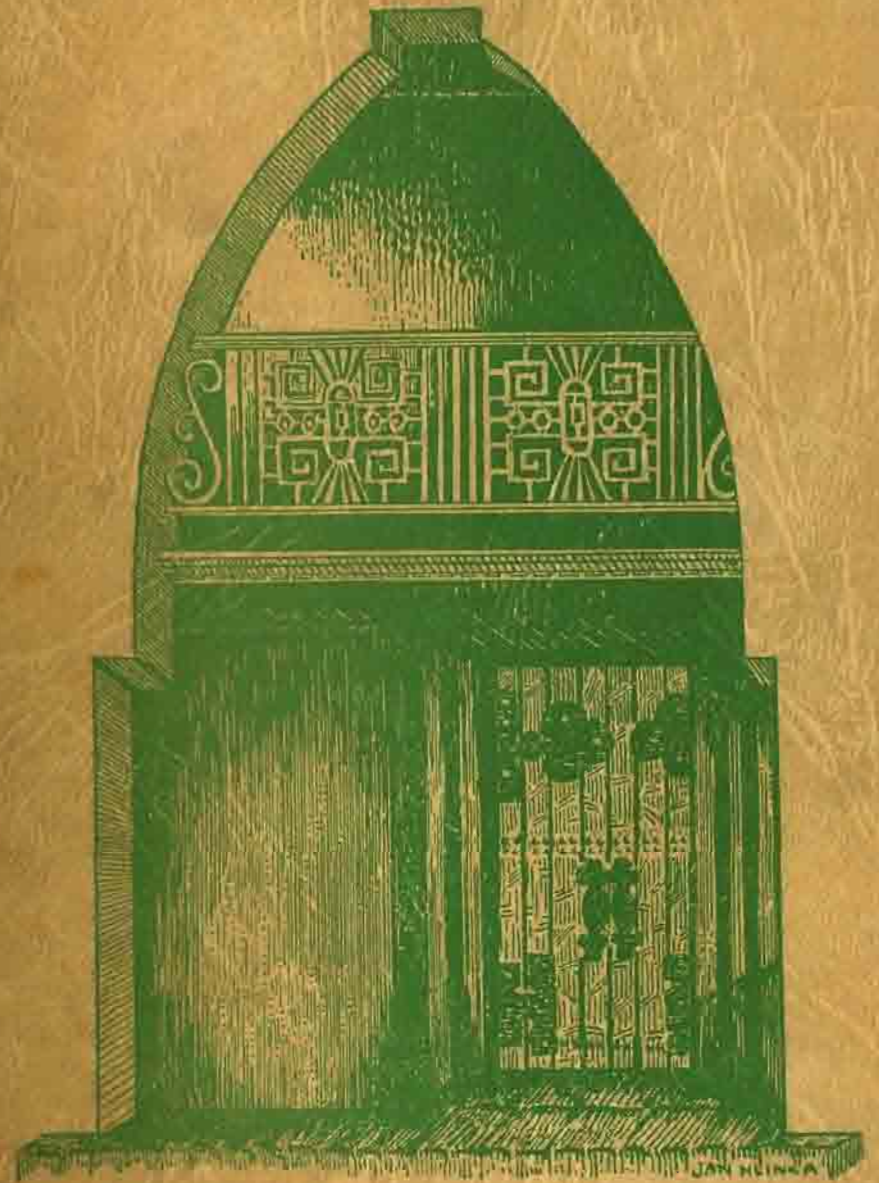


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NOTE: The article on *The Symbolism of Fairy Tales* was crowded out of this issue. It will appear in the Winter HORIZON.

THE WINTER ISSUE OF HORIZON WILL INCLUDE:

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OTHER NEW AND INTERESTING ARTICLES

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Journal of the
 Philosophical Research Society

AUTUMN
 1947



ISSUED
 QUARTERLY
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HORIZON
 LINES

AN EDITORIAL
 BY MANLY PALMER HALL



The Fine Art of Being
 a Person

WORD worshipers are now united in the adoration of the term "modern", by which they would imply present enlightenment as contrasted to previous benightedness. Strictly speaking, *modern* simply means *recent* or *current* in reference to historic times. But of late this harmless little combination of letters has been given a false directional meaning. By this procedure *modern* has come to imply the infinite superiority of recent practices and policies merely because they exist *now*. For the most part this mania for up-to-dateness leads only to a ludicrous effort to appear contemporary.

The average intellectual who considers himself modern is only physically recent. He attempts to prove his modernness by violently casting off the past and disparaging everything that is old. Sophistication is substituted for genuine maturity. He forces his immaturity upon others, expecting to be regarded as superior not because he has contributed to progress but because he has violated tradition.

Prominent psychologists are positively rhapsodical in their praises of the 'un-

historical' man. He is the new Prometheus who dares to oppose the will of the old gods; the lusty young Siegfried of academic folklore, forever slaying the dragon of tradition. He is perched precariously on the "roaring ridge" of *now*, and appears as a tiny vortex of uncertainty in the midst of the unknown.

This deified instant which we call *now* is strangely elusive. Even as we attempt to conjure up some tangible image of its dimensions it slips away to be merged with the past. There is also the concept of a somewhat larger *now* implied by the term *nowadays*, which extends the present time to include a generation, century, or even longer periods of the past. This extension marks the historical boundaries of contemporary culture.

It is also possible to postulate a kind of *now* entirely disassociated from the concept of time. This is a qualitative *now* by which things are discovered to be recent because they partake of the nature of the recent. There is a kind of time that grows old and dies, and there

is an ageless time that remains forever in the state of eternal *now*. The spiritual nature of man abides in the condition of ageless time and is sustained and perfected by ageless truths. The material part of man exists in the sphere of physical time and is subjected to the vicissitudes of past, present, and future.

Maturity is not the present minus the past; it is the present sustained by the past. Maturity always includes, in terms of understanding, all that has gone before. By simple analogy, the grown man is not an adult minus his childhood but the result of gradual unfoldment of childhood until it reaches mental and emotional maturity. The adult who has forgotten his own growing years will never make a successful parent for he lacks that bond of psychic sympathy by which he should be bound to the childhood of all who live.

On one occasion Sir Isaac Newton observed, "If I seem to see further than other men it is because I am standing on the shoulders of giants." What we like to think of as the modern way of life is sustained by all that has preceded it in time and experience. We are always in debt to that which has gone before. We should not be bound to the past, but we must accept its contribution to what we regard as contemporary.

There is a primary knowledge essential to the knowledge of the individual, and it is this necessary wisdom, and not modern man as a person, that deserves to be termed 'unhistorical'. We will grant that for many vital questions absolute answers do not exist; in fact, it is doubtful if ultimate solutions would be especially useful now, even if available. But no human being can live a constructive, purposeful, and civilized existence until he has perfected within himself a philosophy of life suitable to his own requirements. No one can plan a personal program of enlightened action without first arriving at reasonable and self-satisfying answers to such basic questions as, where did we come from, why are we here, and whither are we going?

Consider two men, widely separated in time and estate. One is a Boston clubman, scion of an old and cultured family.

In the year A. D. 1947 this distinguished gentleman has no vital or useful conclusions regarding the mystery of his own origin, purpose, or destiny. An ancient Egyptian farmer, plowing his land on the delta of the Nile in the year 1947 B. C. was in precisely the same dilemma. It is quite possible that the Bostonian is a graduate of Harvard, owns a yacht, winters on the Riviera, and is a patron of the fine arts. These advantages are now natural to the privileged classes, but his ignorance of his own internal existence, and the extension thereof, is 'unhistorical'. He shares this larger uncertainty with the Piltown man, the Roman senator, and the Egyptian farmer.

The present tendency is to evade the challenge of essential knowledge, which is the knowledge of self, by overwhelming the mind of the seeker with a display of superficial erudition. Simple questions provoke a learned dissertation remarkable for the wealth of its words and the poverty of its ideas. As soon as possible the subject is shifted to safer grounds to prevent further embarrassing questions.

Primitive man differed from his twentieth-century descendent particularly in his attitude toward the world about him. To the savage, nature was all-powerful, relentless, and remorseless, and humanity a helpless creation destined to perish in the very struggle for survival. The citizen of today regards himself, collectively speaking, as superior to nature, lord of all he surveys, and capable, at least theoretically, of binding the universe to his purposes and ambitions. Nature is merely a source of raw material to be explored and developed according to fancy and advantage.

It is evident that this type of thinking originated in metropolitan areas where men live constantly in the presence of their own handiwork. The Empire State Building appears highly important to a little person who has never seen a sunrise over the glaciers of Mt. Everest. But the works of mankind are not nearly as impressive to a shipwrecked sailor on a raft, and who have fought the Pacific Ocean for twenty-one days.

The Greek philosopher Diogenes appraised the accomplishments of the inhabitants of a neighboring city in these words: "They build as though they would live forever, and eat as though they would die tomorrow." This is not a bad description of the modern temper. Humanity is reaching to the stars with one hand and burying its dead with the other. When a primitive man died his body was taken out at night and placed on a rough platform away from prowling animals—nature did the rest. When an important modern departs this life he may be interred in a lead casket with a concrete shell that will last ten thousand years, with the promise of perpetual care until the land is needed for other purposes. This is called progress, but both men are equally dead. The vital question is, which died with the better hope? This alone determines what the Chinese sage Confucius called 'the superior man'.

In the year 327 B. C. the philosopher Plato, whose spiritual and intellectual attainments are universally admired, died in his sleep at the age of eighty-one. His death was caused by no disease—simply by the fullness of years. He left no debts unpaid, no business unfinished. He lived without malice and died without fear. The night before his passing he read the poems of Sophron until a late hour, and growing weary placed the book beneath his head for a pillow. In the morning his disciples found his body apparently peacefully asleep, but the glorious spirit had departed.

In human concepts of time Plato lived and died long ago, and his life and teachings belong to that historical tradition which some moderns hold in such contempt. By a more just reckoning his Olympian spirit is part of a future order of life far beyond our present ken. Smallness dates itself, but greatness escapes from all boundaries of time and space. Until modern men and women can meet each day with the same internal serenity and beauty of character that distinguished Plato of Athens, they have much to learn from the religions, philosophies, and ethical systems of antiquity. We have not outgrown that which we have not surpassed.

Nor was Plato the one shining light in an all-pervading darkness. He was only one of many enlightened mortals who deserve our eternal gratitude and admiration. Only a foolish man will trade his share of the larger birthright for that miserable porridge now offered in its place.



More than thirteen hundred years before the birth of Christ a frail, sickly boy became the absolute ruler of the Double Empire of Egypt. He was the pharaoh Akhenaten, who has been referred to as the first civilized human being to emerge from the pages of history. Nearly thirty-five centuries ago this wise and gentle youth discovered as an experience within his own heart that all living creatures are the children of one ever-loving Father, and should abide together in an eternal brotherhood. Akhenaten treated the humblest of his subjects with honor and respect, declaring that no person could slight, injure, defraud, or deprive another human being and at the same time regard himself as civilized.

What was infinitely more important, Akhenaten lived his enlightened conviction without compromise or a moment's consideration of personal consequences. He advocated the principles of political democracy, championed the cause of woman's suffrage, attempted to settle international disputes by arbitration, and founded a religion remarkably free of idolatry and intolerance. Early in his reign his lofty principles cost him the respect of ambitious ministers who had but slight interest in high ideals or the common good. Later these same ethical principles cost the pharaoh the empire, for he refused to engage in a war that meant the slaughter of innocent men. It may be true that politically they were his enemies and in their hearts were de-

terminated to destroy him, but it is also true that these enemies were children of the one God, his brothers in a large sense, and he would not raise his hand against them. Akhenaten died of a broken heart in his early thirties. On his mummy case are the words of his prayer, the simple words of a great soul addressed to the Father of all life: "Call upon my name to all eternity, and I shall not fail."

Some of these recent folk think of Akhenaten as a heathen or at best a pagan, yet which of the five hundred jarring sects of our dominant faiths practice, without reservation, the doctrine of the sacred brotherhood of all who live? And which of our great modern universities are turning out citizens so strengthened in character that they will sacrifice wealth, honor, position, even life itself, rather than compromise in the smallest particular those ethical convictions so necessary to the survival of a civilization? Which then is the better educated man; the more modern man—the 'unhistorical' man, the nine o'clock scholar with small Latin and less Greek but an infinite faith in rugged economic individualism, or Akhenaten, who found a divine power within himself and had the courage to live a truly magnificent life in a world dedicated to selfishness and corruption?

