

HORIZON

**The magazine
of useful and
intelligent living**

NOVEMBER

1943

Articles by MANLY PALMER HALL Philosopher

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HORIZON

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VOLUME 3 No. 3



- *The morbid urge to pain
as a way of purity*

The Night of World Rule by Death

WITH the beginning of the 13th century a strange surge of religion swept across Europe. It came as an irresistible wave of repentance for sins of the mind and of the flesh, and developed as the most unusual religious spectacle ever motivated in human hysteria.

During the Dark Ages virtue as the control factor in human conduct practically ceased. Every type of crime and degeneracy flourished, and sober citizens lived in constant terror for their lives and property. The forests were infested with brigands and the towns with thieves. Murder was a daily occurrence. A man was not safe even in the bosom of his own family. Robber barons pilaged their vassals, and corrupt princes degraded their courts and ridiculed the laws of both the Church and State. Ignorance was universal; illiteracy was accepted as an indication of gentility, and scholarship was limited to pedagogues who mumbled classical Greek and Latin abstractions in their flowing beards.

Sanitation was unknown; the city refuse was thrown into the streets, which were then scavenged by herds of swine.

Lepers wandered about howling in the night, and periodically epidemical diseases wiped out entire communities. One writer has said that there was scarcely a well in Europe that was not polluted. Men lived as long as they could in a world which penalized existence, and departed from this sphere to the uncertainties of another, lurid with the flames of eternal perdition.

Against this melancholy background, laden with misfortune and despair, was played the strange drama of a great repentance. Something deep within human nature asserted itself, an extraordinary revulsion mechanism set in. This motion appears to have begun in the Italian city of Perusa, about the year 1210 A. D. The direct cause may have been the belief that the millenium was at hand. Christ was about to return to his world to judge the quick and the dead. He was coming surrounded by his angels to reap the harvest of the ages.

To say the least, the harvest was terrified at the prospect. Men realized that if the Great Judge judged in righteous judgment the damnation of the entire world was inevitable.

This extraordinary sorrow for sin did not begin with the Church; no pope solemnly called for this repentance; no cardinal or archbishop sanctioned its practices; the great remorse, St. Justin of Padua tells us, originated among simple persons, peasants, farmers, small shopkeepers, and the like, and from these it passed with a wave of frenzy to the learned. Doctors and lawyers and judges joined the ranks of the repentant; noble families were swept up in the general impulse, and princes, kings and queens felt the horrible burden of their mortal sins, and cried out in an agony of spirit. The old felt the burden of their evil deeds, and little children screamed with fear of their mortal sins.

For a world obsessed with the magnitude of its own offenses there was but one atonement—pain. Through suffering the sinners would cleanse the burden of their conscience. They would pay for years of evil thought and evil deeds with years of physical agony. Thus would they show to God and his angels that truly they repented the magnitude of their offenses.

And from out of the mountains they came, screaming in the night, as wild as the most frenzied bacchantes of the Thracian forests. They lighted their way by smoking torches; came in great processions of men, women, and children, singing of their repentance in doleful songs. As through the streets of the villages they passed, from the houses came thousands of others to join with them, moaning and weeping with anguish of spirit.

From the hills of Italy this frenzy spread throughout the Roman plain, the streams of penitence flowed across the mountains into Spain, and great processions moved with melancholy majesty northward into France and Germany. Even men in their dreams were touched by the wailing songs, for day and night the stillness was shattered by the ever rising cries of mortal anguish.

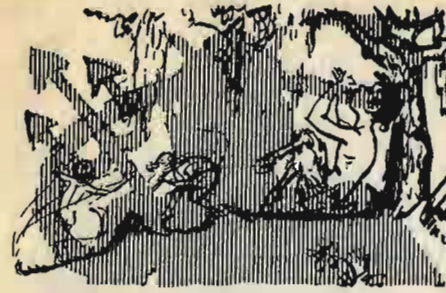
Many historians have described the processions of the repentant sinners: Young mothers with infants clasped to

their breasts; old people staggering and falling under the weight of their years; the strong and the weak, the halt, the lame, and the blind; sober priests and clerics; men of noble blood and brigands, all mingled without thought of rank or circumstance. In most processions these penitents had torn all of their clothing from their bodies; naked and unashamed they passed in solemn files following the banners that bore grotesque paintings of the agony of Christ, and the martyrdom of the saints. Each of these frenzied human beings carried a great raw-hide whip, with which he beat his own body, and the paths that they trod became streams of their own blood. As the frenzy grew stronger upon them they turned their whips upon each other. Many fell to rise no more; but the processions moved on, night after night through towns and villages and countryside, ever searching for forgiveness and not knowing where to seek.

These were the Flagellantes, the Brotherhood of the Miserable; these were the Penitents of old, who wandered about spreading terror and the plague. Theirs was indeed a dance of death with the Specter of Damnation hovering over all, master of the show.

Those too modest to join in these public exhibitions flagelated in the privacy of their own homes, and it is recorded that the heads of many estates built chapels for private penance. To the whip were added other devices to mortify the flesh; wire shirts, scourges made of iron chain, spiked girdles, all these and other ingeniously devised means of torture were devoutly imagined into being, and devotedly applied. Small children beat themselves to death while their elders gave thanks for the blessed realization that had brought about this frenzy.

The arts languished, for no man had time for beauty. All music ceased, except dismal hymns of pain. There was no time for gladness, nor for the enjoyment of even the simplest and most natural of human impulses; there was only time for pain. "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!"



This was the doleful spectacle, but it had another aspect which in justice to the sincerity of these people cannot be ignored.

Crime practically ceased throughout Europe; the prisons were opened and the condemned joined in the solemn rites of purification. Thieves returned the goods they had stolen in public rituals, princes begged forgiveness of the people they had exploited and tyrannized. Those who had borne false witness admitted their faults; and those who had become rich by false measures became beggars of God, giving their all to the poor. Men wanted to unburden themselves of all their guilt and to find some strange kind of peace which they had never known in their struggle after power and gain.

So extreme, so abnormal, and so unnatural was this unbridled fervor that it exceeded all bounds of reason and restraint, it threatened the destruction of European civilization. Men gave up good along with evil, and ceased to practice the practical and necessary virtues in their wild revolt against the flesh.

The Church thundered its disapproval, laws were passed against the public spectacles of penitence, and gradually the great emotional wave subsided. Year by year the number of the flagellants grew less, until at last the practice was limited to those certain orders within the body of the Church which sanctioned the private practice of flagellation and other forms of strict observance.

But the human consciousness was deeply scarred by those long sad years, and a morbid urge to pain as a way of purity survived as a force in the psycho-

logical fabric of man's subjective nature. The urge to be miserable for the glory of God has lingered in a solemn conviction held that there is something evil about being happy, and that God rejoices in the dismal chants of the self-afflicted. This urge, this inner conviction, overshadowed the early Protestant reformation. It substituted for a religion of beauty and gaiety and laughter one that was dour and square-toed in puritanism. Gone also was the grand old pagan universe filled with happy sprites and spirits, and all that was left were the demons. Everything centered on temptation, on sin, and the devil, in sermons forever warning how perdition was at hand. No other religion ever came to the world to take on so completely the morbid psychology of evil. It is only within the last century that devotees to the Christian faith have begun to see the dignity of happiness and friendliness. This carried load of ever present evil destroyed the dignity of living and added immeasurably to the agony of dying. For long, fear was the ruler of Christendom.

A story that gained wide credence in Spain related that about the 8th century a Christian Bishop of Lisbon, to escape from the Arabs, fled to the islands of the west; and there he founded the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola. These cities were fantasies out of the Arabian Nights: There were great palaces built of gold, inlaid with jewels, and waiting there all the wealth of the Indies to be filched by brave adventurers. It was an idea definitely fascinating, and especially so to impoverished Spanish families that had an abundance of good blood but a lamentable shortage of cash. Several ineffective efforts were made to discover these cities, but all that was accumulated was a wealth of lore and legend to awaken still further the prevailing human avarice. The Spanish government had no money to waste searching for mirages, but a number of important families scraped together what remained of their wealth and financed expeditions to embark on this greatest wild-goose chase in history.

In the spring of 1598, Don Juan de Oñate with about 400 colonists, many of them from the best families of Spain, entered the area of Nueva Andalucia and there set up the first permanent settlement of the Spanish, in what is now New Mexico. The magical cities of Cibola proved to be only the pueblos of the Southwestern Indians, and the fabulous treasures no more than native art in a few primitive forms.

At Santa Fe, old Spain thus reestablished itself in the new world and the colonists lived the regal traditions of European culture. But most of the comforts and elegances of the old world were lacking, and literally for centuries the Spanish people in America were almost completely out of touch with their traditional culture; they had to create for themselves everything they wanted and needed. With the exception of occasional caravans that brought in absolute necessities, such as gunpowder and occasionally a few bolts of fine cloth, the settlers were thrown entirely upon their own resources. Life was further complicated by the hostility of the surrounding Indians and the struggle for survival was as heroic as that of any pioneer people.

Other settlers from time to time came from Spain, and great and glorious names were added to the honor roll. It is the descendants of these Spanish adventurers who constitute the Spanish-American population of New Mexico today. They are people who resent even today being termed Mexicans, because they are not descendants of emigrants from Mexico; they are Spanish-Americans with a background of all the high tradition of old Spain.

Oñate and his soldiers flagellated themselves to beseech divine aid for protection against the Indians, declares the earliest record of flagelants resident in America. There are very few other records of the development of flagellation among the early Spanish colonists, but there is every indication that it was practiced. The oldest church record pertaining to the practice of public penance by flagellation in the United States



is dated September 17, 1794, and is in the archives of the cathedral at Santa Fe. This record mentions specifically the venerable Third Order of the Penitentes.

It is clearly evident that the isolated Spanish colonists, left for centuries to their own devices, developed an indigenous psychology and an equally indigenous folk art. The traditional background of both is Spanish, but it has been considerably modified by isolation and by centuries of introversion. Images necessary to Catholic worship could not be brought in, in any large number, over the long and dangerous trails. This led local carpenters to adapt their slender talents to the material available, producing the *Bultos* and *Santos*. The *Bultos* are religious figures of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and various saints, especially St. Joseph. The figures are cut crudely from wood, covered with a plaster-like glue, and then painted with herbal and mineral pigments. Some of the little doll-like statues were clothed with garments made of cloth, which too were coated and painted until they appeared to be a part of the original image. The *Santos* are native paintings on wood, similar in spirit to the icons of the Greek and Russian churches.

This religious art, though produced for the most part by artisans rather than artists, reveals a marked degree of native talent, and in recent years has come to be collected as an important form of primitive art.

