of his choice and be allowed to keep them. There is always something uncertain about ideas that claim to be unique and hitherto unknown. From the distant Himalayas to the Valley of the Euphrates all beliefs that have survived the test of time have strongly emphasized the fact that every person who wishes to advance his personal destiny must first redeem his own character. This point has never been successfully questioned, but is often ignored. There is no reasonable way that we can achieve great purposes without sincere efforts.

In the great plan of things the economic factor is passed over lightly. It is said that Christ had no place to lay his head, and while Buddha came from a wealthy family he rejected all worldly goods and went forth a penniless mendicant. Financial inducements should never entice the truth seeker to become involved in some strange belief. Every day there are public announcements of misappropriations of funds intended to advance religious causes. Exploited persons will turn and seek new faiths that are more honorable. The result has been a continuing shift of devout individuals from one faith to another.

At the moment it might be the wiser course to read a few pertinent passages from the New Testament and live quietly and modestly. In spite of the numerous temptations it is always possible to improve character, overcome defects, release the mind from tension, and the emotions from temptations. No one else will be disturbed, even one's own family will continue to run smoothly, but the self disciplined person will not only advance the duties of the soul, but will lose interest in beliefs that do not require a reformation of daily habits.

The cluttered life is always disturbed by one circumstance or another. By becoming uncluttered the dedicated man or woman is increasing what the Buddhists call "the store of merit." When one faces the loss of everything he must depend entirely upon what he is. When joining a group, let it be one that requires dedication to the universal plan, freedom from selfishness or any other ulterior motive, and the inspiration to lay up treasures in heaven where they are safe from personal negative instincts and marauders who would filch man's worldly possessions.



Poverty is the price of folly and the reward of virtue.

Language: a combination of hisses, grunts, and squeaks intended for the communication of ideas but used principally for other purposes.

Self pity is a disease peculiar to humans.

Love is the discovery of ourselves in others.

—All by Manly P. Hall



Happenings at Headquarters



A good friend of the Society, Mr. Charles Bailey, has presented us with a fine and old example of a Turkish prayer rug. Every pious Moslem must spread his prayer rug five times a day, kneel upon it, face Mecca, and recite appropriate prayers. This example was brought from Turkey a number of years ago and the design is most curious. Many thanks, Mr. Bailey.

The exhibit in the PRS Library for the first quarter of 1988 will be available for viewing by January 10. Recently acquired material makes it possible that most of the great names in Egyptology will be represented by original editions. Original material dating back to the tenth century B.C. will be included in the showing. Two fine examples of papyrus will feature the weighing of the soul in the world of the after life. An early edition of the hieroglyphic designs by Horapollo Nilous introduces Egyptian religious symbols as they were understood in the times of Ptolemy Soter, and his descendants. One of the most learned of the Jesuit Fathers, Athanaeus Kircher, in his monumental work *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, Rome, 1652, sets forth a seventeenth century effort to interpret the ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions. A rare work by Belzoni with excellent plates, hand-colored by his wife, narrates the opening of the second pyramid at Giza.

The first scientific approach to Egyptology is accredited to Sir Flinders Petrie. He transformed the field from the earlier approaches which were largely hobbies and Petrie is regarded as the founder of archaeological Egyptology. We have an excellent assortment of the writings of this distinguished scholar including a number of his books and runs of various learned journals to which he contributed. Nineteenth century researchers especially concerned with the mysteries of the great pyramid will find abundant research material in

the works of Maspero, Wilkinson, and Piazzzi Smyth. Among the most desirable in this area are the writings of Gerald Massey and his major work, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, is still a standard reference text.