Once a thoughtful man has become conscious of the erroneous patterns in the popular mind and has traced the individual and collective difficulties to their common source, he naturally desires to correct the condition. He realizes through trial and error that, regardless of the amount of schooling to which his mind has been subjected, he can still lack the internal strength and wisdom necessary to enlightened modern living. He knows himself to be ignorant in terms of essential knowledge. We usually think of the ignorant as the uninformed, but in the light of our broad program of public education we must amend this definition. In the world of today the most painfully and dangerously ignorant are the misinformed. To be schooled from childhood in principles, policies, and practices, which have brought no peace, happiness, or security to any generation dominated

by them, is to reach maturity misinformed and therefore essentially ignorant.

If it appears that our criticisms are excessive or unjust let us quote a paragraph from Carl G. Jung, one of the world's greatest living psychologists. He writes:

"No one will deny or even underestimate the importance of childhood years; the severe injuries, often lasting through life, caused by a nonsensical upbringing at home and in school are too obvious, and the need for reasonable pedagogic methods is too urgent. But if this evil is to be attacked at its root, one must in all seriousness propose the question of how it came about, and still comes about, that stupid and limited methods of education are employed. Obviously it is for the one and only reason that there exist stupid educators who are not human beings, but personified automatons of method. Whoever wishes to educate should himself be educated. But learning by heart and the mechanical application of methods, which is still practiced today, is no education, either for the child or for the educator himself." (See *The Integration of the Personality*.)

These facts, so clearly stated by Dr. Jung, are responsible for a widespread dissatisfaction. This unrest in turn manifests itself through a variety of organizations and movements that have sprung up, to the constant annoyance of pedants in general. The unpardonable sin committed by these unorthodox groups is that they dare to exist at all, and equally reprehensible is their thoughtful consideration of doctrines and ideas that have been violently denounced by the campus sophists.

The study of comparative religion, for example as it is carried on in our universities and colleges, has proved distressingly sterile. The results amount to little more than an historical survey of doctrines and creeds, instructive perhaps, but not inspiring. The student may be amazed, intrigued, or even amused at the diversity of man's notions about things abstract and divine, but he develops little realization that this broad panorama of ideals can be of any vital importance or assistance to himself.

In a highly regimented civilization such as the one in which we live slight consideration is given to the requirements of the minority groups. A gesture of tolerance is about the best that can be expected. This is especially true of religious and intellectual minorities, at least some of which are composed of thoughtful persons striving to improve their standard of living and thinking. Although cultural institutions of this country and Europe are crying out in loud, quavering voices for more integrity and better ethics, no practical program for the attainment of these admirable ends is available for the average person.

There appears to be only one possible solution. If our great religious and educational systems choose to remain indifferent to our pressing needs, then it is up to the private citizen to work out his own salvation to the best of his ability without benefit of scholastics. There is an ever-increasing body of well-purposed men and women no longer satisfied to live badly simply because it is the prevailing custom, historical or unhistorical. It does not require a highly trained thinker to notice the insufficiency of that which has obviously failed. Yet these sincere, if often bewildered, seekers after a larger knowledge are openly ridiculed by the self-appointed learned, and are referred to more often than is absolutely necessary as 'the lunacy fringe.'

The average college professor would receive quite a shock in the region of his academic ego if he realized the proportions of the intellectual revolution taking place in the body public. In large cities and small towns, and even upon isolated farms, honest citizens are hard at work trying to discover for themselves the kind of knowledge that enriches personal living. While it is not possible to know exactly the numerical strength of these unorganized seekers after vital truths, estimates range from three million to five million in America alone, and these estimates are probably over-conservative. This is a minority to reckon with, and it increases every day.

It is definitely a mistake to explain away this group by assuming that it is composed of the uneducated, the neu-

rotic, and the feeble-minded. What the psychologists sometime like to call the 'herd' is not even conscious of the conditions which have caused this rebellion against the scholastic *status quo*. To my personal knowledge this body of conscientious objectors to stupidity includes men and women of every walk of life. There are scientists, professional men, business executives, government workers, artists of all types, school teachers, wage earners, housewives, and grandparents. All are bound together by a common desire for self-improvement. Each has learned by bitter experience that the materialistic concepts emanating from our educational institutions, if applied to personal living, lead to individual tragedy and collective disaster.

Periodically some representative of the body scholastic writes a book devoted to a wholesale condemnation of the strange cults, sects, and isms that flourish among the untutored masses. Early works of this kind were smug little tirades written by pharisees in high places. But of late the temper has been changing, and the more recent outbursts show considerably more spleen than erudition. Can it be that this current fretfulness is due, in part at least, to the rapid growth of metaphysical movements throughout the world? It is no longer possible to relegate superphysical philosophy to limbo with an easy sweep of the pen. The scholastic may as well accustom himself to the fact that the revival of ancient religious-philosophical systems and mystical fraternities represents a widespread revolt against impotent materialism.

The young people of today are taught during the formative years of their lives that it is a blessed privilege to live *now*; that this is the marvelous age of progress, enriched by the discoveries of science, ennobled by higher education, maintained by an efficient industrialism, and administered by the most enlightened theory recorded in history. Why should anyone in his right mind question the sufficiency of the human achievement or doubt the transcendent wisdom of these educational and ethical institutions that have guided us to this high destiny? Our personal ethics may be a little infirm, our moral-

ity a bit dubious, and our motives a trifle shady, but these are mere details. In the main we are a stupendous success. It becomes our solemn duty to preserve at all costs the priceless precepts that have made possible our greatness. Let us change nothing lest we subtract from the glory of our culture.

When we get old enough to think for ourselves, and if we still have the ability, certain reasonable doubts begin to afflict our minds. How does it happen that in this so wonderfully educated and enlightened century we have fought two of the most bloody, horrible, and costly wars in the history of the human race? And how does it happen that a conviction is forming in the public mind that there are excellent possibilities of a third war infinitely more terrible? The depressions, plagues, revolutions, massacres, racial and religious persecutions and atrocities, to say nothing of the bootleggers, gangsters, and black market operators, seem to detract, in some measure, from our superlative estimation of ourselves. Nor is it particularly comforting to contemplate the problems of adult crime, juvenile delinquency, the rapid increase in acute alcoholism, and the collapsing state of the American home.

Among new and useful improvements we must now include the atomic bomb and the bacteria bomb. In the presence of this indisputable evidence of progress can we blame the average man if he opines that the cultural nations are advancing rapidly, systematically, and even magnificently toward complete annihilation? Experts of a sort advise that we adjust our psyches to this prevailing tempo, become realistic, and purify our minds of all unnatural uncertainties concerning providence. Perhaps it would be kinder for our universities to include courses on how to think and what to think while the physical body which we have labored to maintain is being disintegrated by atomic energy, or the community in which we live is being sprayed with a delicate blend of destructive microbe organisms.

Average men and women must bear the burden of these monumental discoveries that threaten the security and

survival of every individual and the things which they hold dear. The private citizen of moderate intelligence and ambitions is the helpless victim of the prevailing scientific, educational, and economic methods and standards. To meet this emergency millions of practical, but not illustrious, people are striving to preserve within themselves those spiritual values for lack of which human society would rapidly disintegrate into anarchy. It is difficult to understand why these valiant efforts are not supported and encouraged in every possible way.

The major part of the human race wants to believe, needs to believe, and will believe in the existence of a supreme power; a personal god ruling his universe with justice and love, or a divine principle for good operating in and through nature according to an eternal plan. Perhaps this belief is not scientifically demonstrable, but as long as man must live, suffer, and die in this sphere of uncertainty such convictions are an ever-present help in time of trouble. Is it more superstitious to believe in the infallibility of the universal creator than it is to believe in the infallibility of human institutions which have consistently failed?

It is not easy to preserve one's faith in the omnipotence of an all-merciful divinity and at the same time be a witness to the enormity of the human disaster. Surrounded by poverty, suffering, sorrow, and crime, and lured toward the rocks of agnosticism and atheism by the Lorelei of higher intellectualism, the idealist of today must dig his foundations deep if he expects to build upon them an adequate philosophy of life.

It might seem to those unacquainted with the facts that our well-established religious organizations offer appropriate sanctuary to such idealists as find no comfort in the academy. According to certain educators, spiritual and moral issues are outside the province of formal schooling. Unfortunately, our national places of worship hold small promise of relief for the type of thinker who is no longer interested in competitive theologies. There are a goodly number of honest, upright citizens who have not darkened a church door in many a year. One and

all, these conscientious objectors to codes and creeds have the deepest love and veneration for the life and teachings of Jesus, but they have lost interest completely in the principles of sectarianism.

The present trend is toward a personal religion based upon spiritual concepts large enough to include all enlightened faiths and all constructive philosophies. We feel that it is our right to select from the inspired beliefs of the world, whether they be ancient, medieval, or modern, whatever is applicable to our present needs, whatever is solutional to our present problems, and whatever inspires us toward future good without being harassed, condemned, or ridiculed by creed-bound clerics. Time and experience have strengthened the internal belief that in the spiritual heritage of our race will be found answers to the pressing problems of modern living. This is a subject that calls for deeper understanding rather than higher criticism.

Only long years of intimate association with nonorthodox religious movements in the United States makes possible an intelligent comprehension of their aims and purposes. It is equally important that the observer approach the subject of his survey with generosity and kindness of spirit and not be obsessed with the fanaticism to disprove and discredit. Although some of the leaders of the heretical sects are of doubtful integrity or ability, the majority of their followers are absolutely sincere, if not entirely qualified. Most of the contemporary faiths of Asia have study centers, shrines, temples, or retreats in this country. Several independent organizations and societies, devoted to the esoteric religious and philosophical systems of antiquity, have attracted large and even distinguished memberships, and gained international prominence. These groups flourish because the public is dissatisfied with the accomplishments of the larger and more prosperous creeds.

Some of the best work, however, has been accomplished by individuals working alone or in very small groups. A quiet little woman in her middle fifties, after raising three children, is devoting her evenings to a careful analysis of the

Hindu Scriptures. She is teaching herself Sanskrit because she is dissatisfied with available English translations of the puranic literature. A truck driver and his wife have assembled an impressive library of rare books on the culture of ancient Egypt. They have educated themselves in the spiritual tradition of the old Egyptians, and their knowledge is extraordinary. Years ago I knew a man who worked in a cheese factory. He taught himself chemistry, equipped a small laboratory, and spent half a lifetime in alchemical research; incidentally, he had not the slightest interest in gold making. One morning while on a lecture tour I was shaved by a barber who had devoted over thirty years to a careful reading of every available gloss and commentary on the Old Testament. Much of this work he had done in original languages. Having found a sympathetic ear he admitted that he was a cabalist as his father had been before him, and was attempting to discover the secret ciphers hidden in the Bible by the rabbis of old.

One way of checking up on the public taste is to have a heart-to-heart talk with the proprietor of a secondhand bookstore that specializes in rare texts and editions. He will tell you that the more desirable items dealing with ancient philosophy, orientalism, and the esoteric arts and sciences, are rapidly disappearing from the trade channels. These precious volumes, usually quite expensive, have not been purchased by public libraries, colleges, or wealthy book collectors. They were bought by quiet little people, often shabbily dressed and obviously of limited means; people whom pompous intellectuals would not take the time to ignore. Once I traded to my favorite bookdealer



a duplicate set of a scarce and expensive edition of Plato's works. He later told me that the set was picked up immediately by the night watchman of a large garage who said he had been waiting for years to find a set of that particular translation—price was no object. In this way hundreds of thousands of significant books have vanished from the dealer's shelves to enrich the mental and spiritual lives of private citizens.

The librarian of the religion and philosophy section of a large public library told me recently that his department was one of the most heavily used in the library, being second only to popular fiction. How does it happen then that in most cases these departments are slighted when the annual appropriations for new books are being distributed by the board? Heavy private buying of rare volumes is influenced to some degree by the fact that these works are not available in public collections. A library which will purchase without compunction one hundred copies of a popular novel begrudges one book which would be useful to serious thinkers. Should libraries merely cater to public taste, or should their function include a gentle directing of the reader's taste toward that which is valuable or solutional?

