

# The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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## CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN - JUNE 1972

Dear Friends:

This is the story of my first bank. Grandmother was a devout believer in thrift. Children should be brought up to save, and she would look solemnly over the top of her glasses and remind me that "a penny saved is a penny earned." While we were in South Dakota the local hardware store displayed an unusual shipment of children's banks. Most of them were of cast iron, gaily painted with enamel. The more commonplace varieties were miniature facsimiles of Wells Fargo strongboxes, silver-painted cash registers, and accurate reproductions of tumbler safes similar to the one in the lawyer's office down the street. Each of these had a slot in which to deposit the coins and a rather complicated method for reclaiming the funds if the need arose.

These were not the banks that caught my eye--the mechanical ones were far more fascinating. My final selection consisted of an eagle perched above a nest containing a number of eaglets with their mouths open and stretching their necks toward the possible source of food. You placed a penny in the beak of the large eagle, and pressed the lever. It would then lean over, spread its wings, and drop the coin into the midst of the baby birds. Who could resist saving money with such appealing banking facilities! Actually, I was torn in my decision because there was another depository which had caught my eye. Against a tree stood William Tell's little boy with an apple on his head. William Tell faced him with a crossbow. You placed the coin in the crossbow and released it by pulling a handle. The penny always made a bull's-eye, entering a specially prepared slit between the apple and the junior Tell's head. There were many others to choose from, but Grandmother reminded me that if we bought too many banks we would have nothing left to put into them.

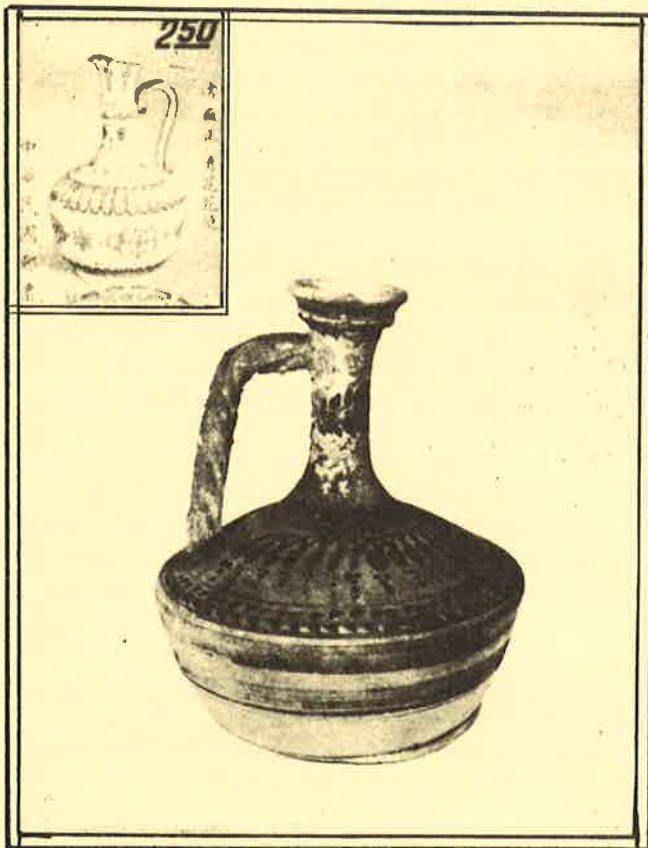
I selected my first bank when I was about seven years old, and at that time these cast iron wonders cost a dollar or less. Now, they are museum items, and unbelievable prices are paid for them by enthusiastic bank collectors. One of our important national banks has a fabulous collection of these battered but still intriguing monuments to economic foresight.