The European mystery plays, which have practically disappeared from other parts of the world, are still performed among the Spanish-American villages. A favorite theme for these plays is the story of Adam and Eve and the traditional Fall of Man. The religious theatre has the simplicity of 17th century Europe. There is no scenery, and the audience sits on rough benches, and the theatre is lit by kerosene lanterns. Adam and Eve are portrayed by two dusky skinned youngsters, 10 or 12 years old, whose knowledge of the philosophy of the Fall of Man is completely nil. Adam and Eve, in blue denim jeans, when tempted by Satan, who is another small boy, are protected by an angel with cardboard wings. The audience is duly impressed and the drama has all the subtle integrity of what a modern might term the absolute theatre.

Another favorite subject is the visit of the three wise men to the manger of Jesus. Little Niño is usually a wood carven figure of the infant Christ; the star of Bethlehem is a lantern hung over a beam on a rope. If the lantern catches on some protruding post, in the process of being drawn along, the audience will rise and pry it loose and then return to their seats without the slightest consciousness of interruption.

Even today, if you leave the main highway and go into the little Spanish villages, thirty or forty miles from the beaten track, you drop back three or four centuries in the psychological life of man. You are in the medieval world. This adventure in perspective is very important to every student of contemporary religion and comparative psychology.

You leave the world of familiar modern attitudes and live again in the romance, witchcraft and sorcery of the Middle Ages. Here witches are still persecuted for their evil enchantment, and wizards with the claws of cats creep about in the night casting spells. Medicine is practiced by witches and old women who dry the herbs and simples hung from the smoky beams of their little adobe houses. You are among a people left alone and forgotten, who

have gone on living as they have always lived, in a curious mixture of a grand tradition and poverty, of old high estates and modern want, of intrinsic culture and comparative illiteracy.

The Church for many years sent priests to minister to the needs of these scattered mud villages, and in each there is an adobe church, its altar adorned with modern Italian religious art. But the priests were few and the distances great, and the villagers had to adapt their faith to their simple problems and the limitation of their environment. And so Catholicism has taken on the aspect of a folk religion, both simplified and distorted in terms of local color.

Isolation causes neuroses, and these people sank into themselves until their lives moved according to a sad and gentle minor note, a note of frustration that was akin to pain. Any individual who retires from normal intercourse with his kind is likely to develop a pathological neurosis, which in turn will lead to the frustration of his natural instincts. These isolated settlers sought an escape from themselves, and found it in the philosophy of pain.

Among them there came into being the order of *Los Hermanos Penitentes*, the Penitent Brothers of the Order of St. Francis of the Catholic Confraternity of Penance.

The Penitentes are the members of a religious sect that exists principally among the Spanish American communities of New Mexico. The strongholds of the Order are Sandoval, Mora, Taos, San Miguel, Colfax, Rio Arriba, and Valencia counties of New Mexico, with the society extending into southern Colorado, eastern Arizona and the northern parts of Old Mexico. In recent years the order of the Penitent Brothers incorporated as a benevolent organization under the laws of the State of New Mexico.

The Penitentes practice flagellation as a religious discipline of penance and at times use other means of self torture. It has been their practice for centuries to crucify members of the cult in the solemn ceremonies of the Easter season.

The rituals of the society are secret and the brothers are bound together by vows. Outside persons attempting to witness their secret rites have been beaten, stoned, and in a few instances shot at. Women are not permitted to become members of the Brotherhood and there seems to be no women's auxiliary, but in Penitente communities female sympathizers now voluntarily practice self torture privately, and in older times publicly.

Although the Brotherhood is nominally Catholic, there has been friction between the Penitentes and the Church for years. The members, however, still refuse to permit the Church to regulate their actions, although Archbishop Lamy promulgated in 1858 a set of rules to govern the conduct of the Brotherhood. In these rules he states that the Order is a Catholic confraternity.

The exact number of the Penitentes does not seem to be known, but their strength is placed at roughly 10,000. The order is considered politically powerful and few public officials wish to offend the Brotherhood. Important State Officers have been made honorary members of the society.

The principal public activities of the Society take place during the period of Lent and culminate on Good Friday. But there are other occasions in which services may include flagellation. Among these are funerals of deceased members and the celebration of certain holy days, such as All Saints Day, Corpus Christi Day, Founding of the Cross Day, and the days of saints held in special veneration locally.

Each of the Penitente villages has its own local order and the connection between the different groups is very slight. Each local chapter is presided over by



ten to twelve officers, of which the chief is the *Hermano Mayor*, or Chief Brother. Theoretically he is elected annually. But in practice he serves for many years, and has no superior.

Each of the Brotherhoods has its house of assembly, which is called a *morada*. This is a small adobe structure with one door and one window and is usually divided into two rooms. The larger of the two rooms is a chapel which is the place of assembly, and the smaller room is used for the initiation ceremony. Here the whips and other implements of self-torture are kept.

The initiation into the Brotherhood includes the sealing of each brother with the peculiar mark of the order. The officer who performs this task is called the *Sangrador*. With the aid of a sharp instrument called *pedernal* he gashes the back of the neophyte, usually with three vertical cuts about ten inches in length. These represent the three Persons of the Trinity. After these cuts have been made it is usual for the brother to request of the *sangrador* to beat the open wounds with a whip. Honorary members do not go through this ceremony, and they are not admitted to all of the meetings of the order.

The public ceremonies of the Penitentes during the period of Lent include public flagellation, the carrying of heavy wooden crosses, and other forms of penance. One simple penance calls for strewing a number of small pebbles before the altar in the *morada* and then kneeling on these pebbles for several hours at a time.

The consummation of the ritual is the crucifixion of an especially selected Brother who is called the *Cristo*.

Before the advent of tourists the Penitente crucifixion took place in full daylight, but in recent years the rite has been performed only at night, in remote places, guarded by Brothers armed with rifles.

In the old days of the order the *Cristo* was fastened to the cross with iron nails driven through the hands and feet, and remained crucified for the full three hours described in the Scriptures. This

was not as might first be supposed likely to prove fatal, and the majority survived the ordeal.

In recent years the *Cristo* has been tied to the cross with heavy cords. His arms are bound to the shoulders, and his legs to the thighs; and the ropes bind him so tightly to the wood that all circulation in his extremities is stopped. The limbs almost immediately turn blue, and it is only possible to remain on the cross for about forty-five minutes and survive.

During the crucifixion the body of the *Cristo* is usually covered with a tightly wound white sheet, and the head is covered with a black bag. While the Brother is hanging on the cross the sermon of the Seven Last Words of Christ is read.

Usually two women kneel at the foot of the cross; one represents Mary the Mother, and the other Mary the Magdalene. Frequently these women are the mother and wife of the crucified man, and as they weep at the foot of the cross they know the same pain as the Marys of nineteen centuries ago.

In some communities the Penitentes engage a physician to watch the *Cristo* during the crucifixion, to make certain that he does not die upon the cross. A local doctor is known to be absent from his home every year during Holy Week, and it is reported that he serves the Brotherhood in this capacity.

There is often snow on the ground in New Mexico during Easter season, and the crucified *Cristo* may suffer as much from cold and exposure as from the ropes that bind him to the cross.

If it should occur that the Penitente *Cristo* dies upon the cross, his death is kept secret and his body is buried in some secluded place known only to the Brotherhood.

If the dead man has a family, his shoes are taken to his house and left on the doorstep to signify that he has gone on a journey.

A year later, a Penitente cross is placed over the grave of the dead Brother; and the members each bring a stone and place it at the foot of the cross. This heap of stones at the grave of the Peni-



tente is called a *descanso*, and all well-wishers who pass that way may add a stone to the pile.

Several writers have attempted to compare the religious rituals of the Penitentes with the Passion Play given every ten years at Oberammergau in Bavaria. It appears to me that such comparison is utterly impossible. The Bavarian pageantry is performed in fulfillment of a vow made centuries ago when the village of Oberammergau was miraculously preserved from the plague. The life of Christ, as given by the Oberammergau players, is a beautiful spiritual drama, done with the deepest reverence; but it is a play, and was never intended to be anything else.

The Penitente crucifixion is not a play. In no sense of the word it is given for dramatic purposes. It is a re-living of the original mystery of Calvary. Those who take part in the Penitente ceremony are not acting—they are re-experiencing the world tragedy. The modern *Cristo* is suffering exactly as his Savior suffered, and he may like Christ die upon the cross.

The Penitente in his ritual is seeking mystical union with his Lord, by suffering with his Lord. Through pain he seeks to understand Him who suffered for all mankind. For this reason I feel that the European and American rituals are entirely different.

In recent years there has been a general opposition to the crucifixion rites. The Church has made heroic efforts to stop the ceremonies and in many Peni-



tente communities they have been discontinued. In some, a life size wooden figure is substituted for the *Cristo*, and in others the ritual ends with the *Cristo* carrying his heavy cross up the road to Calvary. The late Archbishop Gerken is believed to have advanced the cause of preventing this rite by coming to an agreement with several Penitente leaders. It is doubtful, however, that the ceremony has actually been stopped; but certainly it has received no publicity recently.

The public ritual of the Order includes the dragging of heavy crosses considerable distances over the rough desert land. There is usually a path that leads from the *morada* (chapel) to the Calvary or place of crucifixion. The distance may be approximately a mile and probably includes numerous gullies, rough ground, and nowadays barb wire fences. Over this ground the Brothers drag their great wooden crosses, their bodies bleeding from the blows of their whips.

The crosses are of great size, from 12 to 14 feet in length, made of heavy timbers, and weigh from 300 to 800 pounds. The heaviest of the crosses is called *doncella*, and is reserved for one who desires to make the greatest penance for his sins, real or imaginary. It is not unusual for the Penitentes to fall under the burden of their cross. They are forced to their feet again by the lashes of their Brothers, who act the part of Roman soldiers; although sometimes, one depicting St. Simmon will carry the cross for the weakened man.

In addition to the crucifixion there are three other important and dramatic rituals practiced by the Brothers in the last days of Lent. These are the Stations of the Cross, the Ritual of the Death Cart, and the *tinieblas*.

If you visit a little Spanish Penitente village on the evening of Good Friday you may see death riding through the night in a little wooden cart.

In the village it is very quiet; it is just about dark; and everyone is out in their Sunday best; even the voices of little children are hushed. You see shadows against the buildings; no one is saying anything; occasionally you see the red glow of a cigarette. The women have black shawls over their heads, the men wear dark clothes, and some wear black hats. They are hushed, expectant, lined up along the little dirt road that goes through the town. You hear arising the song of pain. Now everyone is very quiet; the one radio is turned off, and all are intent on strange old songs that in the cool, clear air can be heard eight or ten miles away. It is the Gregorian chant of pain, with the *pito* piping like the shrill cry of a night bird.

Far away a light like a star is bobbing down the road. Everyone comes forward from the shadows to await the procession. As it approaches the singing grows stronger and louder. Gradually another sound is added, as if an avalanche was gathering in the mountains, as a low, earthshaking rumble. There is the sound of something dragging and scraping, something drawn and pulled; it is heavy. Gradually this procession reaches the outskirts, then comes into the village; in a few seconds it reaches you, goes by, and is gone. It is all over.