When it comes to the attention of modern educators that the layman is developing an intense affection for Pythagoras, Buddha, or Confucius, there is widespread consternation in the upper brackets. Is it possible that a creature, apparently human, can choose to believe such ancient doctrines, when with a little expert assistance and application of modern methods that same creature could be elevated to the estate of believing nothing?

The thoughtful mind must be impressed by the timelessness of essential knowledge. Frequently people ask me why I insist on turning to antiquity for inspiration instead of basking in the warm, clear light of present day erudition. Occasionally someone, richly inoculated with the contemporary viewpoint, recommends that I look to the future, talk about the future, and hang my hopes on the hook of futurity. The suggestion

sounds important, but is deficient in vital content. When one looks at the future he beholds a vacuum. Tomorrow is a capacity which must be filled with the substances of yesterday and today. Only escapists, weary with facts, seek solace in golden tomorrows. Futures must be created, and they will be no better and no worse than the circumstances which bring them into being. If we are sincerely searching for something we must seek it where it is most likely to be found. This is the truly unhistorical attitude. It seems a little vain to look for wisdom in a social order that is in dire straits because it is not wise. Things are not good because they are new, nor are they bad because they are old. They are sufficient only if they are sufficient, regardless of their time and place.

Styles and customs change rapidly and their motion is roughly circular, but men grow slowly. This simple statement confounds the ages. Much of what we term progress is merely change, which may or may not result in progress according to the use that is made of the challenge of shifting patterns. For example, styles change, but if we put our old clothes away long enough the chances are they will be back in fashion. Stylists have noted that the bustle returns every fifty years, but this can scarcely be regarded as a proof of progress. There is also the popular belief that each time muffs return to fashion there will be a war. This is hard to prove because wars are relatively incessant, and there is frequently enough fur left from a worn jacket to make an excellent and stylish muff.

We behold the phenomenon of a two-fold cultural motion in world affairs. One branch of this motion is the growth of the individual himself, and the other branch is the development of his physical institutions.

The spiritual life of man unfolds according to its own rules, whereas the products of his material activities progress in harmony with the pattern proper to the physical world. The growth of institutions does not prove the growth of individuals. It is the same with the human body. In the course of years the body matures, but this does not prove

the maturity of the mind or emotions inhabiting that body. Physical growth is almost automatic, but spiritual growth is the result of wisely directed effort.

There has been much more essential growth in the sciences than there has been in the scientists. We have brought the physical instruments of learning to a high degree of sufficiency. But we have overlooked the all-important fact that institutions are bodies valuable not for themselves but for the light of truth which shines through them and from them. We must grow as persons if we would gain the skill to use wisely the advantages offered by physical progress. To fail the challenge of right use is to fail utterly.

There comes a time in the experience of each person when he becomes acutely aware of the insufficiency of the prevailing mental fads. He must strike out for himself, living above the prevailing code if he is to find a security greater than that of the herd. To differ from the majority is to bring upon oneself the condemnation of the majority. In a regimented social system individuality is rebellion, and the rebel must be punished for his audacity. To differ without courage results in disaster. Most of us desire the approbation of our fellow men, and the quickest way to lose it is to start thinking. The collective not only resents the thinker, but is quite honestly afraid of him. The individual is a menace to the *status quo* and a challenge to that inertia which we have come to accept as a substitute for peace and security.

The individual has a native genius for getting himself into trouble and complicating the lives of those about him. It requires only a slight amount of pressure in any direction to upset the delicately balanced social apple cart. All advancements in the human state have been accompanied by long and difficult periods of adjustment. It is bad enough when such adjustments and their consequences are forced upon us. It appears unthinkable that we should choose to upset the ordered procedure of our present chaos in the hope of improving things. The popular keynote is to leave well enough alone.

Only the wisest of mortals is content to reform himself. The moment an ideal generates within the human temperament its proud owner feels himself an appointed apostle unto the gentiles. Long before he has made his reforms practical in his own small sphere of activities he is hard at work trying to convert the scribes and pharisees. Of course these habitual offenders do not convert; rather they organize themselves and their resources against the menace that has arisen in their midst. In the end the would-be reformer learns that he cannot save the world, and will be extremely fortunate if he is able to save himself from himself and the world.

If we wish to survive as an individual it is absolutely necessary that we learn discretion. In practical definition silence is the better part of discretion. If we are very quiet the world may not notice that we are trying to be ourselves. It is much safer that way, for if the world finds out it is almost certain to be annoyed. This same world, observing our curious behavior, will become convinced that we are the ones requiring salvation, and will set to work restoring us to the collective for our own good, whether we like it or not.

After a few head-on collisions with the collective the would-be individual is inclined to the notion that the world is united in a conspiracy against growth and progress. He may react to this opposition with a firm and heroic decision to depart from society and retire into the congenial atmosphere of himself. He may be further disconcerted when he discovers that his threat to deprive society of his presence meets general approval. Having resolved upon a mental, if not physical, state of exile, the prospective martyr absents himself from the mart and the forum, and frequents lonely glades and wayside shrines. Here a new dilemma presents itself. The human being is by nature a social animal; he enjoys the kinship of his kind. It is one thing to reach the state of understanding in which worldliness departs from us, and quite another thing to function on that lower level which inspires us to depart from worldliness. We seek aloneness and

achieve loneliness. Like Faust in his laboratory, we are then ripe for a revolution against ourselves.

To make a real success of being a person it is necessary to lay our foundations well and develop a long range strategy of action. We must know that we have sufficient real strength to stand on our own feet without fears, doubts, or regrets. Only the strong can be individuals. Those strong with physical ambitions try to make themselves greater than the laws of their world; those strong with spiritual aspirations strive for the courage to obey the laws of the divine world. Experience has proved that the only safe way to protect the person during the early stages of adjustment with spiritual convictions is to avoid clashes with the social collective. Fortunately this is quite possible. The group mind is not especially penetrating, nor is it actually looking for trouble. Like a hibernating bear, it desires primarily to be left alone and will reward indifference with indifference. But if we insist on waking the bear for the glory of God or any other reason we will have a nasty situation on our hands.

Mahatma Gandhi has given the modern world an extremely workable formula to regulate the behavior of potential individuals. His program has been non-militant non-co-operation with that which offends the standards of right action. It is not necessary to personal progress that we interfere with the activities of others. We can simply refrain quietly and unobtrusively from participation in that which we know to be wrong. But even in this we must be careful, realizing always that different human beings, functioning on different levels of thinking and feeling, must have a different standard of values. They have as much right to their opinions as we have to ours, and it is foolish to imagine that they would be any happier because they were converted to other systems of beliefs.

We have in the world today nearly a dozen important religious and ethical codes, and literally thousands of smaller sects and creeds. Though our faiths be many our faults are the same, and the differences in the faiths have had little effect upon the basic delinquences of hu-

man nature. It is hard to discover any essential difference between a selfish Moslem, a selfish Christian, and a selfish atheist. Each has over-powering religious convictions for which he is ready to die, and at the same time he is destroying himself for lack of basic ethics. When we convert him we only give him a new formula to explain the virtues which he is not practicing. If he had no formula at all, but practiced the virtues, he would be better off and so would his world.

The superior man whose proportions have been sketched for us by the Chinese sage, Confucius, is the truly unhistorical man. He lives above time and place, and by conduct alone shares in the aspirations of all ages and races. The superior man is simply one elevated by an internal code of ethics to a state of consciousness by which he is above the performance of an inferior action. The superior man is not necessarily a genius, nor is he destined to undying fame. His greatness is measured by breadth of tolerance and depth of understanding. His estate may be humble, but his state is exalted.

It is possible that we have conveyed the idea that the practice of being a person presents extraordinary difficulties. Experience proves this to be true, but there must be added realization that the individual increases in strength through the natural processes of his own growth. Improvement is not too difficult if it is real and genuine. Trouble arises when improvement is assumed by the mind but not actually attained as an inner experience of consciousness. This is why ethical codes imposed upon the individual from outside bring with them a sense of frustration. Ethics which interfere with action, restricting us contrary to our impulses, becomes a heavy burden. Virtue cannot be thrust upon either the citizen or his civilization. The great legislator, Solon, observed, "That prince is blessed whose subjects do not fear him, but fear for him." This thought can be applied to any individual who seeks personal nobility. The wise man is never the autocrat even in his own intimate environment. He never attempts to force a state of serfdom or obedience upon his family, his neighbors, or his friends. He

does not seek to be admired or respected, and accepts only that allegiance which is freely given. He is content to live his convictions and prove his superiority by his works alone. If he is truly superior he will be respected.

The practical consideration, therefore, is the statement of a program which if followed intelligently and sincerely will lead to the emancipation of the person from the pressure of the collective insufficiency. Such a program can be found in nearly every system of idealistic philosophy. It is not the lack of a plan for self-improvement that perpetuates mediocrity; it is the lack of continuity of human effort that frustrates essential progress. The qualitative interval between theory and practice must be bridged. It is not enough to have well-defined theories as to what constitutes superior living. We may be able to recite the formula and still remain untouched by the virtues which we admire. The application of ideals to their reasonable ends in the spheres of action is ethical practice. There can be no progress outside of this practice. The impulse to apply must come from within the personality itself, and must be sustained by internal motives.

To be an individual we must become internally self-sustaining and at the same time fail in no collective responsibility. We cannot grow at the expense of our environment. This is not superiority but plain old-fashioned selfishness. We can demand no help from others, although we may accept such assistance as is proffered. The world owes us nothing except that which we earn. The first conscious step toward individuality is to establish honest internal motives and to weed out of our thinking all ulterior stimuli. Only when we face facts clearly without illusions or delusions can we set up an adequate standard of conduct.

To be superior means to excel, not to escape or evade. There is no reward for bluffing or pretending. Uncontrolled enthusiasm usually proves detrimental because it cannot be sustained. The personality cannot be browbeaten into a state of grace by the autocracy of the will. We are never any better than when we are not trying to be good. It is the level

and not the supreme effort that proves real progress. Emergencies are not the test of the superior man; he proves himself by the ordinary and not the extraordinary incidents of his living. As Confucius pointed out, the superior man is justified by small and simple deeds and decisions. To be superior we must be internally civilized, and this means to be eternally thoughtful. We may feel that the old Chinese scholar went further than was necessary when he recommended that even in the most intimate family life all the proprieties should be observed. Most of us would soon be exasperated by Confucian punctiliousness. It would be hard to picture the average husband and wife bowing three times to each other every morning upon arising, nor could we accustom ourselves easily to a ritual of each member of the menage addressing the others only in the tone of voice which would be employed to an illustrious guest. Certainly it would be stupid if such practices were inspired by codes and traditions, but Confucius pointed out that courtesy, consideration, respect, and even veneration are the natural attributes of internal superiority. The civilized man is gracious because such is his natural instinct. There is nothing superior about a family brawl, and exhibitions of bad temper between intimates are in no way different in principle than the brawls of nations, which we call war.

We apply the term excellent to that which excels. The individual must excel to distinguish himself from the commonplace. He gains distinction by excelling in his work through the increase of integrity and skill. Only that which excels deserves advancement. The man who works only for his pay check earns nothing but his pay check, and has no right to expect to be specially favored. The man who contributes to the delinquences of his time must expect to share in the delinquences of his time. If he practices corrupt policies he must expect to be the victim of corrupt policies.

To be superior we must sincerely admire, encourage, protect, and serve the superior values which we perceive about us. The civilized man has cultivated an

appreciation for the beautiful and the good and the necessary. He is moved by his own inclination to art, music, literature, and poetry. He is discriminating, bestowing his approval generously where it is deserved. He may sacrifice creature comforts for the enrichment of his consciousness, but he sacrifices only his own comforts, not those of persons depending upon him. He seeks the association of his own kind, not to teach but to learn. He is silent in the presence of his superiors, not because he feels inferior but because he hopes to benefit by attending to their wisdom. He never argues. He cultivates leisure.

The final proof of a civilized human being is his ability to administer leisure. No civilization which has lost the art of leisure can become truly great, and no individual unable to find leisure in his own life can attain the stature of a superior man. Leisure is not idleness; it is the dignity of living. Haste is a proof of decadence, and all that hurries hastens to its end. The tension which accompanies haste prevents reflection and the mature consideration of action.