Last year while shopping in an arcade in Kyoto, I found a quaint and seldom-visited curio shop. The proprietor spoke no English, but fortunately I had been guided to the shop by a Japanese friend. We picked several religious antiques, including some

very nice ritual bells and some old votive paintings. Then the dealer inquired politely, "Would you be interested in an iron pocketbook?" A little confused but always inquisitive, I assured the dealer that I was waiting impatiently to view this curiosity. When it appeared in all its glory, it was a fine, old-fashioned, cast iron mechanical bank, probably made in Pennsylvania. How it got into his antique shop, thousands of miles from home, might be a story in itself, but this I was not able to learn. We closed the transaction on the spot, and the "iron purse" was shipped to me with a number of other purchases. This bank was a gem of its kind, permeated with the folk art quality. At one end of a rough and rocky platform was a tall tree stump, on the top of which sat a humorous-looking monkey. Facing the monkey on a lower level was a lion rampant with its tail pendant. If you put a penny in the paw of the monkey and pressed the inevitable lever, the little simian leaned over to drop the coin into the lion's mouth, which always opened at precisely the right moment. The bank rattled suspiciously, so I looked inside and found that it was filled with Japanese one-yen aluminum coins. Some child of Japan had also been instructed in the virtue of economy. Due to the nostalgia invoked by this episode, we are reproducing herewith a true and faithful picture of my new bank.



Several sets of colorful postage stamps reproducing Chinese works of art in the Palace Collection in Formosa have been issued recently by Nationalist China. The newest set of these stamps is devoted to porcelains of the Ching Dynasty between 1723 and 1735. The ceramics of this period were the most notable contribution of China to world art in recent centuries. One example in particular struck my attention because of its similarity to a much earlier work from the Mediterranean area.



The pottery of the eastern Mediterranean involved the skills of Crete, Cypress, and the Greek States. The similarity in style of these two productions from opposite sides of the earth reveals a startling resemblance which is obvious in the accompanying illustration. For practical purposes we should recognize an archaic archetypal pattern of designs which are to be found everywhere in the ruins of early communities. Craftsmen seem to instinctively recognize laws of symmetry and strive for a combination of beauty and utility. The Cyprean pitcher, while comparatively crude when placed beside the more recent Chinese version, has the same architectural composition, and many art lovers might prefer the ancient piece. This art form can be traced through the Near East, across Afghanistan through India to Mongolia, China, and Korea. There are fine examples dating back to the 8th to 10th century which inspired the genius of the Ching potters. The excavated pitcher from Cypress dates from about 1,000 B.C., and the pattern may have reached East Asia along the famous Silk Road.

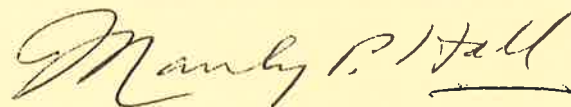
This is by no means a stray example. Pottery is the oldest type of artifact which links the remote past with the modern world. We still copy forms and decorations from archaic originals without even realizing that we are not inventing new shapes and ornamentations. Efforts have been made to discover the mathematical formulas which governed the shaping of pottery. What we now call in art "dynamic symmetry" based upon perfectly measured geometric proportions are present in most examples of early work. The Golden Cut referred to by Aristotle and the Golden Mean of Pythagoras both involve the division of rectangles in dynamic composition. When reduced to diagrammatic value, pots from old burial grounds are as perfectly proportioned as the columns of the temple of the Olympian Zeus or the palacial Baths of Caligula. There were laws and rules of composition that were never disregarded. Were these rules known to the potters who labored five or six thousand years ago, or did an instinctive discipline of artistic requirement guide them unerringly to recognize the divine proportion? This is to be found in old ladles excavated in Pompeii, broken vessels from Knossos, where once stood the Cretan labyrinth, and other vessels which were buried with the Egyptian dead.