Sir A.E. Wallis Budge, curator of the Chaldean and Egyptian departments of the British Museum, published a large and impressive folio including several of the most important paprii of *The Book of the Dead*. Most of Budge's major works are in our Library including the *Papyrus of Ani (The Book of the Dead)*, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, and handbooks dealing with specialized fields. Budge wrote on subjects such as Egyptian language, scarabs and their translations, amulets and magical devices, and a guidebook for travelers in Egypt. Dr. Breasted, Sr., an outstanding American Egyptologist, published an English translation of the Edwin Smith papyrus which dealt with the theory and practice of medicine during the fifteenth to tenth centuries B.C. An extremely fine heart scarab (which was placed in the space left for the heart which was removed for separate embalmment) has several lines from *The Book of the Dead* on its reverse. Dr. Breasted said that it was too important to be in a private collection.

Items selected from the PRS collection include many that were placed in the tombs of important Egyptians. These include ornaments, vessels and receptacles, charms, and lamps. We feel that this exhibit will interest almost anyone, and everyone is invited to come and view.

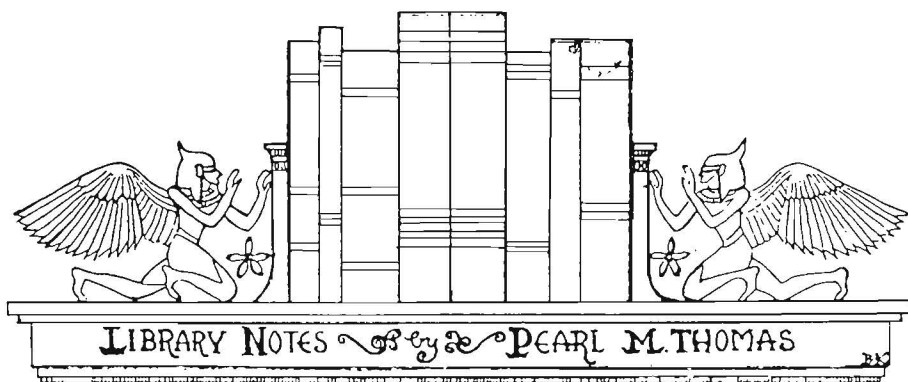


If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be the greatest prodigality, since lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough always proves little enough. Let us then be up and doing, and doing to the purpose; so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity.

—Franklin

Nothing is easier than fault-finding; no talent, no self-denial, no brains, no character are required to set up in the grumbling business. But those that are moved by genuine desire to do good have little time for murmuring or complaint.

—Robert West



TRAVELS AND COLLECTING IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Recently, my Southern California son phoned me to ask if I had read the article in the *Los Angeles Sunday Times* travel section about Orcus Island, one of many in the Puget Sound area off the coast of Washington. I had, and he suggested that he and his wife needed the type of vacation that particular area promised. Then he added, "Would you like to go with us on the trip?" What could I say, I had just completed two deadlines and the prospect of a trip (almost any-place) sounded good to me. He made all the arrangements: flight to Seattle, hotels there, in Vancouver, in Victoria B.C., and on Orcus Island. He also arranged for a car rental from the Sea-Tac Airport and back to it again.

I neglected to mention to him that Mercury would be retrograde at the beginning of the trip; it wouldn't have impressed him. But I have been told on good authority that a retrograde Mercury has a tendency to slow down travel with delays and mishaps. So, we found on arrival at LAX that our flight had been suddenly cancelled—we were to go out about three hours later. Then, just as suddenly, another flight was announced with only one hour to wait. In the meantime

our luggage had been accepted, but didn't show up at the Seattle airport. We were told that it would arrive that evening, and we were assured it would be placed in our rooms. (At 10:40 P.M. it came.) So, less luggage, we sought out the four-door car we had ordered. Another snag . . . they had only a two-door model for us. So we waited there until a four-door model was prepared, and indulged in Washington apples that were set out for the patrons. This has probably happened before, but we enjoyed the apples.

That afternoon we headed down to the waterfront, parking the car along with many other vehicles near where we wanted to visit the various piers, the Old Curiosity Shop, and to eat at one of the many restaurants. On returning to the car, my family noted that a headlight had been broken and one side of the car had been heavily scratched. My son made out a report and to date hasn't mentioned the outcome.