We have surrounded ourselves with a variety of labor saving devices in order that we might have more time to ourselves. Yet this time has brought us only waste, extravagance, and dissipation. We have time at our disposal, but no wit or wisdom to use it well. We are disciplined by the things that we have to do, but we must discipline ourselves in the use of leisure. The superior man proceeds without haste or waste, seeking neither to escape the present task nor hurry on to some other action.

The solution does not lie in devoting every free moment to the ends of some ponderous scholarship. We should not grudge our present state because it keeps us from our books, our gardens, or our meditations. We should not resent the world because it interferes with our spiritual advancement. We should take nothing too seriously, especially ourselves. It is difficult to administer either labor or leisure successfully if we are deficient in a sense of humor. The superior man is by nature and acquirements a happy man. He enjoys living, and enjoys liv-

ing well. Hair shirts and heavy penances hold no attraction for him. He lives according to his means; if they be slight he lives graciously within them; if they are ample he is grateful. Wealth is no virtue, nor is poverty; it is equally difficult to live well in either state. To be poor and satisfied is a fine art. To be rich and happy tests the greatness of heroes. We are equally burdened by privation and excess. Poor men are not to be despised; rich men are not to be envied, but good men are to be emulated. The poor have the virtue of moderation thrust upon them. The rich are ever exposed to the temptations of immoderation. The superior man measures the character of others, not by what they have but by what they are. Poverty is the disease of the wise; wealth the disease of the ambitious. But all the poor are not wise, nor all the ambitious rich.

Having settled certain general policies the man who would be an individual must then determine within himself the direction in which he will proceed, and the ends which he desires to attain. It is not enough merely to be comfortable, either internally or externally; the final challenge is enlightened purpose. If he dreams of a universal usefulness he must equip himself with the abilities and accomplishments necessary to his purpose. It is here that he comes to the dividing of the ways. Usually he must depart from the standards of sufficiency which have been set up by human society. Here also he becomes acutely aware of the lack of essential knowledge in the educational system fostered by popular thinking. Any one of a hundred colleges, universities, or institutes can teach him useful arts, sciences, or trades, but not one of them offers any well-formulated program to produce the superior man. They assume that a superior mathematician or a superior lawyer is by virtue of his specialized training an outstanding person. There is nothing easily available to assist those who desire to explore into themselves. There are all the sciences but the science of the self; all arts but the art of living.

Realizing this, the individual must work out his own destiny. Hence the

extracurricular activities which offend scholasticism. But whether or not the irresistible impulse to grow is pleasing or displeasing to the schoolmen has no direct bearing upon the case. They can ridicule, denounce, and condemn to their hearts content; they cannot prevent growth.

Organized religions confronted with the same challenge can resort only to anathemas, denunciations, and cries of heresy. They cannot hold the mind that is moving serenely, calmly, and steadily toward the knowledge of the self. When a man grows too large for these institutions he escapes from them to a freedom which they can neither understand nor appreciate. Having emerged from the artificial restrictions and limitations imposed by the habit patterns of the herd the intelligent individual stands forth in all the glory of a person—he is unhistorical and unhysterical. He has demanded his birthright and proved his demand by merit. He has not been freed by proclamation, but by his own progress. He condemns no one and nothing, but is a living condemnation of the systems which were unable to produce him and from which he had to free himself in order to survive. He is hated by the foolish and the dishonest because he cannot be

controlled or corrupted. He is understood and admired by only those who are dedicated to the same ends which he has attained, and of which he is a living proof. In the superior man the quest of the ages is fulfilled, and the hope of all races is justified. He is the proof of the intrinsic humanity in man. He demonstrates that it is possible, through dedication to principle, to live well in any time, any place, and under any condition. He refutes all excuses and all evasions. He proves that it is not necessary to wait for better times in order to be a better man.

Obviously, perfection is beyond the grasp of the average mortal. Nor should we dream upon it, and finding it unattainable relapse into melancholia. Improvement is possible to all, and by gradual improvement we become the superior man. The emancipated person is the hero of the world, for by overcoming ignorance, superstition, and fear he escapes into a universal life in nature and through nature. He becomes a citizen of the philosophic empire. He has achieved the unhistorical destiny by transcending history. He has transcended by fulfilling, for there is no escape from this world except upward into the free air of universal space.



A GREAT PATRON OF LEARNING

Ashurbannipal, King of Assyria, who came to the throne 666 B. C., was one of the world's greatest patrons of literature. He gathered the records of the known world into an immense library in his palace at Nineveh. It is probable that his collection included at least some of the works previously in the Imperial Library of Sargon, at Uruk, which was known as the city of the books. The libraries of Sargon and Ashurbannipal were the royal storehouses of the wisdom of Sumer, Akkad, and Argon, and little more than the name remains, but broken tablets tell the story of the human desire to learn and to preserve learning for the good of all men.

FAUST

Legend and Fable



IN those dear dead days which so happily are beyond recall it was a serious mistake to devote time and energy to the training of animals. Had Magister Georgius Sabellicus Faustus Junior not trained his dog to perform a number of parlor tricks, and had he refrained from attempting to educate a horse, it is quite possible that his name would have descended into a respected and respectable state of oblivion. At a time when even the intelligent human being was regarded with suspicion it was not seemly for dumb brutes to give evidence of erudition.

Even Martin Luther, according to Widmann's Faust-book, declared that by the help of God he had been able to escape the evils with which Faust and his devils sought to destroy the pious man. Luther was convinced that a spirit from the pit appeared before him in his study at Wartburg while he was translating one of the psalms. Undaunted, he pitched his inkstand at the phantom. The specter disappeared, but the inkstain on the wall can still be seen. "I have seen and defied innumerable devils," declared Luther.

Most legends have some foundation in fact, and there is ample evidence that a magician by the name of Faust, assisted by his diabolical animals, created considerable stir in the first half of the 16th century. The historical sorcerer, however, has been absorbed so completely

into the Faust myth that he descends to us as a focal point of tradition rather than as a man.

The original form of the Faust legend appears in a book published in Frankfurt in 1587 under the title: "History of Dr. Joh. Faust, the notorious sorcerer and black-artist: How he bound himself to the Devil for a certain time: What singular adventure befell him therein, what he did and carried on until finally he received his well-deserved pay. Mostly from his own posthumous writings; for all presumptuous, rash and godless men, as a terrible example, abominable instances and well-meant warning, collected and put in print..."

This work gained immediate popularity, and within ten years was translated into several languages. The Dutch edition of 1592 was the first to include dates for the principal events of the story. Whether these dates were the result of scholarly investigation or were merely fabricated to increase the credibility of the narration, the translators failed to say.

For the benefit and amazement of those interested it was declared that

Faust was born in 1491, and made his first pact with the devil on the 23rd of October, 1514. This pact was for seventeen years, and on the 3rd of August, 1531, it was extended for an additional seven years. The magician's life was forfeited to his devil on the 23rd of October, 1538. Faust's dealing with the prince of hell extended, therefore, over a period of exactly twenty-four years.

There is some confusion over the birthplace of this singular man. According to his own account he was born in the house of a peasant on the banks of the Roda in the duchy of Weimar. Some accounts say that he was born on the borders of Poland, and studied magic at Krakow. In any event, he was adopted at an early age by a kindly uncle who lived in the city of Wittenberg. This generous relative who was childless devoted much pains and money to the education of his promising nephew. The young man was destined for theology and seems to have been an excellent student, for in his examination he carried off all the first prizes. After securing his doctorate in divinity, Faust decided that the religious life was not for him and took his degree as a doctor of medicine, resolved to become a celebrated physician.

About this time he fell in with a group of liberal scholars devoted to obscure arts and sciences. With them he studied religions, philosophies, and magical systems of the Chaldeans, Greeks, and Arabs. While his interests were not entirely orthodox, Faust appeared at this period in his career as a man of unusual acquirements and exceptional capacities. He was the very personification of the growing spirit of inquiry and mental independence which was asserting itself throughout Europe.

In a work attributed to Faust published in Wittenberg and probably falsely dated 1525, the doctor declared that from his youth he had been a tireless student of the arts and sciences. When a rare and curious book of magical formulas fell into his hands he was tempted to experiment with the spells and enchantments which it contained. All might have still been well had not Faust taken a long walk one evening in a dark, thick wood a

short distance from Wittenberg. It was there that temptation caught up with him.

Coming to a solitary crossroad he was reminded of the spells he had read about, and his quickened interest in magic prompted him to attempt the invocation of a spirit. He drew the ceremonial circle with his staff and recited the mystic formulas contained in a manuscript he had examined. Between the ninth and tenth hours of the night he uttered the awful words of power, and a demon promptly appeared. A prince of hell would scarcely arrive unattended, and Faust was properly terrified by the combustions in the air about him and the horrible monsters that crawled around his enchanted circle. Finally the din subsided, and Mephistopheles himself appeared in the guise of an old gray-robed monk, and demanded why he had been summoned.

The acquaintance between Faust and his demon improved rapidly. Mephisto was no meddling fiend; he was an infernal aristocrat, a character of good parts and an excellent conversationalist. In the seclusion of his study Faust had many long and interesting discussions with his unearthly crony. They talked of God, the creation of the world, the mysteries of the planets, the secrets of science, and many other fascinating subjects. Faust inquired about conditions in hell and the order of the infernal hierarchy, and Mephisto obliged by arranging for the good doctor to make a brief tour through the several departments of the inferno.

After the details of the pact between Faust and the devil had been settled, the doctor and his familiar spirit traveled extensively. Mephisto, ever the accommodating one, transformed himself into a horse with two humps on his back like a dromedary, and transported Faust through the air with the greatest of ease. The grand tour required fifteen months, and among the high lights of their trip was a visit to the Vatican. There they resided invisibly in the Pope's private apartment for three days.

In Constantinople Faust gave the emperor of the Turks an exciting time.

With the help of Mephisto, Faust took on the appearance of the prophet Mohammed, and divided his time between the imperial throne room and the Seraglio.

Typical of the incredible doings that won for Faust his reputation as the first sorcerer of the century was his merry jest with a farmer. Meeting the countryman taking a load of hay to town the magician inquired politely how much the rustic would charge for as much hay as the doctor might like to eat. The wagoner replied that for a penny the gentleman could consume as much as he pleased. Faust then fell to with a vim until it seemed that he would devour the entire load. The farmer offered Faust a gold coin to stop eating. The doctor accepted the money, and when the countryman came to his journey's end he discovered that his load of hay was entirely restored.

Many of the marvels accredited to Faust would be explained today by hypnotism and mesmeric suggestion, that in the early 16th century were beyond human comprehension. When he wearied of performing miracles Faust took the time to deliver courses of lectures on the poet Homer at the University of Erfurt, and enjoyed the protection and favor of the prince of Anhalt. He once entertained the prince and his guests with a magic castle which hard-working Mephisto had built during the previous night. The banquet was served from the Pope's gold plate which the devil had borrowed for the occasion.

In the early legends Christopher Wagner appears in the role of the sorcerer's apprentice. After the magician had been killed by his demon, Wagner (by Faust's will) inherited his property, including his secret papers and his good house in the town of Wittenberg. Wagner gained considerable fame as a sorcerer, but was never able to equal the reputation of his master. In a curious work published at Stuttgart in 1846 by T. Scheible entitled *Christoph Wagner* there appears a detailed account of the life and activities of this faithful disciple of infernal arts. Wagner's favorite devil in the form of an ape attended him. Is it possible that our assistant sorcerer had a trained monkey? Or perhaps this genial simian

was only the ape of learning, to indicate that Wagner 'aped' the genius of his master.

It is amusing that while Goethe was writing his version of the Faust fable he had an acquaintance, one Heinrich Leopold Wagner. Goethe confided part of his plot to Heinrich, who proceeded to appropriate the material for his best known tragedy, *The Infanticide*. Could this circumstance have influenced Goethe in delineating the Wagner of Faust as a hopelessly prosaic and commonplace character entirely lacking in creative imagination?