Superimposed upon archaic ceramic creations was the concept of individual invention which has since come to dominate this art. Eccentricity justified the violation of long established rules and permitted every craftsman to work according to his own preferences. The tendency was developing in Greece during the age of Pericles. Some of the Grecian States enacted laws prohibiting utensils that violated the laws of symmetry or revealed obvious disproportion. It was assumed that every urn and vessel and wine jar had a psychological effect upon those who used them. To serve food from an illshaped plate of unpleasant color was to invite indigestion. An inharmonious fabric design or badly constructed building profaned the precious gifts of Athena and Dionysos. Man was always to fashion for the glory of God and not the fulfillment of his own conceits. In any event, every ancient town had its rubbish pile, the burial ground of broken cups and plates. As we carefully reconstruct some noble product of the past, we become aware that old tribes we regard now as barbarians had an appreciation for beauty far greater than that generally exhibited in modern times. This beauty was not limited to alabaster jars for princely patrons or wine cups for victorious generals. Most of the fragments bear witness to utensils of the common people--inexpensive and readily replaceable, but worthy of a Cellini or a Wedgwood. Both of these, incidentally, borrowed from the ancient relics.

We are at work preparing for publication the notes of a seminar which I gave on the subject: "From Death to Rebirth." These talks covered the problem of the state of Man in the afterlife and the conditions which lead to his re-embodiment in the material world. The notes will be issued by offset printing from the typewritten original and will be attractively bound in art paper. Further details and the exact date of publication will appear in our next Contributors' Bulletin.

We deeply appreciate your response to our recent Friends' Fund announcement. Your moral support and financial assistance are most encouraging and help us to serve you with greater effectiveness.

Always most gratefully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marjorie P. Hall". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name. The name "Marjorie" is written in a large, flowing script, while "P. Hall" is written in a smaller, more compact script. There is a horizontal line under the name "Hall".



## SPECIAL NOTICE FROM OUR BOOK DEPARTMENT

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

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Price</u>
Esoteric Astrology	Alan Leo	\$ 7.50
E.S.P. In Life and Lab	Louise Rhine (P)	1.50
Essays	Bacon	2.45
Essays	Emerson	1.95
Essays in Applied Christianity--The Church and the New World	Reinhold Niebuhr (P)	2.75
The Essentials of Mysticism	E. Underhill	1.50
Essential Unity of all Religions	Bhagavan Das	2.45
The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe	John C. Monsma	4.50
The Expansion of Awareness	Arthur W. Osborn (P)	1.95
Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra	C.A. Muses	8.50
The Esoteric Orders and Their Work	Dion Fortune (P)	2.00
The Egyptian Book of the Dead	E.A. Wallis Budge (P)	3.95
Esoteric Christianity	Annie Besant (P)	1.95
Etheric Double	A.E. Powell (P)	1.45
Edgar Cayce, The Sleeping Prophet	Jess Stearn	4.95
Experiment in Depth (A Study of Jung, Elliot, and Toynbee)	P.W. Martin	8.00
The Faith of Epicurus	Ben Farrington	4.95
Five Sacred Festivals of Japan	Casal	6.00
The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology	Vivian Robson	6.50
Folk Arts of Japan	Hugo Munsterberg	7.50
The Forerunner	Kahlil Gibran	3.95
Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism	Lama Govinda (P)	3.75
Freud and Psychoanalysis (#4)	Carl G. Jung	9.50
From Mesmer to Christian Science	Frank Podmore	10.00
The Future of Man	Teilhard de Chardin	6.00
From Pioneer to Poet (Signs of the Zodiac Analyzed)	Isabelle M. Pagan	7.50
The Future is Now	Arthur W. Osborn	6.00
The Field of Zen	D.T. Suzuki (P)	.95
The First and Last Freedom	J. Krishnamurti (P)	1.75
Fancy Paper Flowers	Kiyo Sekiyo	5.25
Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity	Francis Legge	10.00
Folk Legends of Japan	Richard M. Dorson	2.25
The Flowering of Mysticism	Rufus M. Jones	11.95
From Intellect to Intuition	Alice Bailey	5.75
The Farther Reaches of Human Nature	A.H. Maslow	12.50
Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy	G. de Purucker	6.00
Garden of the Prophet	Kahlil Gibran	4.50
The Garland of Letters	Sir J. Woodroffe	5.00
Gems of the East	H.P. Blavatsky	3.00

These books may be ordered directly from The Philosophical Research Society, Inc. (address on first page). Please add 25¢ for handling on orders of less than \$5.00, and sales tax is to be included by California residents. Note: Prices are subject to change.