Only one other mishap occurred, probably also due to retrograde Mercury. The attendant at the hotel who put our luggage into the rental car for us in Vancouver somehow lost the car keys. He was terribly disturbed. Apparently this doesn't happen often at first class hotels. They had to phone to Seattle to get the number of the key and then go to the rental agency in Vancouver. My family was very gentle with the situation and was assured that the man involved would not be affected. We were in no rush . . . we were on our way to catch the ferry to head out to Victoria. So, while waiting we just went out and spent more money!

And then, everything went right. The weather was magnificent, warmer actually than at home in Los Angeles, and the skies a true blue. We had great meals—ate too much everywhere but that is always par for the course.

The Seattle part of the trip was pure nostalgia for me. I was born in Seattle and it was all I knew until I was a teenager. We visited old haunts of mine and I had a heyday describing things to my family. The famous Pike Place Farmers Market really impressed them. I somehow forgot to mention that it has grown considerably and really was impressing me too. I spent some time there, trying to locate a large sign I remembered that stated the month and year the market

was established. Knowing that the market and I are the same age, I thought it would be a nice touch to get a picture alongside the sign. No one knew a thing about it. We settled for my son taking a picture of me by a water fountain that I well remembered. Then we sought out a cafeteria type restaurant that was famous in the early days for their coffee (it was Mannings in those days). After shopping, my mother and I would purchase some sweets and go to the coffee place where I was allowed a three-cent cup of the brew. We carried these up to the third level where we had a full view of Elliot Bay and enjoyed the ever changing scene of boats plying back and forth. We repeated that on this trip while I regaled my young family (they will love the "young") with stories relating to the market. Right at the scene, I was able to recall much that I had quite forgotten.

From there, well supplied for a picnic, we drove up to Volunteer



Pearl at Pike Street Market in Seattle, Washington.

Park, and on the way stopped in my old neighborhood to take more pictures. As to be expected, many of the things I remembered turned out to be much smaller than I recalled them. In my completed album of Seattle pictures, I added some snapshots of the same places photographed over sixty years ago. On this trip, I took a picture of the lovely home of a dear childhood friend and located a picture of her taken at age ten to put along with it.

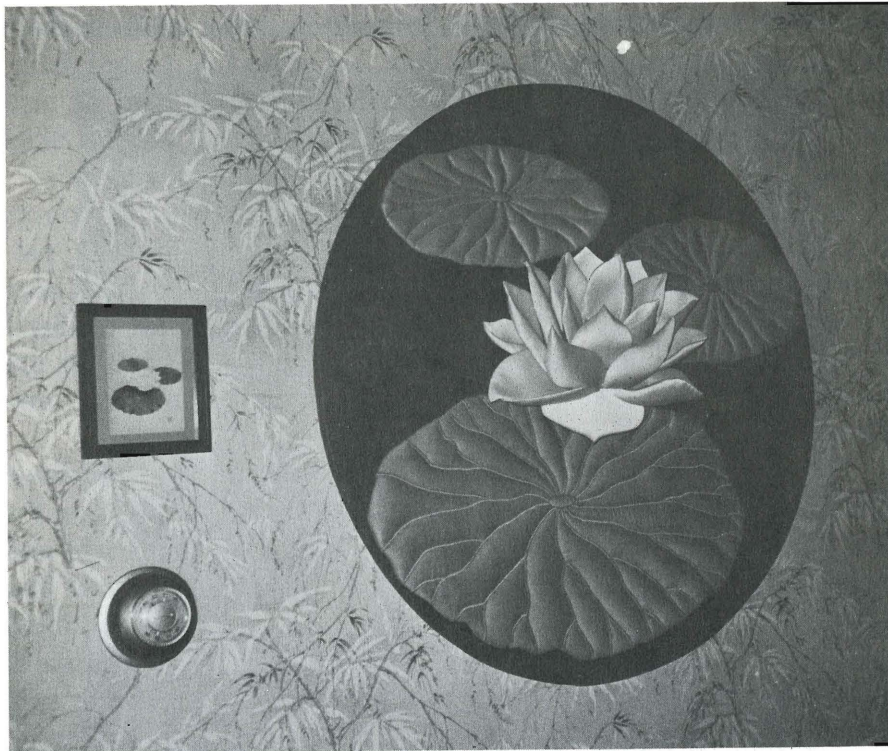
The Volunteer Park water tower which I regularly visited as a child, and always climbed up the steps, was another opportunity to add old pictures of it along with new shots for the album. I told my family that there were 102 steps. So, while I spent time across the street at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) they went up into the tower to take pictures for me and, incidentally, to count the steps as 107. My son, ever the diplomat, allowed that after all these years they probably have done the steps over, but when I described them, they realized that these were undoubtedly the same steps. We also stopped by my old grammar school and a picture of me was taken at the entrance. Looks exactly the same—the school, not me.