Any student of the Faust legend would enjoy a visit to Auerbach's Cellar in Leipzig. During his student years Goethe frequented this inn and sat in the very chair where the old magician enjoyed his wine and meat. Although the building has been partly reconstructed, the old cellars are probably remains of the original tavern. Two old paintings, dimmed with age and somewhat the worse for retouching, ornament the semicircular spaces in Auerbach's Cellar. One shows Faust bearded and mantled, seated at table, and watched by a small black dog. The other represents the magician flying out of the door astride a winecask. The date 1525 is conspicuous in connection with the paintings, but there is some doubt whether the pictures are quite this early. It was there that Faust bored four gimlet holes in the edge of an old table top. He drove a spigot into each, and from the dry board flowed four different kinds of wine.

But all good things must come to an end. The pact was for twenty-four years, and as the years slipped by the day of reckoning approached. Faust became subject to fits of despondency, and sought to discover some means of extending his contract for a second time. But Mephisto was weary of performing minor marvels, and the day before the final payment was due the fiend appeared holding in his hand the parchment which Faust had signed with his blood. The devil gave notice that but twenty-four hours remained, and the sorcerer must hold himself in readiness.

In the end Faust resolved to face his destiny with a good grace. He invited a number of his friends from the university to a final festive gathering. He served his guests with the best of foods and the rarest of wines, and after the banquet told them the whole incredible story, and bade each an affectionate farewell.

Between twelve and one in the night a furious storm broke upon the house. Horrible cries were heard in Faust's room. They grew fainter, and at last there was only an unearthly silence. The next day the magician's apartments were found smeared with blood, and at some distance from the house his body was discovered mutilated almost beyond recognition.

The accounts of Faust's death are as numerous and varied as the other elements of the legend. Each translator and editor has added new factors according to taste. Philipp Melancthon reports that Faust's end was hastened by the devil wringing his neck, and old books of magic describe how the magician was found one morning in his laboratory with a knife in his back. It is quite possible that the much feared conjurer was assassinated. Typical of the early legends is one to the effect that when the magician's body was laid out neatly for burial the corpse turned itself face down and could not be kept in a normal position.

Such is the story-line which inspired the literary and dramatic productions of such men as Christopher Marlowe, Gottfried Lessing, Robert Browning, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. More prosaic historians, deficient in the region of their imaginative faculties, are of the opinion that Faust's personality has been glamorized to a considerable degree. Like most dabblers in the occult arts, Dr. Faust was first branded a charlatan and then persecuted as a wizard. In order to sustain its premise that Faust was a mere pretender in matters magical the Encyclopaedia Britannica has recourse to the rather unscientific procedure of quoting one dubious character to disprove another. Faust is delineated as a drunken vagabond dedicated to deceit

and lies. It is far more probable that he was an early transcendentalist and scholar whose name has come to be associated with a tradition which flourished long before his time.

As an introduction to the Faust legend it will be useful to consider the pre-Faustian elements involved in the myth. The curious lore of demonism began among ancient, even prehistoric, cultural groups. Primitive humanity shared a common belief in the existence of invisible beings capable of influencing the lives and affairs of mortals. Veneration for the spirits of the dead, the worship of deceased ancestors, and the ghost cult are among the earliest of religious concepts. Originally these disembodied ones were regarded as neither better nor worse than the living, but like those still functioning in physical bodies these shades or manes could be influenced by flattery, bribes, gifts of food, music, and the dance. Ghosts, if neglected, might become peevish and seek revenge by causing sickness or destroying crops. To the old pagan all nature was alive, and human survival depended, at least to a degree, upon humoring the forces operating from the unseen world.

Spiritism has survived all the changes which have affected the intellectual state of man. It flourished equally in both civilized and savage communities and has resisted every effort to destroy its power and influence. In systems of religions which are based upon a belief in a perpetual conflict between forces of good and evil, spiritism usually includes elements of demonism. If evil exists as a principle, then, like good, it must be served by a hierarchy of beings. It is the duty of these dark angels to labor unceasingly to frustrate the benevolent plan of the good God for his creation.

Psychologically, demonism originated in fear and imagination. Philosophically, it began with the human effort to explain the disasters which afflict the virtuous. Theologically, it served the useful purpose of justifying the vigorous and profitable activities of the clergy.

It is still difficult to explain the place of God in human affairs. For instance, if several nations engage in mutual war-

fare, each prays to God for victory, certain that its own cause is just. It is obvious that deity cannot favor all, and the losers have a religious dilemma on their hands. It is not difficult for a defeated state to nurse the notion that some evil agency was responsible for the failure of its righteous cause. When our projects go well it is due to our own exceptional abilities and capacities, but when things go badly it is no fault of ours—there is a devil loose in the land.

The vicissitudes brought about by political changes, invasions, and conquests, also bear upon this subject. The gods of conquered people lose caste, becoming negative factors at best. The conqueror brings his own religion with him and his priests seek to impose it upon the subjugated communities. As all faiths but our own are false, the dominant cult proclaims itself the sole custodian of truth and sets to work to silence all dissenting voices.

It is noticeable that medieval European demonology was strongly influenced by the feud between the Christian Church and the surviving vestiges of the pagan religions of Greece, Egypt, and Rome. The Greek daimon, Latin daemon, was merely a tutelary deity usually associated with a particular function of natural forces. There is not the slightest implication of evil in the original meaning of the word. Socrates had a familiar daimon, a wise and noble spirit who instructed him in the mysteries of philosophy, and protected his life on a number of occasions. It was from this Greek word meaning a spirit or divinity that the churchmen fashioned their term for an evil entity, or a devil. We can almost suspect that the contrivance was a spite mechanism. The new faith fashioned vassals of wrath out of the kindly godlings of its enemies.

By this same method Saturn, an old Roman god of seed and sowing, is transformed into Satan who was stoned. Of course Saturn was borrowed in part from the Greek Cronus whose morals did not conform entirely with the standards of monastic asceticism. Lucifer, which means bringing light, was an old name for Venus in its form of the morn-

ing star. Lucifer also had a much deeper significance, but needless to say the clergy was not interested. Beelzebub, who ranks just below Satan among Milton's fallen angels, can be traced to the Chaldaic-Hebrew *Ba'al zebub*, usually translated Lord of Flies. This translation is a slight error due to popular lack of sympathy for gods Babylonian and subjects esoteric. The word *zebub* was given to flies because of the buzzing or humming sound which they make. A more correct translation would be the Lord who Sings. *Ba'al zebub* was not an evil deity, but a form of the saviour-god.



BA'AL ZEBUB, THE LORD OF FLIES

We know from the historical records that many accused of sorcery during the middle ages were merely worshipers of what the Church solemnly pronounced to be false gods. The general state of benightedness, which descended upon Western civilization after the collapse of classical learning, resulted in an almost eclipse of man's mental life. In the abyss left by the fall of the Greek school, untutored imagination developed demonology into an elaborate pseudo science. Some such excessive attitude is inevitable whenever human institutions such as the State or Church fail utterly to protect the integrity of the individual. If a man has no faith in God or in his temporal leaders his ethical standards degenerate

and he turns hopefully to those negative patterns of which the devil is merely the personification.

Medieval demonism was a dramatic expression of the frustrations, phobias, inhibitions, and neuroses which afflicted most Europeans. Life in terms of simple physical survival was difficult, hazardous, and painful. There were few opportunities to improve one's condition. War, plague, and crime, was the common lot. The aristocracy burdened the masses, advancing its own extravagancies regardless of consequence. Nothing short of magic could break the vicious circle of ills against which all ordinary human efforts accomplished little. Any courageous individual who dared to raise his voice against the prevailing corruption was accused of sorcery.

The majority of convicted and executed wizards and witches were innocent of any fault except of having influential enemies. Even a just and upright citizen with no religious or political opinions of social significance could be dragged before the inquisitional court by the gossip of a spiteful neighbor. Once he fell into the clutches of this court his cause was lost. He would be tortured until he was ready to confess anything to ease the pain. Armed with such a ridiculous confession, the ecclesiastical court then hustled the victim off to the rack or gibbet, or worse. If he refused to confess, the miserable man was boiled in oil, but if he confessed he received special and gentle consideration—the oil was brought to a boil before he was thrown in.

Undoubtedly there were a few benighted and corrupted men and women who devoted their lives to sorcery and witchcraft, and dealt in love philters and poisons on the side. These certainly deserved to be punished. The neurotic times produced a considerable amount of insanity and borderline types of mental disease. The human mind cannot struggle generation after generation against external confusion and internal chaos without ultimately collapsing under the strain. Of the majority, however, who were involved in so-called magic, it may be said that they suffered from the ignorance of the learned, the vices of the

virtuous, and the smallness of the great.

Out of the fragmentary history of Dr. Faust and the streams of myths and legends that combined to form the final structure of the story there developed an important psychological and philosophical fable. It is this fable with its deep and significant implications that justifies present thought and research. The original legend was curious, but the unfolding and interpreting of this legend by the faculties of the human mind is profoundly significant.

The final perfected form of the Faust legend as we find it elaborated by the genius of Goethe is one of the world's greatest literary and spiritual achievements. It is the whole tragedy of man in which is exhibited the dreams and aspirations, the hopes and fears, the courage and despair, which make up the compound of human consciousness. Goethe divides his masterpiece into two parts, of which the second is the more important philosophically, if not artistically.

The brilliant German intellectual Karl Rosenkranz summarizes the basic design of the great poem thus: "Both Parts are symmetrical in their structure. The First moves with deliberate swiftness from Heaven through the World to Hell: the Second returns therefrom through the World to Heaven. Between the two lies the emancipation of Faust from the torment of his conscious guilt,—lies his Lethe, his assimilation of the Past.

"In regard to substance, the First Part begins religiously, becomes metaphysical, and terminates ethically. The Second Part begins ethically, becomes aesthetic, and terminates religiously. In one, Love and Knowledge are confronted with each other: in the other, Practical Activity and Art, the Ideal of the Beautiful.

"In regard to form, the First Part advances from the hymnal chant to monologue and dialogue: the Second Part from monologue and dialogue to the dithyrambic, closing with the hymn, which here glorifies not alone the Lord and His uncomprehended lofty works, but the Human in the process of its union with the Divine, through Redemption and Atonement."

In the first part of *Faust* Goethe delineates three principal characters: Mephistopheles, Faust, and Marguerite. As these bear little resemblance to the persons of the Faust legend they must be examined according to the requirements of the philosophical fable. As Mephistopheles, or Mephisto, is in every way the dominant character, his implications must be examined first.

In *Webster's Dictionary* Mephistopheles is not defined but described as a word of uncertain origin, the name of the cold, scoffing, relentless fiend of Goethe's *Faust*. Several authors have attempted to trace the meaning of the word Mephistopheles. The original spelling of the name seems to have been Mephistophiles. Bayard Taylor, who devoted much time and consideration to the Faust legend, is inclined to believe that the word originated in a typically medieval bungling effort to combine three Greek words, to create a compound implying "not loving the light." Taylor feels that this is the sense of the name as it was understood by Goethe.

Moncure Conway in his *Demonology and Devil Lore* points out that the ancient Romans had a mysterious deity called Mephistis. She was invoked in connection with the mephistic exhalations of the earth which occur at the sulphur springs in the grove of Albunae. In sorcery, the fumes of sulphur associated with volcanic phenomena were regarded as emanations from the pits of hell. Demons were usually associated with fire and brimstone. William Godwin has a different explanation. He suggests that Mephistopheles is a corruption of Nephostophiles—a lover of clouds. (See *Lives of the Necromancers*.)

Conway suggests that the concept of Mephistopheles resulted from the intellectual shudders of priests at the possible consequences of the researches of scientists, chemists, and alchemists, among the fumes of their laboratories. This archfiend is the embodiment "of the ascetic's horror of nature and the pride of life and of the medieval priest's curse on all learning he could not monopolize. The Faust myth is merely his shadow cast on the earth, the tracery of his terrible power

as the Church would have the people dread it."

The appearance which Mephistopheles assumed differed with the several forms of the legend. He also changed his shape at will to meet various emergencies, and at times preferred to remain invisible. In the Frankfurt Faust-book of 1587, Mephistopheles is made to say: "I am a spirit, a flying spirit, potently ruling under the heavens."