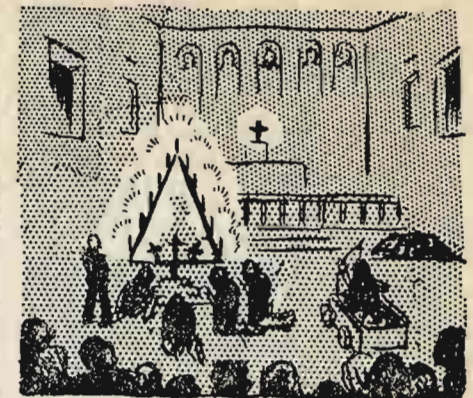
Try to explain it; you can't; but something very strange happened in that moment when the Procession of Death went by, for you have experienced what you have thought could only have happened in Perugia, Italy, long ago. When the procession reached you there was

first a man playing the pipes, the *pintero*, ragged, tall, and thin; you may have known him as the village musician who plays at the village picnics; tonight he plays the song of death. Behind him in the procession is a short and stout villager who carries a great triangular candlestick with a candle in each corner; but the candles are not lit; they are to be used in a later ritual. Behind totters an old man with a lantern feebly held up. By the light of the lantern he reads from a little book. Supposedly, he is reading the song he is singing; but he has long since devoutly memorized the song. The rays of the lantern strike on the ground obliquely behind him, and in the rays you can see two pairs of bare feet. For a moment they look disembodied; but that is because the owners are otherwise covered with black veils. In the darkness are men whose backs are bent and covered with flagellation welts; one is completely skinless; but by hair ropes, fastened to each back they are pulling the Cart of Death.

The Cart itself differs in various communities. It is usually a long wooden affair, six feet in length, with wheels about the size of automobile wheels. It would be difficult enough to draw the cart along at best, but in order to make it more difficult the cart wheels are set so they will not turn, and the cart is pulled not by the help of them but in spite of them. To make it more difficult the cart is heaped with a heavy load of rocks.

On the heap of rocks in the cart sits Death, a skeleton, partly covered with black robes and crowned with a black crown, grinning ghoulishly, and holding in his skinny hands a drawn bow and arrow.

This is the night that Death rules the world, the night when, according to the old doctrine of the Church, for three long hours pandemonium rules the world. And as that strange thing has gone by, Death in a little Wooden Cart, you have thought of the world and things as we know them today—that little cart going over and beyond the mountains, across Europe and Asia,



across the world, for surely this very night Death again is riding. For by the sorrows and the stupidity of men, Death has been made the ruler of the world—and tonight thousands struggle and die on fields of battle. What you have seen is strangely reminiscent of something that is quite unbelievable.

Afterward you go to the little church. There are no priests; the Penitentes will have nothing to do with priests. The doors are locked behind you, and men with guns stand guard. And now the ritual of the lighting of the candles is celebrated. The rituals are not in Latin, but in Spanish, strangely Mexicanized Spanish of the 15th century, entirely different from the Spanish and Mexican languages of today. Then the Master of the Lodge rises up and says, "Those who wish to depart may do so; those who remain do so at their own risk," and generally there is quite an exodus, and the doors are locked again.

The white triangular candlesticks with the candles lit stands before the altar; all other lights are extinguished. Then, one by one, the three candles are put out, and the church is in utter darkness. And now is portrayed the first of the three terrible hours when the graves are opened and Death comes forth. Demons arise from the pit, chains are rattled, objects are thrown, and the heavy Death cart is hurled about the church from one end to another—and if anyone is knocked under its wheels it is just too bad. In

black darkness arise the cries of pain, the moans of Penitente agony, and the burdened shrieks of lost souls. Suddenly the candles are lit again, and the pandemonium is repeated three times, to represent the three hours when Death is upon the face of the world. Then doors are opened, and the Penitentes creep out into the darkness of the night and are seen no more for a year.

But visit that little village a few days after Easter, and go into a store and say, "I would like to speak to Jose," and the reply will be, "Oh, it is lamentable, but only a few days ago Jose fell off his horse, and Jose is ill. It will be yet a few days before you can see Jose." Perhaps then you say, "Well then, I would like to speak to Hernandez." The answer will be: "Oh, lamentable and terrible! Hernandez was out plowing in the field the other day, and his team ran away, and the plow hit him. Hernandez is also ill; come back in a few days." You might then inquire: "How about Garcia?" and be told, "Oh, but Garcia fell in the well last week, and he will be unable to see anyone perhaps for weeks." Persisting then, "Well, let me talk to Pedro," the answer is, "Alas, Pedro has a great infirmity, and no one can see him for a month; he has a terrible trouble with his stomach." You can go thus through the list of all your vilt-larger acquaintances, and no one is available. The entire community is recuperating. And of course, not from the given infirmities or disasters, but from the annual Penitente ritual.

In the far away villages of the high New Mexico plateau the Brothers of Penance are not only a religious group but the principal forces for law and order. For the most part they exercise a benevolent influence over the lives of their communities. The *Hermano Mayor* sits in judgment over offenders and sentences them according to his understanding of their misdeeds. If Jose will steal his neighbors sheep he shall make penance of fifty lashes. If Fernando will filch from his neighbors field he shall crawl to the *Campo Santo* on his hands and

knees with a large bundle of cactus tied to his bare back.

A modern influence is coming into the Penitente communities. In one town there are two *moradas*, the *Morada Republicana* and the *Morada Democratica*. Some years ago a lecturer representing the league against tuberculosis lectured in a number of the *moradas*. Later, one Brother was punished with ten strokes of the lash for expectorating on the floor contrary to the advice given by the speaker. One writer has noticed that in a ritual of the Penitentes depicting Jesus before Pilate, the man representing Pilate had a small American flag stuck in his hat.

Among the Penitentes there is a delightful practice of punishing the Saints if they fail to grant the prayers of the faithful. The *Bulto*, or wooden image of the Saint, may be turned about in its niche so that it faces the wall as punishment for failure to bring about the results desired. After an appropriate season of punishment the Saint is forgiven and permitted to look out again upon the world of the faithful. This is indeed a land where men feel perfectly justified in reproving their gods if need arises.

Most writers have spoken rather bitterly about the Penitentes and their practices, but the sincerity of the majority of these simple people cannot be seriously questioned. No one can walk with them along the road to Calvary without feeling something of spiritual exhilaration. For there is a great power in these tired men, their backs bent under the load of their weighty crosses.

We may all wish for that day when man shall worship his God with beauty and joy and happiness, and all such pain as this shall vanish away with the strange doctrine of sin that brought it into being. But until that day, it is the duty of every intelligent person to respect the sincere conviction of other men. Of all Christians, the Penitentes are the ones who have most literally and exactly obeyed the words of the Scripture, "Take up your cross and follow me."

The Man Who Kept A Secret

MICHEL Nostradamus died on the second day of July, 1566. This remarkable man was the greatest prophet of the modern world. In the closing years of his life he compiled his celebrated Centuries, more than 1,000 prophetic quatrains: The history of the things to come until the year 2,000.

Nostradamus, a physician, was given to the practice of metaphysical arts. He conversed with spirits, and captured the demons of the air in an enchanted bowl filled with magnetized water. Robed like a priest of some ancient Phrygian cult, he invoked the invisible forces of nature in the strange alchemistical laboratory in his little home at Salon.

After the death of this extraordinary person, many fantastic stories were circulated about him. Some believed that he had been buried standing up in the side of a church wall, so that foolish men could never walk across his grave. Others held that Nostradamus had not died at all, but had retired to his tomb with a little lamp so that he could write on in peace the predictions of all things that should happen until the end of the world.

One remarkable account relates that when his tomb was opened, a loose stone fell and killed the man responsible for breaking into the sepulchre. A manuscript was found buried with the body stating that the man who broke into the tomb should die.

The townsfolk of Salon named a street in honor of their distinguished citizen, and later a public fountain was dedicated to his memory. With the passing of years legends multiplied, and they grew with the telling. Many of these myths unquestionably originated in actual occurrences, but others are obviously fabrications. Possibly the most interesting of the semi-historical legends are those involved in the story of "The man who could keep a secret"—and did.

In the month of April, 1697, thirty-one years after the death of Nostradamus, an artisan of Salon, whose name unfortunately is not recorded, returned to his home after a long day at his bench; and after a substantial meal retired to rest. He was a man of small imagination and not given to any special interest in the supernatural. At the midnight hour he was awakened by a strange chilliness that seemed to fill the entire house. As he sat up in his bed terrified, the walls of his room appeared to open, and the spirit of Michel Nostradamus, surrounded by an aura of flickering lights, came out of space and stood at the foot of his bed.

The occult physician-magician appeared exactly as in life; he wore the black robe of a scholar, and his long gray beard shone with a silvery fire.

The spectre addressed the artisan, ordering him to go to the Intendant of the province and demand letters to King Louis the 14th. These letters should provide for a private audience with the monarch.

"What thou art to say to the King," declared the spectre, "thou wilt not be informed of until the day of thy being at court, when I shall appear to thee again, and give thee full instructions; but remember thy life depends on absolute secrecy towards everyone save the Intendant."

After repeated warnings that, on pain of death, must no person be told of the apparition or the purpose of its coming, the ghost returned to space, and the walls of the little room closed again.

The artisan was terrified; for several minutes he lay in his bed moaning and praying, beside himself with fear. His good wife, disturbed by the commotion, hastened to his side and pleaded with him to tell her the cause of his fear. At last, desperate at the plight in which he found himself, the artisan bound the

woman to secrecy and told her the story.

As he finished speaking the room was violently shaken and a voice said, "I warned you to tell no one, on pain of death." At the same instant a blinding flash of light filled the room, and the artisan was stricken dead in his bed.

This extraordinary incident caused great commotion in the little French town. There were many private discussions and several public meetings among the burghers. Soon others were visited by the ghost, and each in turn was bound to secrecy. And each in some way and from some cause betrayed the trust, and died.

The epidemic of mysterious deaths became a principal subject of conversation not only at Salon, but throughout France; for the fame of the great departed seer was known in every district and province.

In Salon was a blacksmith named Francois Michel. Included among his neighbors were two brothers, one of whom had recently died as the result of informing his brother of Nostradamus' ghostly visit. One night Nostradamus came to Michel the farrier under conditions exactly the same as they were on his first appearance. A happy man was Francois Michel, and he had a great desire to live a normal expectancy of his years. He agreed to fulfill the demands of the spirit, and fortified the decision with the resolve that not even torture should cause him to betray the trust.

He went immediately to the Intendant, but had considerable difficulty in securing an interview, for the official believed the poor blacksmith to be of unsound mind. But in time he secured the ear of the officer and told him of the letters to the king that must be prepared exactly as Nostradamus had required. The farrier, a practical and direct man, closed his interview with the words, "I can readily conceive, your Excellency, that I must seem to you to be playing an exceedingly ridiculous part; but if you will be pleased to order your officials to examine into the late sudden deaths in our town, I flatter myself that your Excellency will again send for me."