Everywhere in the Northwest, gardens are important. Vancouver and Victoria, B.C. both have astonishingly beautiful gardens, patterned after the famous gardens of England. At Butchart Gardens near Victoria, I have a picture from the past that I took of my husband at the entrance to the Japanese garden with a torii gate in the background. This time, my son took a picture of me near the same place with a similar view of the torii.

Traveling is such a beautiful excuse to look for some of those types of things one likes to collect. I have a genuine affection for fans (partly because they take up so little room in suitcases) and I also have a love for the flowering lotus. This doesn't mean that I am eternally looking for them wherever I go. What I buy must meet certain standards of excellence. One or two really good artifacts in a home can do wonders to lift the vibrations of the entire surroundings. A good piece of art or a distinct vase of good proportions somehow makes little gee-gaws out of place and they usually disappear; they just don't belong.

Several years ago we had a summer display in the PRS Library

showing the talents of four women artists. One of these artists, Carol Pietsch of Agoura, California, displayed in the library proper some outstanding examples of her art, done three-dimensional with satin. I was so impressed that I had her do a copy of a small picture from the cover of MPH's booklet: *A Vital Concept of Personal Growth*. The copy she made for me is on a circle of twenty-eight inches, the lotus of nineteen petals is twelve inches across and the largest lily pad is twenty inches. It is in a place where you can't possibly miss it when you come into my apartment. The small copy of the cover of Mr. Hall's book is beside the satin version. I have other lotus pieces—capiz shells for candles, a wooden piece in the form of a lotus which incidentally came from a thrift shop in Pasadena.



Left: Cover of MPH's booklet, *A Vital Concept of Personal Growth*. Right: Three dimensional satin version.

I had a wonderful experience on Orcus Island when I visited a community art gallery, where more than fifty local artists displayed their wares. I quite fell in love with a lotus designed plate, hand-thrown in porcelain using an intricate glazing technique dating back to the Italian Renaissance. Each piece is one of a kind. My new lotus plate from there is truly one of my treasures.