In the secret manuscripts of sorcery Mephisto, prince of Hell, "is under the power of Jupiter and his regent's name is Zadikel, one of the throne angels of the Holy Jehovah. He can be made to appear early on Wednesday morning (Jupiter's day and hour) or late the same evening. He appears first as a fiery bear, but the lesser and more pleasing manifestation is a little bald-headed man in a black cape."

In the Strasbourg Faust play the magician asks the demon why he appears in the form of a man. The devil answers with a laugh: "Faust, perhaps we are then wholly devils, when we resemble you; at least, no other mask suits us better."

In some old legends Mephistopheles took the form of a dog. Faust saw this dog one day while walking through an open field. It resembled a spaniel and ran about leaving *ein Feuerstrudel*—that is, a fiery eddy behind it. The animal followed the old philosopher into his study, snarling and howling. After causing great terror and disturbance the dog suddenly vanished, and Mephisto stepped out from behind a stove in the garments of a traveling scholar. The magician was disappointed that a princely demon should wear such humble attire. Taylor suggests that Goethe's choice of the itinerant intellectual as a guise for his fiend was based upon the bad reputation of these meddling, argumentative parasites who begged and borrowed, contributing nothing but worthless opinions in exchange for their keep.

In the *Geisselbrecht* puppet play Faust commands his evil spirit to discard its terrible shapes and come as a jurist, doctor, or hunter, but best of all to appear as a student. Mephisto is not particular;

he will be a coachman or a cavalier upon request. In these abilities to alter its forms at will the demon reveals that versatility which the medieval theologians associated with the faculties of the human mind. All branches of secular learning which inclined the intellect away from theology were but masks of Satan.

In the prologue to Goethe's *Faust* the devil is on friendly terms with deity, who is gracious enough to tolerate the infernal presence even among the heavenly hosts. In fact, God engages in a wager for the soul of Faust with the archfiend. Mephisto defines himself as the spirit of negation, or denial, and part of that power that still works for good while ever scheming ill. The devil even has the audacity to point out to God the miserable state in which mortals exist while the heavenly choruses sing hymns at the foot of the eternal throne.

In the great poem Mephisto describes himself as a *Juncker* of high degree. The term is now associated with a member of the Prussian aristocracy, and implies pride, haughtiness, and the glorification of militarism. When he appears on the puppet stage Mephistopheles is dressed as a person of quality. He wears a red tunic, a long mantle of black silk, and a cock's feather in his hat. Goethe accepts this traditional costume, and it has been carried over into the opera.

At this point attention must be drawn to the *Drudenfuss*, or wizard's foot which Faust traced upon the threshold of his study door. The word *Drudenfuss* is another example of the corruption of ancient meaning. The old German word *Drud* is derived from Druid, the pagan priests of England and Gaul. After the coming of Christianity these wise old men were regarded as wizards.

The sign of the wizard's foot, or the cloven hoof as it is sometimes called, was the pentagram, or five-pointed star of Pythagorean symbolism. It was made by drawing five lines with a continuous motion of the pencil. When placed with one point upward this magic star is the symbol of light and truth, but when inverted so that two points are up it represents black magic and sorcery. The figure on Faust's doorsill had two points

facing out which permitted the devil to enter, but when the evil spirit attempted to depart he faced the single point and was held prisoner in the room.

The inverted pentagram was known in ceremonial magic as the sign of the goat's head. The accompanying figure, drawn by the French transcendentalist Eliphas Levi, illustrates this symbolism. In medieval magic Satan was often represented with the attributes of a goat, and at the sabbat or convocation of witches and sorcerers the evil one appeared in the form of the goat of Mendes. In the Faust stories Mephisto retains only his pointed mustache and goatee as a reminder of his sabbatic form. In most medieval art, however, the devil is depicted as a composite creature with the legs and horns of a goat. This conception originated with the Greek god Pan, a pastoral divinity and the patron of shepherds. In its combining form the Greek word *pan* means 'all', 'every', 'extending through', 'uniting a group'. Thus Pandemonium, the capital of Hell in Milton's conception, means literally 'an abode of all spirits'. Our word pan, signifying fright or confusion, meant the cries or commotions of the Pans, or nature spirits.

A little research into the ancient concept of the god Pan will help clarify the place of Mephistopheles in the Faust fable. Pan was an aspect of Zeus, the supreme deity of the mundane order of the world. Zeus in his proper form as father of the Olympian band ruled the extensions above the earth. As Poseidon he was lord of the seas, or the humid principle in nature. As Pan he presided over the broad surface of the earth with its countless forms of life, and as Hades he had dominion over the subterranean abodes of ghosts.

Goethe must have been well-aware of the Greek creation myths, for he draws upon the *Theogony* of Hesiod for his concept of the universal machinery. The conflict between Pan, symbolizing nature, and the early Church is summarized in the last cries of the pagan oracles. It is reported that when Christianity came into dominance the oracles cried out together: "Great Pan is dead." In a con-

versation with a friend Goethe observed: "Then the character of Mephistopheles, through his irony, and as *the living result of a vast observation of the world*, is also something very difficult to comprehend."

Zeus-Pan, therefore, represents the laws of the material world as they manifest in the operations of nature. All physical things which unfold upon the earth are part of a phenomenal diffusion over which Pan presides. He is intimately associated with the sensory perceptions and the reactions which they set up within the consciousness of the human being. He is forever calling men to the consideration of the obvious and emphasizing the importance of the physical processes of generation. All material sciences, materialistic philosophies, and materially organized theology, are under the dominion of Pan, although they may choose to resist his laws. The conflicts between these institutions result in the pandemonium which afflicts the mortal state. Overemphasis upon physical factors in the unfolding of the human being always leads to panic in the ethical sphere.

Nature is concerned solely with its own survival, and in this sense Mephistopheles personifies the urge toward the physical, ever present in the human psyche. This spirit of negation prompts the mortal mind to compromise its universal aspirations by accepting as a substitute an impermanent material security. The entire program of empire building which has obsessed mortals since the beginning of recorded history is, in fact, a compact with Pan. Finding happiness beyond his reach, man is resolved to seek comfort in its place. Unable to subdue himself, he dedicates his activity to the subjugation of nature. In the end he loses sight entirely of his original purpose and destiny, and becomes the servant and slave of the productions of his own ingenuity. Thus he barter his immortal soul for the passing glory of the world.

The fascination of phenomena, the lure of the senses, and the temporal ambitions which these stimulate in the human disposition, lead to a broad skepticism which brings no comfort or lasting happiness. Thus the world itself, with

all its relentless processes, can be likened to a demon without moral sense or ethical scruples. This monster may lure his victims to a condition of complete unbelief where both hope and despair end in a common inertia. Materialism is the half-truth more dangerous than a lie. It is not essentially evil or unnatural, but suffers from what the Greeks would call deficiency. So-called realism is no more nor less than the acceptance of the obvious without consideration of overtones.

When we recognize Mephistopheles as the symbol of the material sphere with its hypnotic influence over all the creatures inhabiting its broad domain we can understand this fascinating and debonair spirit of negation. He is the final sophisticate, the ultimate state of worldliness, believing nothing, ridiculing hope, scorning fear, and dedicated to the task of undermining belief, whispering that all effort to achieve anything beyond personal satisfaction is vanity. Mephisto would fit very nicely into almost any gathering of modern pseudo intellectuals. In fact, he is the very genius of their assemblage, inspiring them to an utter uninspired manner of life.

While we like to think that the suave and purposeless sophisticate lives a charming, romantic, and satisfying though meaningless existence, we also assume that he belongs to a small class set apart to the practice of indolence. It seldom occurs to us that he is only an extreme example of the prevailing attitude. So long as human beings are content with creature comforts and have no mind to examine the cause, purpose, and consequence of themselves, they are spiritually indigent regardless of their physical prosperity.

But to be a full-fledged lotus-eater indolence is not enough. It must be sustained by a complete philosophy of mental inertia. Uselessness must be elevated to the dignity of a fine art. It must be advanced to the chief place among human motivations. It must be demonstrated reasonably and logically that the meritless shall inherit the earth. It may be noted in passing that if present trends continue, and the helpless share their

convictions with the thoughtless, there may not be much left to inherit.

In a strange way the temperament of Mephistopheles exposes the basic deficiency of the human intellect with all its tendencies to natural and artificial doubts about providence. Even now the functions of the mind are imperfectly known, but we can clearly perceive in the workings of thought the mingled forces of resentment and futility. The mind resents its own limitations and the immensity of the problem with which it is confronted. The human ego, in which resides so much of the pride of the fallen angels, rebels at the restrictions imposed by the laws of God and nature. It strives desperately to amend the very mechanism of its own existence. At the same time there is an ever-lurking suspicion of futility. There is so much to know and so little that can be known; so much to do and so little that can be done.

In the chess game which man would play with the infinite, space and eternity must always win. That which man builds crumbles about him; his well-laid plans come to nothing; his highest projects reveal their insignificance. He has the power to dream, but not the power to make his dreams come true. Unless his foundations are deep and true he is likely to fall into the Mephistophelean mood and decide that life is a sorry jest.

With the collapse of medieval scholasticism and the rise of humanistic philosophy, theology lost its grip upon the human mind. It would be a mistake to assume that all the churchmen were motivated by bigotry or selfishness. They realized a danger, and four hundred years of materialistic thinking has proved many of their fears to be justified. Liberty without sufficient learning degenerated into licence. The intellectual became conscious of the possibility of building a physical empire which could stand against the pressure of universal environment. He could bestow permanence upon his social order even though he himself remained impermanent. He could build a city that would last for a thousand years even though his own span remained three score and ten. Like Jesus, he was taken to the mountain top and tempted with

the cities of the plains and the treasures of the earth. Jesus, the master mystic, rejected the prince of this world and his honors, but most nominal Christians lack the internal strength to follow the example of their great leader.

Pan, alias Mephisto, whispers into the ears of every man: "Make the most of this life, for you will be a long time dead. Fill the world with art and science, fine buildings and noble monuments; dedicate your life to policies and politics; fight wars for your neighbors' good; plot, scheme, and steal your way to fame and fortune; gratify every impulse of your flesh. Then in the midst of your own self-satisfaction and the applause of your contemporaries, lie down and die like the lame, the halt, and the blind. Leave everything behind, and take with you to the ancestral ghost-land only your impoverished self. You have spent so much time trying to be a success that you have forgotten to be a person."

By what blessed faculties of the mind, by what disproportions of the senses, has man rationalized himself into such a dilemma? The human being with the light of heaven in his heart dwells in an outer darkness, content to be born to suffer and to die. Mephisto explains this mystery to God when he thus epitomizes the mental processes of man: "Reason he names it, but doth use it so, each day more brutish than the brutes doth grow."

To the psychoanalyst the personality of Mephistopheles is easily understandable. The demon is concealing a terrible neurosis beneath his mischievous personality. He is indeed a god fallen from grace, deprived by his own character of his share in the universal good. He is devoted to evil, though fully realizing the futility of his efforts to corrupt. His very effort to destroy men accomplishes their salvation. If he can lure them to complete worldliness he will bring them finally to a complete revolution against worldliness. Mephisto is obsessed by the depressing conviction that God will win the wager for the human soul. The prince of evil is a melancholy spirit, for even his pride is not his own. He is but the instrument of the divine purpose, serving God even when he disobeys.

We have already considered the original form of the Faust legend, but now we must examine the philosophical Faust, the character created by artistry to fulfill the requirements of the ethical fable. The character of Faust changes with the motions of popular opinion, but always he personifies a dominant trend in social motivation. He originated in the 16th century, but he takes on new proportions and dimensions in each of the succeeding centuries. There is always a Faust, but the breadth and depth of his character are in a process of constant discovery. As we learn more of our world and of the forces, laws, and principles operating therein, the Faust dilemma takes on a larger significance.

Dr. Kuno Francke in his book *Social Forces in German Literature* writes: "If it were possible to sum up the experience of several generations in the life of a single individual, we should say: the sixteenth century is like that mysterious, heroic figure, which owed its legendary existence to this very age of reaction against the freedom of the early Reformation, the 'famous necromancer' Dr. Johann Faust. The sixteenth century, like the legendary Faust had thrown away the wisdom of former ages, like him it had tried to open a new path toward the higher realms of life, like him it found itself powerless to work out its own salvation. The spirit of the Faust-book of 1587 is altogether theological. Faust is represented as a godless rebel, his pact with the devil is devoid of higher motive, his death is surrounded by all the horrors of hell. The book transports us into a world in which the Copernican system has no place; it is a warning against free thought and human aspirations; it is the autobiography of an age which has lost faith in itself."