The Intendant made a thorough search into all the circumstances of the deaths, and convinced that some strange supernatural force was at work, decided on his own responsibility to send Francois Michel to Versailles with the special dispatches to M. de Baobefieux, the Minister of State. The Intendant went so far as to supply funds for the journey, and wished the bewildered blacksmith success in his strange mission.

Francois Michel arrived at Versailles by coach without the slightest idea as to what he should say to the Minister of State when he presented his letters. As he arrived late in the day after a long journey, he decided to rest in a local inn for the night.

At low twelve, the witching hour of spirits, the curtain of the great canopied bed parted, and the ghost of Nostradamus stood beside the blacksmith. The shade of the dead sorcerer dictated to Francois, word by word, the message he was to deliver to M. de Baobefieux. At this time also, Nostradamus revealed the secret message that was to be given to the King.

"Many difficulties will be laid in your way," concluded the spectre, "in obtaining this private audience; but beware of desisting from your purpose, and of letting your secret be drawn from you by the Minister or anyone else, under pain of instant death."

The Minister of State tried in every possible way to force Francois to reveal his message to the King, but the farrier was not moved, and maintained absolute silence respecting the dreadful message which he could confide solely to the king.

M. de Baobefieux finally intimated that without more explanation he could



not request for an unknown blacksmith a private audience with His Majesty. Francois solved this dilemma with the following words: "That your Excellency may not think that what I am instructed to tell the King is all a mere farce, be pleased to say to His Majesty that at the last hunting party at Fontainebleau, His Majesty himself saw the apparition, that his horse took fright at it, and started aside, and that his Majesty, as the appearance was only momentary, took it for a deception of sight, and therefore abstained from mentioning it to anyone." The Minister of State, gathering his courage, reported to Louis 14th the incident of Francois' arrival and the extraordinary story he had related. To his surprise, the King commanded that the farrier be brought to the palace at the first possible moment. King Louis admitted that he had seen the apparition in the forest in Fontainebleau.

So it came about that the farrier had private audience with the King. He remained at the court of the *Grande Monarque* for three days, and much of this time he spent in the private cabinet of the King. At the end of the strange visit, Francois took public leave of the King, whose manner on the occasion was most gracious and appreciative. At the time of the parting, the Duc de Duras, who was Captain of the King's guards, remarked apologetically to the King, "Sire, if your Majesty had not expressly ordered me to bring this man to your presence, I should never have done it, for most assuredly he is only a fool!"

Louis answered this with a strange smile, murmuring, "My dear Duras, thus it is that men frequently judge falsely of others; Francois is a more sensible man than you and your friends imagine."

Through the devious ways of court life, the visit of the Blacksmith of Salon to Louis *le Grande* came to general public knowledge. Every effort was made to discover the nature of the message he had brought; but even those who knew the deepest mysteries of the State were unable to find out what tran-

spired between Francois Michel and Louis the 14th.

Speculations were innumerable and for some years every move that Louis made was examined in the effort to discover if his actions were influenced by some supernatural counsel. The most common explanation was that the message in some way involved the program of French influence in Spain, by which the grandson of Louis gained the Spanish throne.

Francois the farrier received a handsome present from the Minister of State and returned to Salon, with strict injunctions that he should never mention to any living soul what had transpired between himself and the King.

The good blacksmith had but one weakness of interest to our story. He would occasionally join his cronies in a local tavern and tinkle with them far into the night. On these occasions he would become quite garrulous, and frequently the subject of their conversation was his great journey to the king. One of his companions would ask laughingly, "Come Francois, tell us your secret, if you have one." But even when the farrier's tongue was well loosened, he never forgot the warnings of the ghost of Nostradamus, and his lips were sealed. One writer has pointed out that his silence was as intense and complete as that of the celebrated Count Von Moltke, of whom it has been well said, "He was able to hold his tongue in seven languages."

Further fame came to the blacksmith of Salon; his portrait was painted by M. de Roulet, the outstanding artist of his day. The picture was extensively engraved and copies are still to be seen in collections of old French prints. They depict Francois Michel as a grave and intelligent looking man of about forty; with a strange somewhat mystical look in his face. In his painting the artist caught the stubborn silence of a man who had seen something from the other world, and had the wit and courage to take his secret with him to the grave.

Jacob Boheme: *Shoemaker of Gorlitz*

THERE is a very important message in the story of the life and teachings of the great German mystic, Jacob Boehme, for certain of his mystical investigations, if not original or new, are extremely unusual.

He was born about the year 1575; detailed birth data is not available. A cobbler by trade, he lived to the age of forty-nine years. Boehme was a comparatively young man when one day in his kitchen the sun struck a pewter plate and he was blinded by the light. From that time on, he has said, he was able at will to see the Beings of the Invisible Universe.

It is obvious that Boehme had been previously endowed with clairvoyance, that he came into this life with it; and it was through this curious accident that he achieved his illumination. Having achieved clairvoyance in the 16th century, when it was not at all orthodox, he brought down on his head the animosity of both the Lutheran Church and Roman Church. These churches, particularly the Lutheran, persecuted him unmercifully, and were the ultimate cause of his death.

During a comparatively short lifetime, while cobbling shoes and raising a family, Boehme authored more than twenty-five mystical books. He found it necessary to reprint re-statements of certain of the documents, to write them in a new language, in order to clarify them. He used a jargon created out of the alchemical, metaphysical, and scientific works of his time, and to each word he gave a special meaning. This makes it difficult for the average person to read Boehme; his words are not those used commonly but are a coined vocabulary to explain metaphysical Truths he alone perceived.



During the years of his so-called ministry, which was the period of his writing, he was on at least one occasion forbidden by the State from producing his manuscripts, and for many years he never wrote anything. When the urge again came upon him irresistibly, he moved to another community and continued with his writings. Not until after his death was it appreciated that this simple shoemaker, a man of unpleasing features and harsh voice, had left behind him an exceedingly rich heritage, in the findings of one who had sought long into the mysteries of life. Among his books the *Mysterium Magnum* and the *Aurora* stand out as very great achievements.

The most important line of Boehme's thought is his conception of the Fall and Redemption of Man. The Fall, as described in the Book of Genesis, plus the Redemption through Christ, as given in the New Testament, constitute the peculiar essence of Christianity. Of primary importance therefore is a mystical interpretation of these, as so-called orthodox religious facts.

Jacob Boehme, acquainted with and following in the footsteps of the Cabbala, perceived there was more than one

Adam, more than one common progenitor of the human race. He recognized four Adams, or four Adamic Beings, as the progenitors of the four classes of existence. He used the peculiar Hebraic meaning of the word Adam: that is, a specie, race, type or kind; spelled ADM, a word meaning a collective, not an individual; a race. The word Adam signified all of a certain type of creature.

One Adam he called the Celestial Adam, referred to in the Rabbinical writings as dwelling in Paradise; that is, in a sphere of space, located in one corner of the Garden of Eden. This Celestial Adam had no fleshy or material parts; his was a mystical body derived from God. This body was luminous, ethereal. It was filled throughout itself with Light and Life.

This Collective Creature, the Whole of Humanity, dwelt in a Garden, but not one as we know it, filled with trees and plants, but in a Paradisical State, a Mystical Condition, a Spiritual Estate. Here all life dwelt together without the defilement of a material condition. And where it is said that the Lord walked in the Garden in the cool of the evening it is to be inferred that men while in this spiritual condition had communion with God.

To Boehme, God meant the entire Hierarchy of Celestial Beings, not a super man with long white whiskers. The God of Boehme was the Divine Power of Nature which man was aware of primarily. Or, before his condition of relapse into his material, or fleshy, or earthy condition.

It was in the Garden also, in the School of the Angels, according to Boehme, that the Archangel Raphael taught Adam and Eve the Mystery of Life. And this was Boehme's interpretation: While man was still a spiritual creature he was instructed in all the mysteries of life; so he gained these mysteries not by material experience alone, but by internal interpretation, for man was, spiritually, already in possession of the secrets of life.

The Second Adam, the Relapsed or Fallen Adam, Boehme represented by taking a capital A and allowing it to

fall on its side. This Fallen Adam, the Relapsed Adam, he recognized as merely primitive humanity in the process of evolution, humanity descended from a spiritual to a temporal condition. The earth itself was a Second Eden, said Boehme. And was not merely a location on the earth, as Bible students would have you believe, but the whole earth itself. In the Terrestrial Paradise, the Second State of man, human beings dwelt together in a physical relationship, and the Spiritual Mystery of God here took on its second appearance.

Now, why the Fall? What was the cause of it? To establish his authority and state his premise, Boehme went back to Greek ideas. He recognized the Fall not as sinful, as the Christians would have you believe, but as an inevitable motion of nature. The Fall of Man was the descent of man into the state of experience. It was the descent from theory to practice.

Man dwelling in the School of the Angels may be likened to a boy going to school. In his classes he gains a theoretical knowledge of the arts and sciences. Having gained this knowledge, it is then necessary for him to go forth and do these things himself, that his theoretical knowledge may be transmuted into a practical working knowledge. That is what occurred; for according to the ancient Greeks, the primitive man of the human family, having received his theoretical experience in the College of Heaven, descended into the state of experience, that he might transmute theory into practice. The Fall of Man was not then because of sin, but was an inevitable motion, an inevitable necessity. In his fallen state, man was less than in his spiritual state; but out of man's so-called Fall, or descent into matter, was to be born a new and higher creature, greater than before in all its parts.



In his present condition man is an exile from the Sphere of Light, but, to Boehme, a voluntary exile who elected to descend, in order that he might learn, and through learning perfect himself in the course the theory of which was bestowed by mystical interpretation.

Boehme then takes up the great question of human suffering. You and your friends have expressed it many times, somewhat after this fashion: "Why did an All-Wise Providence decree in the first place that man would have to go through the cycle of experience? Why did not God bestow wisdom in the beginning, and save man from war, crime pestilence, and destruction? Why was not man created wise instead of foolish? If Diety could create man, then Deity could create him perfect." Someone is always pointing out that man is the constant indictment as to the limitation of Divine Power, because it is obvious if God could have done any better He would have.

Or, that man, exiled from the source of his own inspiration and deprived of the Light of Truth, has created what we call civilization, which is a constant menace to his own survival; so why did God not do it differently?

The answer is two-fold.

If God had been an old man with white whiskers, God would probably have done it differently; but God is what the name implies, the Law of Nature. The Law can only do that which is next. The Law can fulfill, it cannot create. And, as man has had previous evolutions, long before he came here, extending over infinitudes of time since the Dawn of Beginnings, the only thing the Law can do is that which is



next. We are now in the state of that which is next.

Therefore Deity did not possess the power to create the perfect man. All the Universe could do was to fashion each out of his own karma, and as in the beginning we came here a specie, or race, we brought with us the karma of previous cycles. Here we are to work it out.