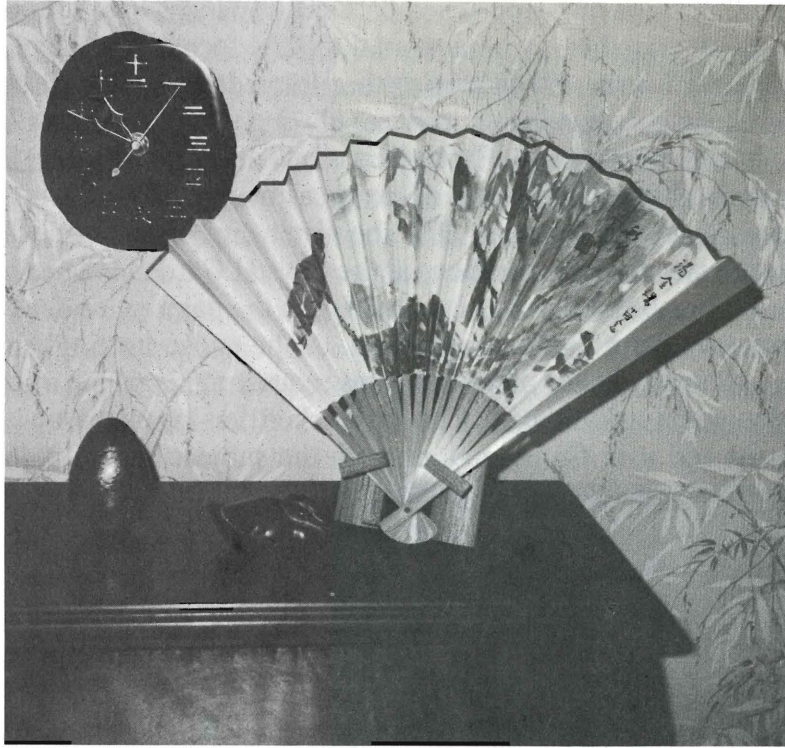
Last August in Victoria, B.C. the sister city of Suzhou, China had exhibits and demonstrations at the Crystal Garden located back of the Empress Hotel. I was intrigued with the painting on fans that a gentleman from Suzhou was doing. As he spoke no English, he had a lady translate for him what I was requesting. I wanted a sketch of a lotus and a lotus pad. The lady asked for my name and had the artist add it in Chinese along with the subject he had painted. He then added his "mon" in bright red ink. I took several pictures of him while at work on the fan, and for all this I paid \$5.00. This was in Canadian money, which in our money would be less than \$4.00.

While on the subject of fans, last December on the big island of Hawaii, I found an exquisite fan from Spain and got into conversation with a traveler who was familiar with this particular type of fan. She told me that the fan was cheaper on the island than in its homeland! We often encounter this situation—go to the source where something is made and you may pay more than elsewhere.

Another item that I like to collect on trips are the plastic place mats; they are colorful, useful, and so very packable and they are such a good reminder of pleasant times.

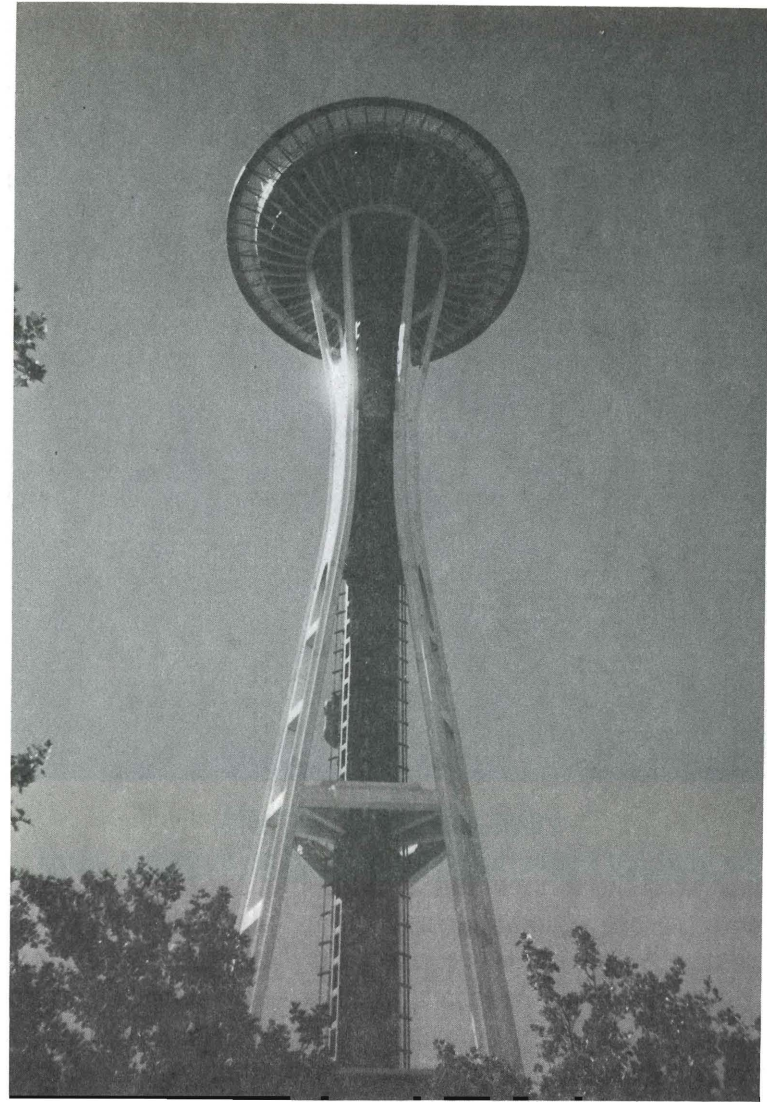
When at the Spaceneedle in Seattle and making purchases, I discovered a most patable little duck which "the price being right" I added to my other purchases. Subconsciously I must have already known that I was going to have some lotus additions to my household. In Oriental art, ducks and lotuses symbolically go together.