As the Faust legend originated in the 16th century we must search there for the original psychological pattern, for it is useless to consider a work of this kind apart from its reference frame of time and place. We are dealing with a problem in perspective; that is, spiritual and material motivations. These are associated intimately with the revolutions of public opinion which led to the collapse

of medievalism as a concept of life.

The Protestant Reformation was not especially successful in freeing the human being from bondage to the jots and tittles of theological controversy. The Christian religion took on a dogged kind of orthodoxy well-represented by the literal-minded, stern-visaged, square-toed Puritan. Life came to be burdened with a morbid and unhealthy kind of piety which had no place in its pattern of things for art, music, literature, or religious mysticism. The only emotion left to the believer was an obsessing fear for the survival of his own immortal soul. An earlier fanaticism essentially glamorous was exchanged for a fanaticism without glamour, but fanaticism itself was untouched. The reformers devoted a large part of their time and energy to stoking the fires of hell for the benefit of all who differed from them in the slightest particular.

How then shall we interpret Dr. Francke's statement about the freedom of the early Reformation? In what way had the common man enlarged his perspective, or liberated his mind by casting off the power of the Bishops of Rome? The answer appears to lie in a rearrangement of psychological factors. The individual rebelled against an infallible institution, God's Church in the world; he dared to question the revelations of the saints, the testimonies of the martyrs, and the edicts of the papacy. Against this audacity the Church hurled its anathemas; it excommunicated the heretics, and unloosed all its forces, spiritual and temporal. But the rebel survived, to all appearances as happy or miserable as before. He still enjoyed the blessings of nature; his gardens grew, his cattle fattened, and pestilences were no more grievous than formerly. God did not smite him, nor the devil drag him down to perdition. It dawned upon this emancipated man that he was free. He could follow the dictates of his own heart, think what he chose to think, and live as he pleased to live, in spite of the thunderings of an outraged clergy.

The trouble was that he was free by circumstance and not by the strength of his own character. He sensed a new

personal strength, but was without the wisdom to administer it wisely. He had a large opportunity, but he was still a small man. He was intolerant by habit, and habitual tendencies are stronger than incidental factors. The liberated man made use of the privileges provided by his new-found freedom to create a fresh kind of bondage for himself and his neighbors.

Conditioned by centuries of theological domination, the man of the Reformation interpreted freedom of worship to mean absolute conformity, and freedom of life absolute obedience. He had won the right to follow the dictates of his own conscience, but his conscience seldom dictated anything liberal, tolerant, or gracious. His conscience was ridden with blind fears, and these could not be overcome merely by changing theological allegiances. The dear old Pilgrim Fathers are a case in point. These Puritans came to the new world seeking the freedom to worship God as they chose. Scarcely had they landed on the blessed shores of opportunity before they began banishing their own members for non-conformity. Some of these exiles found asylum from their own kind among the savage, untutored, but hospitable red men.

Thus Dr. Francke is correct in his reference to freedom. Man did escape one overshadowing dogma, only to impose a dozen conflicting creeds upon his conscience. His freedom lay in the fact that he recognized his right and power to afflict himself rather than accept passively the afflictions of an infallible clergy. Faust personifies the uncertain ties of the liberated man who has freed himself from everything except himself, to discover that he has only substituted one despotism for another.

Faust is the scholar, the philosopher of the scientists. He has devoted his life to the quest for knowledge. He has accumulated the learning of the classical pagans, the early patristic Fathers, and the medieval scholastics. He has dabbled in astronomy, magic, and the cabala, and has perused—according to Goethe's version—even the mystic scroll by Nostradamus's proper hand.

But years in the laboratory and the library have availed nothing, and in his heart Faust knows that in spite of all his lore, he stands a fool no wiser than before. The passing of time has grayed his hair and bent his back with the burden of age; he is an old man, frustrated and neurotic, looking back upon a wasted life. He is the embodiment of the ignorance of the learned, with his mind full of opinions and his heart empty of peace and contentment. Although he has lived long he knows nothing of life or living. He has been a self-imprisoned man who chose to pass his days in the dungeon of the sciences "Where heaven's dear light itself doth pass, but dimly through the painted glass."

According to the medieval mind this frustration was not due so much to the experience of futility as to the concept of futility. Man had not explored the material universe to its extremities, but he had exhausted the content of his conception of the world. For the first time he began to doubt, not so much what he knew as what he could know. A small, smug, neatly packaged conceit which he had long interpreted as truth disintegrated before his mental eye. He fell into a sea of uncertainties with a devastating realization of his own insignificance.

Medieval scholars were taught that man was the primary creation, that the earth was God's footstool, and that the stars were lanterns set in the heavens so that humans could find their way home in the dark. Heaven was for men who had been saved, hell for men who had been lost, and the earth for men about whose future state there was still a reasonable uncertainty. God made man and then he rested, but not for long. No sooner was this noblest of the creatures established in the earthly paradise provided for him than matters of cosmic import transpired. All space began to struggle for dominion over the descendants of Adam and Eve. This machinery led ultimately to a cosmic drama centering around the redemption of man. The medieval concept of life was homocentric. Then came the great uncertainty. It began to look to the inquiring, liberated mind as though man might not be as

important as he had led himself to believe. Perhaps the human being with his fortunes and misfortunes was only incidental. This suggestion was sufficient to completely deflate intellectuals of every class. If man were not lord of all he surveyed—the most important creature in all time and space—many precious prejudices would require complete overhauling.

From being an important creature in a comparatively unimportant world the human being was suddenly transformed into a comparatively unimportant creature existing in a large and important world. Under the impact of this realization the significance of all human institutions came to be questioned. Man lost faith in himself and the systems under which he lived. From the sincere belief that he knew everything he shifted to an equally sincere belief that he knew nothing. Worse than this, he began to doubt if he could ever know very much about the immensities of natural phenomena making up his universal environment.

This phase of the Faustian complex is not peculiar to the middle ages; it manifests whenever and wherever man extends his own intellectual horizons. Truth is forever elusive; even as we think we hold it in our grasp it slips away into infinity and is lost. All learning leads to the realization of ignorance. The truly wise man is the one who has discovered how pitifully little he knows or can know. We build ways of life only to outgrow them.

If it be impossible to explore the vast expanse of natural phenomena, how much more difficult is the task of attempting to examine and classify those inconceivable spiritual causes which are entirely beyond the reasonable limitations of the human intellect. We can rationalize and explain and interpret, but we can never be sure. This must lead the right-minded person from an autocracy of certainties and facts to a democracy of convictions and beliefs. Nothing remains infallible. Religions and sects take their proper places as sincere faiths about the substance of things unknown. There are no longer infallible schools or infal-

libe doctrines. Men can no longer walk about proclaiming themselves the peculiar custodians of truth. There is a new kind of equality. All are seekers together, realizing that the quest for knowledge is eternal. Some have a little more, some a little less, but none has enough to accomplish his own immediate perfection.

This was a new kind of freedom, a release from the delusion that truth was a commodity belonging to certain groups or individuals. The quest became the common denominator. It became obvious that everything must grow. The mind must grow in its capacity to know; the heart in its power to understand; the hand in its skill to accomplish. Arts, sciences, religions, philosophies, laws, customs, and institutions of all kinds must grow—nothing is finished. All growth is toward truth, but the dimensions of the ultimate facts are beyond the conception of present humankind.

Unable to cope with the infinite implications of a limitless universe the 16th and 17th-century humanists questioned seriously the advantages of abstract speculation upon the proportions of unknowable ultimates. It appeared profitable to correct errors in man's small world before attempting to storm the gates of heaven. It might be interesting to know, if it could be known, how many angels could dance on the head of a pin, but this information did not offer much consolation or security to the average man burdened with high taxes, corrupt rulers, plagues, droughts, wars, and crime waves. Might it not be better to put one's own house in order before contemplating the departments of the heavenly mansion?

As spiritual certainties faded under the impact of the Copernican system the intellectual began to take a more healthy interest in his own problems. He sensed the possibility of creating a far better state for himself, his loved ones, and the generations which were to follow. Naturally, his progressive instincts regarding his physical estate aroused the righteous indignation of the clergy. The Church had only one explanation for the rising tide of skepticism—the devil was loose in the land.

For some reason, rather easy to discover, the devil has always been in the vanguard of progress. He seems to have inspired every useful reform in history if we are to accept the pronouncements of the conservatives. It was well-known in the 15th century that the demon himself helped Johann Gutenberg print the Great Bible, and whispered to several early astronomers that the sun was in the center of the solar system. He encouraged Giordano Bruno to doubt that the constellations were chandeliers, and has been a strong advocate of democracy from the time of Savonarola to the present day. He was a champion of literacy, and as late as the 19th century was responsible for the discoveries in anesthesia.

In the story of Faust, Mephisto plays the traditional role of urging the human being toward the improvement of his mortal estate even at the expense of his immortal security. Dr. Faust, disillusioned by the reasoning processes which led to ineffectual abstractions, hearkened to the temptation of humanism. There must always come that tragic moment when the human mind grows weary of seeking truth by digging through the refuse heaps of other men's opinions.

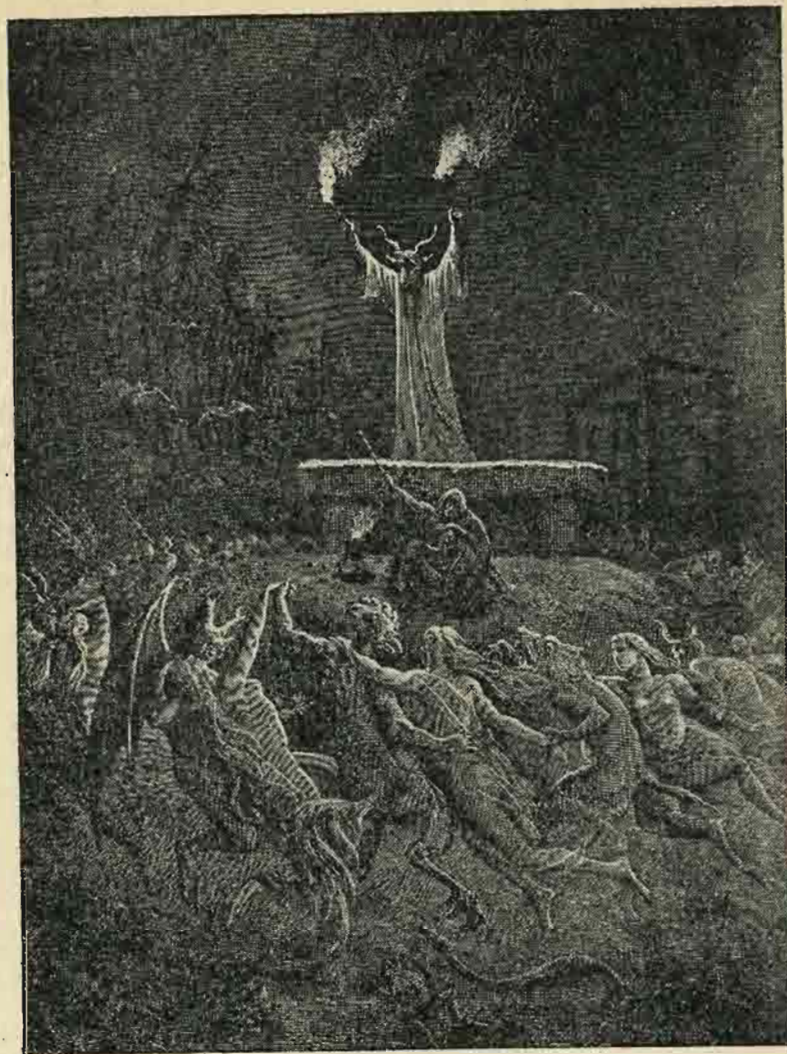
Paracelsus declared that magic was rooted in imagination as the word implies. Faust is frustrated, and it is only natural that frustration should lead to neurosis. The neurotic and the introvert never accept life as it is but escape to unreality by creating imaginary internal worlds. Scholarship, frustrated in its every effort to discover the mystery of life, seeks refuge and escape by conjuring up a vast illusionary project in the sphere of matter.