Why were we not created perfect in previous cycles, in some ancient time in the dawn of things? The reason is obvious. Perfection is a condition to be achieved. We work not from the Light, but toward it. We must grow up from the seed of ourselves into the flowering fruit of life. This process requires on this earth alone more than a thousand million years.

Boehme saw this. He saw it could not be done at will. The Relapsed Adam was man made temporal, the Universe made form, God made body. No disgrace was involved; no one could call the kettle black because the same condition applied to all. Boehme looked upon the Fall as a natural experience, symbolizing the adolescence before maturity which has to come in fulfillment of the laws of life.

Boehme recognized the Third Adam. He called it Adam Struggling Toward the Light, referred to it as the Enlightened Adam, or Inspired Adam. This race consisted of those who in this life wave have perceived dimly a Purpose behind destiny, and who have dedicated themselves to the achievement of that Purpose. In other words, those who dream after a nobler condition, which entitles them to a specific classification. These are the Heroic Souls; those who are coming toward Truth by means of philosophy, mysticism, and the inner experience of the consciousness.

Boehme further recognized the Fourth Adam. He called it the Redeemed Adam, or Christ. He identified the Perfect Adam with the Christos, declaring the Christ to be the symbol of the same Perfect Enlightenment that is inferred in the beginning of human evolution. Therefore, the Redeemed Adam,

the Adam in Christ, is humanity completely enlightened as to the concerns of this particular life wave. In other words, this is graduated humanity, humanity that has risen above every problem presented by human existence. To symbolize this, he reversed the A and stood it upright, placing wings on it. It is the identification for the Perfect Adam, the Adam who abides with God. This Adam is the Perfectly Redeemed Soul, that which has accomplished the Nirvana of Buddha, the Samadhi of the Hindus, the perfect identification of the individual with the Divine—Adam in God, Adam in Christ, Adam in Paradise, restored again to his true and perfect Divine State.

Here I would like to digress, to bring an interesting point to your attention. Boehme was a contemporary of some of the mystics of the early 17th century, including the first Rosicrucians. He was contemporary with Dr. Robert Flood, Michael Myer, Johann Valentine Andrea, and Sir Francis Bacon. A very interesting note in Francis Bacon's writings infers that he knew of Boehme, and while he does not mention him as living a contemporary life, they died within a few years of each other. In the ornamentations of the writings of Francis Bacon, the early editions of which can be consulted in the Philosophical Research Society's library, is a curious device called an ornament or headpiece; it is engraved and goes across the head of the title page of the book. The heading usually consists of two capital A's, one black and one white. The device is repeated in a dozen different forms; and it occurs in the First Quarto Edition of Shakespeare's plays. These two A's the light and dark A, have never been explained in connection with Bacon's writings. They have been noticed and commented upon, but no one seems to know where they came from. It appears they were derived from Boehme, and the light A signifies the Redeemed Man, and the dark A signifies the Fallen Man. Bacon's mysticism led him to the writings of Boehme, which conceived the Kingdom of Heaven repro-



duced on earth for the benefit of relapsed mankind. Also, the capital A stood for the spiritual man, the Redeemed Man who abode again in heaven, represented by means of a double capital A shaded and light, the Fall and Redemption. This keynote to Bacon's writings seems definite, for Bacon's writings were as much concerned with the redemption of man through knowledge, as Boehme's were through mysticism.

Boehme's philosophy is intensely human, relating closely to the mystery of man's own salvation. He senses the Biblical story to be allegorical, not literal. His *Mysterium Magnum*, which is curiously compiled, is largely devoted to proving there is a great and deep mystery behind the story contained in the Bible itself.

It would be very good, I think, if we could cross the centuries and try to get the feeling of Boehme's philosophy, not as 20th century thinkers, but as twentieth century participators in his ideals and in him, trying to feel as he felt, to think as he thought, to see as he saw the vision of a great spiritual renaissance.

When Boehme was a boy in his twelfth year, an apprentice cobbler working alone in his father's shop, a customer came in who wanted to buy a pair of shoes and could not wait for the father's return. Boehme did not know what to charge him for the shoes, but after considerable calculation the boy stated what he thought was right. The man paid the charge and departed. Half way down the block the man turned and came back to the shop and called, "Jacob, come forth." The little boy of twelve came, wondering how the man, a stranger in town, knew his name. The man said, "Jacob, you are small, but you shall become great. You are of no estate, but you shall become wise. You are un-schooled, but you shall become learned. The Universe in its wisdom has decreed

that you shall receive the Light." The stranger then departed and was never seen again.

This incident changed the entire life of the boy; it continued to give him hope when later he lost his eyesight as the result of the reflecting pewter plate, it was the type of guidance calculated to produce the man who became the mystic. It instilled in him ever a great calmness.

When Boehme in later years was not working with his shoes he would often take his family out into the forest, spread a picnic lunch under the trees; no one worked very strenuously in those times, life was easy going. He would draw apart from the family after a time, sit alone under a tree and meditate. He did this for years; and it was through these meditations that the messages came and he knew the mystical union which was to lead to the experience of his enlightenment.

In Boehme's own words, and the words of others who have had the experience of enlightenment, it was something like this: Whenever Boehme felt the spirit move him, he would lay aside the shoemaker's hammer and go into a little room back of his shop; and there he would sit down in the quiet and wait. As he waited, practicing only an attitude of piety, which he lived constantly, things would suddenly grow dim about him. According to his own description, he would then see the walls grow dim, and then the walls become transparent like glass. The air would become transparent in a new way. Boehme said there is an opaqueness in the air, although men think it is transparent. The air was like a cloud; and slowly, when it cleared, Boehme would find himself in a state exceedingly mystical. He was surrounded by light, but he was not in any place; great mysterious vistas reached out far beyond his comprehension, and these vistas were the living abodes of Beings. And Boehme would flow through these spaces; he had only to will to move from one place to another. He could look upon himself, and his features, hands, and face were different; they seemed to be

made of semi-transparent glass. He was out of his physical body and was in one of his etheric bodies, for he would look back and see himself sitting in his room back of the shop. He had no fear, because a voice within him kept telling him, "Jacob, you are small, but you shall become great."

And so he learned again in the School of the Angels, discoursed and discovered; what was taught he perceived. No one spoke; but he could hear words. He could also read thoughts.

Then, after a certain period of study a voice would say, "Jacob, return to your house," and he would see himself back in his little room; and as the walls turned gray again he would suddenly find himself sitting in his chair.

On paper he would then write down carefully the secrets told to him; for now, as he expressed it, he no longer saw through a veil dimly but beheld face to face. He had no longer to depend on the words of men, he was fortified by the inner experience he knew to be true. For he knew it came from no evil source, but from some great good within himself. It was thus he began the preparation of the *Mysterium Magnum*, a great mystical document of interpretation of the true meaning of Creation.

When it was completed it received favorable local consideration from a number of the nobility, and through the assistance of influential friends Boehme was able to have the manuscript published. Then the storm broke. He was called up before one religious council after another. He was ordered to recant. He was ordered to admit that the book was the work of the devil. He was ordered to say what he had written was a lie, that he did not see these things.

Boehme made a discovery. It was that he could not tell anyone else what he had seen, and which he knew to be true with all the conviction of his soul, for when he told them what he saw they laughed at him. He explained everything he had seen in minute detail, every experience, and they laughed. Like Plato's Idiot, he had seen more than the rest, and was therefore a fool.

This realization came to Boehme as a great shock. To him it seemed incredible that anyone should either intentionally misdirect, or fail to see. He wanted Light so sincerely, and so passionately wanted other men to have the Light, he could not understand why they would doubt.

Through the debates he made one mortal enemy. The one man resolved to destroy the shoemaker was, strangely, a member of his own church, and one of Boehme's closest friends. The man had nothing to gain by injuring him, yet he devoted years to creating theological prejudice against Boehme—with open acknowledgement that he had refused to read Boehme's mystical books and did not know what Boehme was talking about.

This enemy was of a curious type which smells heresy when there isn't anything there; his interest was in heresy, not in enlightenment. The fight lasted for twenty-five years, in a battle of two minds. One was uneducated in material methods, it was that of a shoemaker of rounded shoulders and calloused hands, of faltering speech, unacquainted with the use of words, playing with a make-believe language he had invented himself, utterly without knowledge of the courts and court functioning. Alone, with his hat in his hand, Boehme had to stand before the judges of the court; go then before the tribunals of the church. And his judges in every case were so favorably impressed by him and the sincerity of his words that they found him without fault. They could not see the things that he saw, but they agreed no man who could see such things could be bad.

But his enemy did not give up. Powerful political force finally forced Boehme to discontinue his writings.

Boehme obeyed the law imposed upon him; but back at his bench nothing could stop him from thinking. No one could stop the inner experience; and after the passing of years, when the voice told him to resume his work, he moved to a place outside the court jurisdiction where he had been living, and

continued his writing. His enemy followed, and continued in every way to injure and destroy him. And with his health broken and his life shortened by this relentless persecution, Boehme finally passed on. His enemy had not stopped the printing of his book.

Among those who followed Boehme was a man named William Laws, an artist, and it is he who made the strange and fantastic designs and symbols which appear throughout Boehme's writings. These designs are almost as important as the text. Their ultimate illustration was by the great artist, Johan George Gitchtel, deep student of Boehme's writings.

Boehme found censorship inescapable while he lived; and that would be true today. One who possesses an inner enlightenment becomes an outcast, a pariah; he loses social standing, and as I think most metaphysical students will admit, loses financial standing. It is very difficult to conceive of a wealthy philosopher. One Greek said, "Poverty is the disease of the wise." For it is required of the mind, turning toward greater concerns, that it should be impoverished in lesser matters. And it is also inevitable in the world in which we live that a person who does not make a reasonably good showing in material matters will be regarded as a failure; and who will listen to the words of a failure? It too is natural for us to be impressed by whatever prestige and authority a person represents. The strength of a mystic is in values he cannot communicate or describe to another. He can therefore be very poor indeed. And yet be the richest of men.

Boehme, trying to get his message to the world, reminds us of Confucius, who spent his life trying to find someone who was wise enough to see what Confucius so well understood. When Boehme failed to find understanding among his contemporaries he settled down and wrote his books, indifferent to his time. If he could have acquired that indifference ten years earlier he would have lived twenty years longer. As soon as he became indifferent to the

results of his work, his work flourished. In this is a valuable thought. When we begin to detach ourselves from the consequences of what we do, doing then the best we can and letting the chips fall where they may, we do better. When constantly striving to achieve or help, we generally achieve neither end. Boehme came in time to a conclusion of great importance: Illumination is an individual matter; it is not to be communicated; it is achieved.

Boehme also reported importantly the effect the illumination had upon his personal life. He says, and others have added their testimony also, that the illumination produces a real chemical difference in the life of a person. The first thing it changes is the way of looking at things. Boehme could look at something and, instantly by will power, look through it. He was able to look at a growing plant and suddenly, by willing to do so, was able to mingle with that plant. He was able to be part of the plant, to feel its small life struggling toward the Light. He was able to share the simple ambitions of that plant, to rejoice with the joyously growing green leaf. Not because he loved the plant; many people do that. Not because he loved life; many people do. But because he was capable by an actual scientific adjustment to feel life with the plant, to sense life with other living things. It was not that he knew them through kindness or association with them; his was actual mystical union with them.