Traveling is such a wonderful time to exercise one's hobbies—to be on the lookout in a casual sort of way for things one likes to collect. And it is a splendid time to take pictures. I often buy postcards on trips and try to duplicate the same scene with my little camera. I don't want to be burdened with a suitcase filled with parapher-



Handpainted fan from Victoria, British Columbia.

nalía in order to take pictures. To open the lens, to put on the flash if necessary, and to press a button is quite enough for me. It has been a continuing hobby for many years. Each year at the PRS Staff Christmas Party I get shots of those attending, candid camera shots of the decorations in the library with special emphasis on the laden tables. I usually bring the overflowing album of past year pictures out for the guests to see at the parties. Of course, none of us are getting any younger, but no one seems to object to seeing these pictures from the past. I like also to take pictures of the various library exhibits and often take them of visitors and guest speakers. I've been fortunate with a number of these and have often been told that the recipients are really pleased. I am almost inclined to believe them when they order many copies to impress their relatives and friends.



Space Needle in Seattle, Washington.

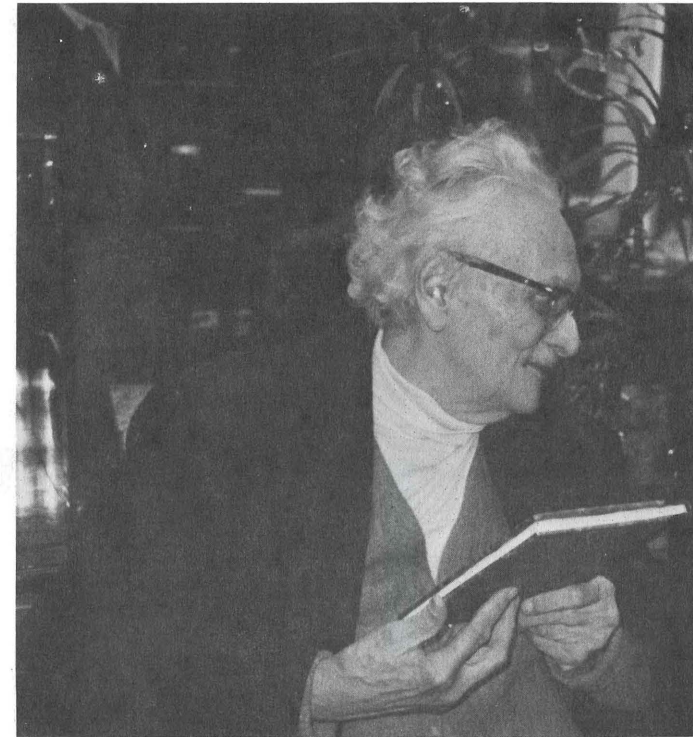
I have no particular knack for picture taking and often think of taking classes to learn something about it. But I take a lot of pictures, and by the law of averages, there are bound to be a few that are good.