Frequently associated with this mystery is the dog; for most people love animals. Not to like an animal is regarded as a bad sign from an occult standpoint; because not to like an animal means that the animal does not like you; and not because of tangible thoughts, but because through a peculiar psychical power the animal senses the motives behind your life. The animal is capable of tuning-in on man in a way that few men are capable of tuning-in on the animal. You may be a person who will sit up all night with a sick animal, feeling if it passes on you are losing a member of the family; but that



is not what Boehme meant. No matter how close you can get to the animal—or, for that matter how close you get to another human being—never can this be related to mystical union. Mystical union is when one person is actually capable, inwardly, mystically, of being one with the other person inwardly, so that there are no longer two minds with a single thought, but one mind capable of many thoughts. They are no longer people, each near to the other, but have become one person really capable of identity in ideals. This is the mystical union.

In the story of Pygmalion and Galatea, derived from the Greek mysteries, Pygmalion created a statue out of stone which he worshipped and it came to life. He had fashioned it so well it finally came alive with his life. Galatea represents that phenomenal object outside of itself, the blade of grass, the star, another person, or a so-called inanimate object; Galatea is merely the not-self. Pygmalion, through his art, the art of life, had fashioned out of not-self an idealistic concept.

To explain how this could be done:—

Suppose we are mystically inclined, but not yet illuminate. We say, "I find God in everything; I find Good in everything; I find Truth in everything." This is Pygmalion's image, because it is made of stone. We have intellectually found these things, but the statue is not alive, because they are merely qualities which we have intellectually ascribed to the phenomenal universe. We say, "God is in everything," then we dislike our neighbors, because the image of our idealism is still made of stone. But when finally, through mystical union, through mystical at-one-ment, we cease to bestow our minds upon the things of life, and bestow ourselves instead, then suddenly we find that the stone image

of our created idealism becomes the living thing. We find the Light we have sought. As we ensoul the idealistic statue we have built, the Universe of Divine Things comes to life in ourselves and we come to life in it.

That mystical union leaves the world a very different place. We cannot bestow that communion upon others. But through it in ourselves we can bestow our lives upon others. Although they may not understand, we can literally flow with them and in them. Although the stone cannot understand the mystic, the mystic can find the heart of the stone. Though the blade of grass never knows the sage who meditates upon its mystery, the sage is one with the blade of grass and understands it.

We can bestow, although the thing upon which we bestow can give nothing in return. We can have nothing in return, for the simple reason that the bestowal of life enriches us beyond any possibility of desiring return. This mystical ability, according to Boehme, becomes like a magical eyeglass. Possibly these were the same magical eyeglasses Joseph Smith is supposed to have used in the preparation of his Book of the Mormons. Possibly these were the same eyeglasses Mohammed is supposed to have used in the preparation of the Koran. Be that as it may, they become a new lense to the eye, a mystical eye by which we perceive the heart of things. Having perceived the heart of things, there is nothing else in the Universe worth looking after.

Having received this enlightenment we are capable of putting the Universe in order. We no longer say, "Why did the gods not create it a different way?" Rather we have a new vision of the Universe, a vision so perfect, so transcendental, that all things are as nothing in comparison.

Boehme had something to say on the Rightness of the world. As he looked out through those mysterious eyeglass lenses Boehme tells us he perceived so splendid a Pattern, so perfect an Order, so adequate a Reason, that he was impelled to fall on his knees. He was

overwhelmed, breathless, at the perfection of the Plan. He no longer asked why things were as they are—the eternal question of the uninformed—he realized why things are as they are, for they are in the Perfect Pattern, and everything that happens is sublimely beautiful, supremely wise, and eternally right. He realized that there is not a single mistake in Providence, nothing but a great impersonal Virtue, an All-wise World, which appears to be unwise only because we have not learned otherwise to see it; a world where we are unhappy by choice, rather than necessity; where it is perfectly possible for us to live together in physical happiness, as surely as the Universe abides in spiritual happiness: That whereas man may be physically discomfited by physical evil, he will never be spiritually discomfited by anything but his own ignorance, which is not discomfort but lack of comfort.

So when Boehme was asked why God permitted wars, why God permitted nations to rise and fall, why God permitted evil—so called—and ignorance, suffering and death, he said, "I can only tell you that those things when seen by the soul, when seen inwardly, are luminously beautiful in themselves, obviously good in themselves, and obviously achieving good; that men wonder at Providence because they have not learned to discover themselves; but when enlightenment comes to them, things that seem unfair and not right fade away, and the world consisting of a divine conspiracy toward Truth stands in its place; that while God in his obvious parts is not good, in his inner parts God is good and true." Therefore even suffering, according to Boehme, is like a flower, beautiful in itself, because through it the Universe achieves Beauty. Every form of life we admire is the product of struggle; every trait of character we admire is the product of suffering; and all the beauty of the soul rises, like the plant, from the dark earth of anguish.

(CONDENSATION FROM A PUBLIC LECTURE
Suggested Reading: SELF-UNFOLDMENT;
FIRST PRINCIPLES OF PHILOSOPHY)

Metaphysics And The Moppets

NEARLY everyone has contact with children—as parents, grandparents, doting aunts or uncles, nextdoor acquaintances, or in the capacity of teachers, guardians or even nurses. What should be done about the introduction of philosophy to the lives of moppets aged four to sixteen? It is a very important period of life, but one for which very little has been done in the way of philosophical education.

Example is the guiding star. One example is better than a thousand words. The parent desirous of giving the child the proper educational advantage must recognize that the point of contact should be in the home. It is not always there. I cannot approve sending children to specialized schools which advocate or specially teach various lines of philosophical thought as metaphysics. The bases are not yet sound as a popular philosophy for young people's education. When you realize how older folks can be misled, it is obvious that we should approach with caution any mystic indoctrination of young people who are even more sensitive and idealistic. One hundred years from now, when metaphysics has cleaned its house, put itself in order, has rationalized itself, organized its ethical principles and reasonable practices it may then make a big and important contribution to the education of young people. But as it is at present, it is just as well that the child does not get an early and heavy dose of metaphysical thinking. And this is not because the subject or teaching is wrong, but because the one who is teaching is too apt to be emotionally unsound and any degree of failure in personal living disqualifies a person as instructor giving guidance to the destinies of another generation.

It is better for the child to begin life with a certain amount of conflict with

the physical world. This is contacted inevitably in the public schools. Willie may come home with something the parents wish he did not have; but by graduation day he will come out a better all-round product than the protective system of learning will turn out. Early in life a child needs to gain individual strength and resourcefulness; if he is sheltered and surrounded with the idealistic culture of the private school he usually goes forth at graduation as a lamb in a world of wolves. He is quickly disillusioned on subjects which do not extend into the sphere of economics, the world as it is wherein he is going to function. Instead of finding the world wonderful, he finds it filled with problems he is unable to cope with. He has been graduated into misery for himself and everyone else.

The noblest and finest way of bringing philosophy home to the youngsters is through giving to them the philosophical keys to the things they are learning in school. A child studying history can be given the key that history was made to unfold certain truths. The study of history is thus enriched. The same is true of the philosophy of language. Instead of learning grammar by rote, lead him to the discovery that the parts of a sentence are like the parts of the Universe; they are related principles of the Law; and the same law that holds his body together makes a sentence a unified structure. Given keys to the understanding a few well selected sentences will take a dismal subject and bring it alive. This is particularly valuable to those known as 'slow' pupils. Most of the world's great have been lamentably bad scholars. The schoolhouse had to burn to get Mark Twain out of the 2nd grade. Thomas Edison was given up as a half-wit, not because he could not think, but because he was not interested

in the way knowledge was presented.

Two years ago a boy was brought to my attention who was called slow-minded. He had wonderful mechanical ingenuity; he could make most anything with his hands, but he could not read. At 14 he could not write his name. He had brought misery to his family and total discouragement to the village school board. By mental test the boy was not slow-minded, and no one could figure why he could not read. He admitted to me that he could not read because he spent his time otherwise, learning about flying, his one interest. He was not slow-minded about reading; his mind was not on the subject; so he was cured by a simple device. I got his parents to buy him some books on aviation. He saw that in the books was all he wanted to know; but he could not find out unless he could read the books. I told the parents to stop reading to him. In three months he was reading—because to do the thing he wanted to do he *had* to read.

Up to that time the parents had read the funnies to this boy, sent him to the movies where he could see life in action; and thus catered to, he naturally wanted to learn about aviation too, without reading, just as people would embrace Nirvana without earning it.

So often slow-minded children, so called, have nothing the matter with their minds; they merely are not interested in the things they are doing, so nothing sticks in memory. They do not differ greatly from the housewife who cannot remember where she puts anything, the husband who cannot remember to mail a letter.

Every sheltered child is weak. The worst of psychological problems arise in lives that have been overshadowed or protected out of reasonable expression. Nearly eighty percent of homosexual cases are traceable to a child being dominated by a single parent; mother's boy,

father's boy, mother's girl, father's girl.

Nothing is worse than domination for protection of a person. It would be more kind to shoot a child than to dominate it for years until it becomes incapable of further initiative, and yet this is a common occurrence, and especially in broken families. No one asks the child his desires, whereas it is essential that from the earliest years of child life there should be culture and nurture of individuality.

Because you believe in reincarnation is no reason to make your child believe in it. The way to converting your child is to so live that the child develops a realization of values, to the conclusion that his father or his mother is the most exceptional person he has ever known. When he thinks them great because they live their ideas, these same ideas will become his own. This method of arriving at a conclusion is normal and healthy.



Some parents will leave a metaphysical book on a child's pillow, some feel they are doing right in reading aloud metaphysical essays. This is no way to produce results. The child is an individual with the right to select his own beliefs—when he gets old enough. If you so act that your code becomes obviously desirable, you can have every reason to believe that when the child is at the point of searching for a philosophy of life he will select yours, as one that has proven its effectiveness.

Likeness And Image

THE RETURN TO NORMAL HEALTH — PART II

A QUESTION ever arising is, has the physician a place in the metaphysical healing program? Here it is intelligent to avoid bigotry of attitude, for it must be recognized that the average physician is educated to be of great service, and if he seldom has the opportunity to use the thing he knows best, it is because the people who go to him do not give much attention to their souls. They hurt somewhere; and that hurt has to be taken care of *right now*.

In years to come it will be necessary for every physician to increase his knowledge of the curative powers in metaphysical methods, just as every metaphysician has the present obligation to be thoroughly grounded in materia medica. He does not necessarily have to use it, but he should know all about it. If he doesn't, he is in no position to give the advice his patient has a right to expect.

More should be said at this point about the problem of toxine, which is an issue vital to our subject. It is the physical ground in which are sown the seeds of difficulty.