The three major cities visited were each a fine experience; none



Christmas party at PRS, 1986.

overshadowed the others. But actually our reason to go north was to take in the peace and charm of Orcus Island, one of 172 islands in the Puget Sound area as a part of the state of Washington. The ferry ride over from Victoria in the very late afternoon seemed to herald the tranquility of the island. We passed many small islands, some were inhabited, and others covered with tall, lush green trees. It was close to 10:00 P.M. when we arrived, and it was very, very dark. Few cars left the ferry and we had no idea where we were going, but my son followed the three cars in front of us, hoping for the best. About eight miles down the way, my son spotted the AAA sign where we were going to stay. The manager was waiting for us and gave us a warm welcome. She told me a friend of mine had stopped by that afternoon to bring me a bouquet of flowers and left



Mr. Hall at Christmas party.

a note (have a picture of it). The manager added the lady came up in an "antique" car (another picture!). It truly was an antique . . . a 1930 Ford truck richly painted in fire-engine red with wood slats as siding for the small truck area. Absolutely charming. The friends who own it entered the Orcus Fourth of July Parade this year and accompanied with patriotic bunting, a tape recorder and my friend's lovely singing voice they captured the first prize. This lady, Verna Pehl, has given two lectures at PRS, once on a Friday and then on a Sunday morning when she and her daughter sang and played the guitar to emphasize the points she was making in her talk for the morning, "Let's Find Our Note and Sing It."

I found the people of Orcus to be warm and friendly. The second time in a shop they knew you. I went to a lovely small chapel with Verna on Sunday, and not only enjoyed her singing but the minister



Ferry at Victoria, British Columbia.

gave a message with metaphysical overtones. It was a sincere loving group with the name Louis Foundation. The leader's name is Louis Gittner, a well-known mystic and writer who has a number of books to his credit.

I also visited the library on Orcus, a charming place which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I was greeted nicely, and when I just happened to mention that Verna Pehl suggested I go in, the greeting was not just a polite gesture.

Our trip north started off with a number of unusual (or are they unusual in these times?) occurrences for which I have given responsibility to the retrograde Mercury. One of our astrological speakers at PRS, John Bradford, told me that when one travels with a retrograde Mercury it means they will return. So must it be!



THE WORLD NEEDS PRS

Fifty years ago in 1937 we established the Philosophical Research Society at its present address and constructed the first unit which included the library and offices. The buildings were reinforced concrete and have weathered well, but as my beloved Grandmother used to say, "There is always a something." In addition to normal upkeep there is the replacement of essential equipment and a constant rise in all services, including the cost of printing, utilities, and wages. We are not subsidized by the state or assisted by endowments. We depend entirely upon our activities and the distribution of our publications.

We have done everything possible to prevent the PRS from compromising in any way the ethical teachings for which we have established an honorable reputation. We are well known in this country and in foreign lands for our dissemination of information on philosophy, comparative religion, ethics, and esthetics.

At this time we have a very heavy publishing program in order to keep our books in print. We state our problems with a sincere belief that the friends who know and respect our endeavors will be able to make a significant contribution to support our efforts. This is a critical time in world affairs and those with constructive convictions can help to preserve and perpetuate the work of the Philosophical Research Society.

Help us to carry on the work to which I have dedicated my life for over sixty years. We can only serve you to the degree that you support us. Please send your gift to the PRS address noted below. All contributions are tax deductible.

Very sincerely yours,

Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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