What causes toxine? Ignorance, of course, in the largest sense of the word; but to say 'ignorance,' does not completely solve the problem; to include ignorance is merely to name one of the specific reasons for toxine. And toxine, I have said, is the accumulation in the body of matter not useable by the body and detrimental to the body. It results from diet, poor elimination, lack of exercise, and also results from worry, fear, hate, and practically every destruc-



tive emotion we have. It also arises from mental attitudes, and from physical exhaustion, therefore, each individual is slowly accumulating the poison that kills, and there is no way of vaccinating him against it. There is only one way to be of help, and that is to get at the root of this evil.

A different line of thought may clarify things. Accept that the human body is the reflection, in nature, of the superphysical principles we call Man. In the terms of Jacob Boehme, it is as though you took a seal and stamped it into matter, and the body is the seal; it is the likeness, the material shadow of the Universe, the perfect likeness of the Superior Nature stamped into a functioning organism.

Every part of the body is thus conceived as a crystalization, a materialization, an embodiment of a quality, an energy, a power or principle. And thus is every part of the body a manifestation of the Divine Nature, stamped into the material substance. It is the shadow of his Soul, the likeness and similitude of his Real Self, captured into form.

This does not mean that man looks like the shape of his body or his organs. It means that each of the Superior Principles manifests as a part of his physical economy; that every part of his physical body is suspended from an adequate Principle and manifests according to that Principle. And so the body is normal only when not interfered with in its process of functioning.

Conceiving the material man as made in the likeness and image of his God

and stamped into the substance of the mundane sphere, then the body is in itself the cause of nothing. There is no disease nor ailment which has a truly material cause. The body is not a principle, it is a receptacle. It is the likeness of principles, but there is no more Life in it than there is in Charlie McCarthy, because every time this ventriloquist's dummy opens his mouth, Bergen comes out; just as each time when we open our mouths our own metaphysical Reality comes out. And if not emerging always in a stunning manner, nevertheless it is always there.

The body itself, the physical body, I repeat, cannot be the cause of anything. It is the medium for the expression of things. In the degree that it is a medium for the higher manifestation of these Principles, to that degree it is a normal body. Wherein it prevents the function of these Principles, to that degree it is an abnormal or diseased body. As truly as Life is manifested through the body, so does disease likewise manifest through the body—but its cause is not in the body, but in the superior or superphysical parts of Nature.

Fix your mind on that principle, and you know why no physical means can cure disease. It can remove the symptomatology, but it cannot cure the disease.

Through neglect, through inefficiency, though the stupidity and inattention of the person who inhabits a body, that body may be brought to a condition in which it is no longer capable of normally manifesting the Principle behind it. It is then said that the body is sick. And when it reaches a condition in which it is no longer capable of being repaired, or is no longer capable of serving a useful purpose, it is then, by death, removed.



The body is like a ship in service. When it reaches that place in age when it is no longer useful as a ship, it is dropped from service.

As the body is conceived as no more than the shadow of the Divine Nature, then ailments become only shadows of degrees of ignorance which exist within the superphysical parts of man. Man consists of three Spiritual Natures, incapable of ignorance; also four Elemental Natures, capable of ignorance; and one body. It is through the body that man manifests the elemental principles capable of ignorance; and it is their stamp which the body bears at all times.

Now, as a form of martyrdom, there is such a thing as the body being for some purpose injured and willingly neglected, and even to the end result of being ultimately dissolved. Rontgen died experimenting with the X-Ray; and Louis Pasteur, working day and night, shortened his life by years in order to help mankind. These were voluntary sacrifices of the lesser for the greater. They but serve to emphasize that even when a higher motive dominates the body, and no matter how divine that motive may be, if the laws of the body are broken, the body will suffer. All the ideals and the highest of aspirations can not prevent the body from breaking down if neglected.

There are people who think if we are sufficiently self-sacrificing and devoted, God will protect our body. There has never been an example in proof of that yet. And the reason is, the body is under the law of physical nature. It must obey physical law. The only way the body can be rendered immune to physical ailments is by discipline and fulfillment of the law of body.

The question is endlessly asked: Why it is that benefactors, like Madame Blavatsky, live a whole lifetime in a sick body? Some will say, Why didn't she heal her own body first?

A fair question; but had she healed her own body first, we would never have had the work she left behind—it would have taken her a lifetime to actually cure her own body. That great

and inspired genius was resident in an inadequate body, as in her case, is a proof of the statement that no matter how divine your labor, if you neglect the body it goes. There is no exception to that rule.

On the other hand, it is exceedingly foolish to become a servant of the body to the exclusion of higher purpose. Many would-be philosophers make that mistake. I know people who have taken care of their body for thirty years. They haven't eaten a single thing they shouldn't eat in that time. They have spent whole days grinding carrots. They have compounded mucilage-like messes of spinach and parsley; but they failed also, because to them the body was of infinite significance, and they forgot to use it for the reason of its existence, as a manifestation of its own Divine Nature.

Athletes are notoriously short-lived, because of overstrain; but certain people persist with pressing all their physical development into a brief period, in the belief that a McFadden physique is necessary to thinking. This is a great error. Some of the best thinkers the world has ever known spent their entire lifetime in a body hopelessly inefficient. That might sound like a contradiction, but it is provable, and anything that is provable should not be overlooked. As long as the body shows sufficient life to serve as a channel, it is used; because the controlling principles come not from the body, but from some place behind the body. And it is only when the body reaches a certain condition of insufficiency so it can no longer be used, that it is dropped.

By no means should the body be neglected; but a worship of the body, and a constant effort to cater to its every whim, is apt to turn one into a magnificent vegetable, within which there is absolutely no evidence of real mental activity. For the average person, a normal course of action is the greatest good. The curing of the body is not just building it up. The real cure is moderation; and the real ailment behind the body is not usually the lack of physical exercise alone, but the kind of thing that



leads a man to eat his raw spinach to keep him alive, while all the time thinking thoughts that will kill him tomorrow.

The fine point of distinction is, the significance of the body is that it truly bears witness; but its duty is to bear witness; and it is never serving its purpose unless it is bearing witness; it is the channel through which life and energy flow into matter; it is the medium which the subjective life uses to solve its problems. With the body, man is linked to matter, and in wisdom we have an understanding of its position in the plan.

Faddists are seldom healthy. Fads destroy perspective; and an extreme of watchfulness, like an extreme of neglect, leaves the fad follower incapable of normal function.

If we can realize that the principal cause of ailments which afflict our physical life come not from the body, but from the consciousness behind the body, we then can consider man as a super-physical entity. And knowing we must have balance, we must discover, if we can, what particular mistakes he makes in his higher nature that result in a bad type of ailment in his body. That means, what kind of bad thinking, or wrong feeling, or wrong living results in a particular disease. Man, bearing witness to himself, is the mirror of his Superior Self. Each person's degree of development of that Superior Self is the degree of the dominating keynote of his life.

Consideration of disease requires that we never forget the Law of Karma. The Law of Karma is the Law of Cause and Effect to us; but to the East it is much more: It is Cydic Rotation. It is as the tides of the sea that rise and fall. It is Cause producing Effect; it is Cause

after Cause producing Effect, and Effect then making a new Cause, and Cause producing a new Effect, *ad infinitum*. Therefore, Karma is the law of absolute manifestation of all causes producing effects consistent with themselves.

Not many years ago most people of thoughtful, philosophic mind, recognized this; but in recent years Karma has been greatly compromised, with people beginning to say, "Oh, well; umm; uhh;" seeking excuses to let this law slip in their minds. And yet it is the one anchor we have, the one anchor to absolute justice. Without it, everything in the Universe fails. The Law of Cause and Effect is the one thing we are capable of perceiving as the rational manifestation of Nature. It is recognizable as we hear of a man who gets some money he has not earned, but who in a short time he has lost it, because he did not know how to take care of it. We recognize it by the man who takes a pill to regain his health, and the pill seems to work, but he gets sick somewhere else; for no matter how many pills he takes, he will never be well while he is stupid.

The Law of Karma, the Law of Cause and Effect, must ever have its place with the thoughtful. Even the modern medical physician knows that life and death are in the hands of something beyond his knowledge, and he will try to keep a man alive for a week, when he is almost dead, just in the hope Nature will manifest one of her marvels. He is never certain that the dying man will die, nor that the healthy man will live. This uncertainty is due to something beyond medical control; for any doctor with experience will admit that he can treat a patient with a certain ailment with excellent success, and another one with the same ailment will not be helped.



This peculiar fatalistic circumstance confronts us everywhere, informing us that we are in the presence of a Superior Wisdom that will have its own way, and that all forms of healing must be as closely as possible modeled to the acceptance of that Law. Any method of healing waits upon the Will of the Infinite. That is final. No man can in anyway change or deflect that Will. And so, in the study of metaphysics, the point is constantly made of not forcing any individual into a state not natural to him.

The outstanding crime man is capable of committing is the use of force. When we take one who does not want to believe and force him to believe, that is unforgivable sin. We may suggest to him what we believe is right; if he comes to us we may tell him what we think—if we have the courage—but never are we to force an individual against his will. Nor may we coerce him, or work upon him mentally in any way against his conscience and will. And those who say to the Infinite, "I demand that man be well!" get themselves into real trouble; according to the old teachings, one who forces another to do anything that other person does not desire to do, personally assumes the Karma of that other individual, becomes responsible for all his faults. It follows, then, he must pay and pay.

Except in emergency a surgeon will not operate on a patient against his will. If the patient is in a condition which makes it impossible to consult him, then the permission must be given through a person of responsible mind.

In metaphysics, where will and desire are so closely linked with Truth, it is easy to get things. A disciple of Pythagoras once went to him and asked him how he should address his prayers to God. Pythagoras said, "I would pray for nothing lest I get it." A wise remark, for should we get the things we think we want we'd be more miserable than we are now.

To the utmost degree it is important in metaphysics that everything be done openly, fairly, and against no other man;

and it is very necessary to know that the individual who seeks help has not been coerced by false means and pretenses. Even those most beloved, the friends, the relatives and those closest to a practitioner may be perceived entering into a condition of stupidity and sickness, but if they do not wish his help, he has no right to give it to them. Not under any condition should a person be mentally and metaphysically influenced in any way without his consent.

That hits at a situation common to metaphysics, the attitude toward persons not present. Someone says to a practitioner, "I have a brother who is abusing me. Can you treat him?" Can the metaphysician treat the brother? Most certainly he can not; it would be influencing a person who has not given his consent.

Some time ago a man used to go every day to the Hollywood hills to bless Hollywood. The effectiveness of such a blessing is dubious in itself; but if he could have made come true all the things he announced should happen to Hollywood, he would have had a multiplicity of the worst incarnations an individual could have, because he had interfered with the rights of thousands of people.

Many persons who need help do not want it; but that is their lookout. Any student in philosophy is always ready to help those in need; but the need must be real and assistance actually asked, or nothing can be done.

A trained clairvoyant of course can by will insinuate himself into the mind of any person. If he wants to see something, he can see it. He can read, so to speak, his neighbor's mail. But the one who possesses psychic powers, and uses these in any way to obtain knowledge, information, or to gain access to the life

of another, that person is as much a burglar as though he slipped in the back door at night with a pass key. But if he so compromised ethics, he'd get into the worst trouble in the world, for misdirection of ethics leads to occult diseases, which are worse than any diseases known to man. The ethics the healer observes is recognition of the Divinity of the Law, and the Plan behind Life.

Any healer who tells you he will be glad to treat your relatives, is a good healer to leave alone. Either he does not know metaphysics and is inefficient, or he does not care, and so is dishonest. And, just as surely as a doctor or priest must observe the confidence of those who give the secrets of their lives to him, it is against all ethical standards to discuss the case of one person with another.

Apart from the relationship of one person to others, each individual has a relationship to himself; and this is it: it is just as evil to attempt to force an attitude upon yourself as upon another. Attitudes are to be grown to, through understanding. That means, never take an affirmation you do not understand and try to affirm yourself into a state or condition. "I am well; I *am* well; I am *WELL*." The type of individual who says such isn't well, and he knows it; and after he keeps that up two or three hours, he is due to take an aspirin. It is stupid to lie to yourself, and to influence others is hypocritical.

This gives us a working foundation to proceed with the consideration of the causes and development of diseases mental and physical, and how they can be worked with metaphysically and improved.

(This article is the second in a series, in condensation of class lectures to special students)



● An incident to remind us that we need a basic tolerance toward the unknown

Pebbles From Heaven

ACCORDING to the *San Francisco Chronicle* for August 29, 1943, something happened in Oakland this past summer which is still beyond the understanding of the local police force. The whole circumstance is startlingly reminiscent of similar natural occurrences outlined by the late Charles Fort, who had an inquiring type of mind in matters of the mysterious.

Mrs. Irene Fellows, who lives in a little white stucco cottage on 89th Avenue, suffered from a bombardment of rocks of assorted sizes and shapes. These stones came out of nowhere, propelled by some invisible agency, and banged against the walls and roof of the Fellows home.

The stones, smooth and round, ranged in size from little pebbles to larger ones the size of a hen's eggs. The rocks arrived with such frequency that they soon lay scattered about the house in a considerable number.

The police put the entire neighborhood under constant vigil. The stones continued to thud against the roof and walls. The most thorough investigation failed to discover any rock-throwing small boys.

Although the Fellows' house is surrounded by other houses, there have been no reports of rocks precipitating elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Oakland has been presented with one of those problems that the average modern scientist would rather hear nothing about. When the supernatural obtrudes itself into the well ordered pattern of our living the result is a general embarrassment. We have no place in our practical way of thinking for mystical or metaphysical interludes. They are upsetting; they cause us to question the infallibility of our present knowledge.

The late Charles Fort devotes considerable space and attention in his books

to what he calls Telaportation, which means, the invisible transportation of solid objects from one place to another. I think that if Mr. Fort still lived he would include the Oakland pebble barrage among phenomena of telaportation.

In some mysterious way, the stones probably dematerialized in a river bed, or some similar source of eroded stone, then passed invisibly a considerable distance to re-materialize in the exact location of the Fellow's home. In all probability the place of re-materialization was determined by some pattern of natural law governing such circumstances. Nothing would indicate that the rocks had any personal antipathy to the house which they bombarded.

A parallel to this curious natural phenomenon is to be found in the magical practices of many primitive people. But with them magic is the direct result of a cultivated sorcery. In the Dutch East Indies there are native magicians whose lore and traditions combine elements of the primitive Witch Doctor, Mohammedan Magic, Brahmanic Sorcery, Buddhist Metaphysics, and a smattering of Christian Theology, a conglomerate of religious culture that has produced sorcerers and witches capable of causing the telaportation of solid objects.

To my personal knowledge one Dutch planter was driven from the island colonies by such means. His family offended the natives, and soon were plagued by refuse falling in the house they lived in. Over a period of months, assorted filth fell from inside the ceiling of the rooms. All doors and windows had been kept closed, and no natives were in the house. Rubbish fell into the food during mealtimes, and poured in a stream on furniture and beds day and night. Filth even appeared in abundant quantities in the showerbath as members of the family tried to use it.

In each instance the rubbish materialized a few inches below the ceiling of the room, and the ceilings themselves were not stained or marked in any way. The deluge continued, increasing in frequency and unpleasantness; the family finally had to leave the island. The Javanese natives were perfectly frank in affirming that they were responsible for the difficulties; said they had brought them about by magical means.

Telaportation is also known among the American Indian tribes. Some years ago an Indian magician resolved to destroy an enemy who had injured him. After making appropriate magical preparations he prepared an arrow and on the shaft inscribed curious figures. Going out to a near hill, the magician shot the arrow into the air with terrific force. The arrow vanished in space and his enemy, who lived nearly thirty miles away, fell dead with that arrow through his heart.

Such accounts imply a knowledge of curious properties abiding in so-called space which are entirely beyond our present knowing.

Among the East Indians there is a belief that holy relics, such as the bones or ashes of saints, can be transported instantly through space; sometimes a distance of several hundred miles. I know of an instance in which a Hindu holy man is firmly believed to have traveled from Calcutta to Benares, a considerable distance, in less than a minute. He remained in Benares for several days and then returned by the same route.

The levitation of solid substances by magical means is common among primitive people. In one of the American Indian medicine rituals, the priests gather in the medicine house and sit in a circle around a large rock. This stone weighs in the neighborhood of two hundred pounds. In the process of "making medicine," the stone is levitated several feet into the air, and floats about the lodge over the heads of the priests. They direct its motion by will-power, and it is reported of them that they can cause it to travel a considerable distance.

The late Charles Lummis, a well known character in the American Southwest, describes a ritual practiced among the Navajos which is called "Catching the Sun." In one form of this ritual, the Indians gathered in their sacred house, which has a small opening at the top through which the rays of the sun shine upon the dirt floor. After an appropriate period of prayer and chanting, the head priest reaches out and catches the sun. A globe of fire, resembling a miniature sun, comes down through the opening in the roof and moves about the inside of the house, following exactly the motion of the greater sun in the sky.

The Abbey Huc, one of the first Catholic fathers to reach innermost Asia, brought back so many extraordinary stories of Tibetan and Mongolian magic that he was unfrocked by his church. He describes, in one instance, a Tibetan painting on cloth which contained a miraculous figure of the moon. The moon on the drawing changed its phases with the moon in the sky. This story was too much for the clergy. The poor Abbey paid the penalty of being too honest to conceal the information he had accumulated.

This world is full of mysteries, and it is easier to deny them than it is to find an adequate explanation for them. In order to solve these supernatural marvels, it would be necessary to reform in many ways our present attitude on the subject of what is possible and what is not possible. Such a reformation is difficult to bring about for a variety of reasons.

In the first place, our present beliefs are deeply rooted in the popular mind; and nothing is more difficult to change than the popular mind. The preference is always to conform to the prevailing errors. A good example of this is our present translation of the Bible. Although the King James version is exceedingly inaccurate it is sanctified by the veneration of three centuries. Newer and better translations have been made, but they have never become popular. The popular mind, accustomed to certain habits of thinking, resents any interference with these habits.

A second dilemma involves the consequences of breaking up a system of knowledge after it has become dominant to most of civilization. To remove the natural materialistic foundation of our thinking would be to launch the whole world upon a sea of doubts. We lack sufficient knowledge of the superhuman laws behind life to enable us to codify these laws. If we did exchange erroneous certainties for new and understandable facts, for a time at least, confusion would be worse confounded.

Another reason for keeping things as they are is the lack among Western people of the faculty development to explore the metaphysical vista. We are not a contemplative people, and our educational perspective is not set to deal with spiritual intangibles.

In the face of these present limitations it is probably wiser for the average person to approach esoteric matters with extreme caution; for orientation is often lost in the study of the abstract sciences. But we do need a basic tolerance toward the unknown. We need to realize that our little knowledge is circumscribed within a limitless extent of possible knowing. We have discovered a few things about life; and so proud are we of these discoveries, and so completely are we absorbed in their magnitude, that we have entirely forgotten the eternity of learning. Mistaking the part for the

whole, we are content with the part to the degree of denying the whole.

The late Charles Fort performed a very useful service when he reminded thoughtful men of the scope of the larger problems of the unknown. That a few pebbles fell on a little stucco house in Oakland is of but passing interest to a public mind, concerned principally with its own survival; but these little pebbles bear witness to a larger state of things about which we should be better informed. Perhaps we could live a better life, achieve greater fraternity, prevent wars, correct crime, and reform those laws which have proven mutually unsound—if we could understand why these rocks rattled on the roof and walls of just one little house in Oakland.



A Christmas Gift Book

LADY OF DREAMS

BY MANLY PALMER HALL

See Announcements on back cover

I DON'T ask you to prepare for a new world, because I realize that a New World is here now.

What, briefly, is this New World: First, there is what called the abolition of distance. Things have become simultaneous throughout the earth.

Second, comes the enormous increase of available power, which at present is used mainly for destruction. All the mechanical-power, wind-power, horse-power, water-power, used in the England of Queen Elizabeth for a week, would not equal that released in a moment by one 8,000 lb. bomb.

Third, the unskilled work of slaves and such-like toilers can be and is being largely superseded by power-driven mechanism. The old social pyramid has vanished. Mankind has no further use for serfs and slaves.

The New World ahead must therefore be an equalitarian society. For ten or twelve thousand years, not more, since men took to agriculture and organized warfare there has been no real human community. There has been a world of masters and men, what Disraeli called the Two Nations.

This world control must be something over and above the patchwork of governments we inherit. They arose from militant necessities; they remain militant and competitive. A group of commissions to rehabilitate our disordered world should be established as soon as possible by the victors in the present struggle. To these commissions all the governments of the world must surrender their sovereign right to practice economic and political aggression against one another.

Horrible and tragic waste of human lives has been going on since, five hundred generations ago, war and subjugation broke upon mankind. Winwood Reade, in his immortal book, has called these twelve or fifteen thousand years *The Martyrdom of Man*, and maybe it was a necessary schooling for our species. I do not recognize the necessity, but anyhow this ugly interlude in the life of our planet is mounting now to its catastrophic end.

The supreme task before our awakening minds is the re-education of the world. Given world unity and world sanity, that would now be an easy task. We have in the radio, the film, in the facility for the rapid transport of material and specimens, all that is needed to cover the whole world with schools; and in the multitude of quickened minds this struggle has evoked a supply of men and women who have discovered that by teaching we learn.

There are claptrap phrases about backward races and inferior peoples. There are no backward races. All over the earth babies start from scratch, full of distinctive and untried possibilities, which the New World will develop eagerly.

Cut along this line; it will not injure the editorial contents of the magazine

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