The dream of empire, the dedication of every available resource to the fashioning of cloud-capped towers and mighty palaces from the unsubstantial substances of the mundane globe, is the escape mechanism of a frustrated humanity. Having wrought the magic, the mind surrenders itself to the phantom forms which it has devised. The unreality is accepted as the real, and the intellectual justifies his own existence by dedicating his life and energy to the service of his own illusions.

The magic of Faust, though seeming to deal with sprites and goblins and diabolic gentry, is really the power of the mind to shape and reshape the fairy world we call physical environment. Man, the magician, discovers that he can exercise a certain dominion over material forces and energies. In this way he compensates, at least to a degree, for the overwhelming sense of futility within his own breast. He can wave a magic wand and bring into being an enchanted land fashioned by his own ingenuity out of the base substances of nature.

If man can lose himself in a magic world and accept fantasy as significant, existence becomes enduring. So he builds cities, and then devises means for their destruction. He invents gunpowder and the printing press. He fashions ships with oars, then with sails, and finally with engines. He captures electricity and adapts it to his purposes. He travels in the air and under the sea, and he mines the deep places of the earth. He conjures up motion pictures and radios and atomic bombs. He brings into being industries, monopolies, and an infinite variety of projects and purposes, until he becomes a phantom god ruling over a phantom world. He then emerges as the master of magic, the proprietor of a puppet show whose jugglery deceives no one but himself. His mortal schemings are a poor substitute for his immortal yearnings, but nothing better seems available. He is weary, disappointed, and discouraged, so he makes his pact with Pan and rushes forward to embrace the illusion.

Mephisto is forever obliging. Remember he is Pan, the personification of the energies which sustain the material world. He is force, power, the vitality which sustains the physical forms of things. Is he not the strength locked in the atom? Is he not the very spirit of electricity, luminous and flickering in the ethers? Is he not the eternal tempter promising dominion but rewarding those who invoke him with confusion and destruction? Man seeks life and finds only death; he aspires to mastery and attains only slavery.



PAN AS THE GOAT OF MENDES PRESIDING OVER THE WITCHES' SABBAT.
The demon stands upon an ancient druidic altar and personifies the pagan rites that were celebrated in secret after the rise of Christendom

The demon restores the youth of the old scholar, transforming the aged Faust into a young and handsome man. What matters it if spritely Pan accomplishes the wonder by spells and enchantments, or by means of vitamins and the Steinach operation? The same energy is at work in either case; the devilry is evident. Faust is rejuvenated physically, but there is no improvement in the sphere of ethics. Mephisto then entices the transformed

Faust with visions of sensory gratifications, wealth, and success. He has a new lease on life, but it is the same old life. Could he live forever he would in the end, like the wandering Jew, long for death. Mephisto—power without wisdom—bestows what appears to be the boon of years, but it is only an extended period of restlessness. The devil has indeed a sly humor.

If one cannot conquer heaven there

may be some satisfaction in becoming master of the earth. By the selfish use of scientific knowledge it is possible to advance one's physical fortunes to a considerable degree. Faust, as the trained mind, directs his resources toward the fulfillment of personal ambition. It follows that the emancipated man, freed of the bonds of his own ethical convictions and eager to exchange his immortal soul for the passing glory of the world, comes upon prosperous times. Learning can now be applied to the least justifiable of ends—the advancement of ourselves at the expense of others. Faust, after his pact with Mephistopheles, personifies human knowledge and skill dedicated to the gratification of human selfishness and ambition.

Mephisto gleefully conspires with Faust's projects, for the archfiend is fully aware that in the end he can claim the magician for himself—body and soul. The inflexible laws governing the physical world over which Pan is master ultimately disintegrate all the enterprises of vainglorious mortals, and the whole surface of the earth is one vast graveyard of men and their works. Thus the world and the devil can be patient; they will inherit their own in good time.

It is entirely reasonable then that Mephistopheles should wear a sly smirk on his features; after all, he did not ask Faust to invoke him. He was quite content in his airy, fiery, sulphurous abode. If men insist upon dabbling in that which is not their business and wish to make pacts with spirits inhabiting space, it is their business; it is up to them to save themselves if they can. Mephisto can afford to be patronizing. He commiserates, sympathizes, and regrets, for in the game of materiality he always holds the winning hand; it is not easy to beat a man or a devil at his own game. Faust's demon is materialism absorbing the materialist; he is Saturn, lord of mundane things, devouring his own children. He is also the archflatterer; he praises and abets all mortal projects, and when men's backs are turned slyly overthrows what they have built.

History is forever repeating itself on different planes of action. The 20th-cen-

tury man is again confronted with the Faustian dilemma. He too must decide whether he will cast his lot with heaven and the universal plan, or make a pact with earth and fall into the slough of the world's despond. Mephisto will always be at hand with hopeful suggestions, impossible advice, ever eager to further impossible schemes. He swaggers about in the best manner of an operatic baritone with feathered cap and jaunty cape; he promises the best and delivers the worst; he is fascinating and dangerous, and his solutions contribute to future ruin. He remedies one difficulty with another, piling up confusion with every appearance of genuine concern. "On, on," he cries. "Be stupid once more and you may win."

To accept materialism for a partner is to have the most dangerous of associates; we should have learned this long ago. History is the account of vast sequences of compromises with integrity, resulting in endless cycles of disaster. With the help of Mephisto we are always going to do better, but each time we compound our misfortunes.

Goethe once said: "People come and ask what idea I have embodied in my Faust? As if I knew, myself, and could express it! *From Heaven, across the World, to Hell*—that might answer, if need were; but it is not an idea, only the course of the action." Actually, the framework of the drama is identical with the story of the prodigal son. Man, falling into the illusion of matter, is saved finally by the immortal spirit within himself.

The third character in the divine fable in Margaret, or Marguerite. Critics of Goethe's poem have pronounced her as being entirely unnecessary to the development of the story. Charles Lamb once asked what Margaret had to do with Faust. Perhaps the answer lies in Goethe's personal life. When he was about sixteen he had a brief, romantic infatuation for a girl of this name, and in developing the character in his poem he reveals considerable personal sentimentality. Certainly Marguerite does not appear in any of the forms of the Faust legend prior to Goethe. She belongs to

his artistry and his philosophy of life; she is the innocent, ignorant, unsophisticated, and trusting victim of Mephisto's wiles and Faust's passions. Goethe conveys the impression that she is comparatively illiterate, and in the poem she uses only the simplest of words, often ungrammatically.

When skill, personified by Faust, makes a pact with the concept of power, symbolized by Mephisto, humanity itself, represented by Marguerite, is the inevitable victim. We must remember that humanistic philosophy emphasized the requirements and viewpoints of the common man. The humanists rose against tyranny of all kind, and were responsible directly or indirectly for the democracies of the 18th century. To them the autocrats and aristocrats were a tribe of soulless tyrants who had bartered their birthright for political and economic advantage. The despotism of privileged classes was a conspiracy against private and public good.

Marguerite, personifying the human collective, is the abused, betrayed, and abandoned proletariat. In the terms of this symbolism the human collective is the proper object of all the ulterior motives in history. When ambitious princes wage war it is the common man who gives his life and property; when despots usurp power it is the common man who is enslaved and impoverished. Proud men take from the weak; cruel men tyrannize the meek, and fortunes are filched from the slender purses of the poor. In our way of life small means is a misdemeanor and poverty is a crime punishable by the loss of most common privileges. The collective is the basic material from which each opportunist hopes to derive the substance of his opportunity. Once the human being has lost the concept of his spiritual responsibilities he seeks to fulfill his own expectancies and purposes at the expense of those about him. He preaches the survival of the fittest and the supremacy of might over right. Like Napoleon he affirms God to be on the side with the heaviest artillery. To date most of the cultural systems which have flourished in the broad empire of Pan have been ad-

dicted to the theory and practice of competitive ethics. Minority groups are sacrificed to the ambitions of majorities. The unorganized many are the victims of the organized few, and the sovereign right of the human being to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness has been much preached but little practiced.

Faust, relieved of all scruples of conscience by his pact with the devil has the power and means to do anything that he wills to do. He has attained this license by addicting himself to the concept of materialism. Taking advantage of his position he begins the process of destroying Marguerite. This is not because he hates her, or that she has injured him; it is solely to satisfy his own desires which, with the unsocial man, is the only criterion of conduct. Mephisto, who is simply power, abets the scheme of the magician whom he has been forced by his pact to obey. Natural phenomena frequently is advanced to prove that the universe is without moral nature. Man copies his palaces after the architecture of Olympus, and his personal conduct after the law of the jungle. Pan is the jungle in man, the origin of his atavistic tendencies. Unless human character is governed by a highly developed ethical conviction it will revert to the savagery which is dormant but not extinct in the human personality.

To those lacking internal integrity freedom is always license for excess. Faust, who has renounced the laws of the divine world reverts to a condition of personal barbarism. He seeks his own happiness without any consideration for the inalienable rights of his fellow creatures.

Goethe was by nature an idealist, and it was not part of his purpose to advance the cause of other's skepticism. His Faust was not an essentially evil man. He did not desire to destroy; rather he was indifferent to the tragic consequences of his own conduct. A materialist is not by constitution destructive, but the convictions from which he operates nearly always lead to disaster. It is impossible for any person to live his own life in his own way without his actions affecting those about him. A man must be social or antisocial. Either he must work with

his group or against it; there is no neutral ground.

Let us state this in a slightly different way. Man—Faust—binds the forces of nature—Mephistopheles—to his own purposes. As a result he gains strength through skill, and domination through intellect. This leads inevitably to the problem of use. Power is neither good nor bad, but the uses of power can be either constructive or destructive.

Ethics clarifies the rules governing the application of power, skill, and knowledge, to their reasonable ends. Without ethics there is no way of protecting man from the consequences of his own ingenuity. An ethical standard is an individual or collective concept of right use. The mind may invent means, but something deeper and nobler than mortal mind must direct and control these means—otherwise so-called progress leads only to self-annihilation.

Ethics cannot be entirely meaningful to an individual convinced that the universe is merely an elaborate mechanism. We must surrender our spiritual convictions before we can lose our ethical perspectives. If we immerse ourselves in materialism, deriving our authority from only the external parts of nature, our ethical standards are weakened. It is not enough for a man to copy the conduct of the animal world, for he possesses dimensions of consciousness above and beyond the beasts of the field. Man is an ethical, moral, self-knowing creature, responsible to himself for his own actions, and responsible to the human collective for the results of his actions.

In Marguerite we can glimpse the faith and trust which the common man holds for his leaders. Because of the natural limitations of his own perspectives the average human being has no adequate means of estimating values and must accept the solemn pronouncements of the learned. This average man has faith in institutions and in the people who manage them. He has faith in his schools and universities, in his lawyers and doctors, his scientists and business executives. He wants to believe that these various groups of his own kind, made of the selfsame flesh and blood and living in

the same world, are true to themselves and true to him. When these intellectuals daily proclaim their undying devotion to his needs and affirm themselves constantly to be dedicated to the improvement of his estate, the common man is not equipped to examine their pretensions.

But all too frequently, like Marguerite, this common man finds that his faith and innocence have been exploited by his leaders for their own advantage. Yet there is a curious integrity in collectives, and just as Marguerite by her simple virtue inspires the redemption of Faust, so the essential good in humanity must finally save the selfish men who have used it so badly.

In the older Faust stories the magician finally is destroyed by his demon, but Goethe redeems his hero by revealing the essential illusion of sin. In the second part of Faust, not included in the opera, the magician sets the devil to work furthering the cause of good. By virtue of the pact Mephisto must obey for the time allotted. Faust, realizing this, uses the archfiend as the means of ascending to a higher and more enlightened form of existence. Mephisto grumbles, but being an honorable demon fulfills the letter of his agreement. Goethe must have had a profound knowledge of metaphysics, for again he builds upon the classical symbolism of the god Pan. Although the material world can never satisfy the human being, it is essential to his evolutionary development that he experience its phenomena. The world itself is the only cure for the worldliness in the human soul. It is the only means by which man can release his own divine potentials.

The god Pan is a useful servant, but a cruel and terrible master. Here again motivation reveals the ethical content. The powers which man discovers in nature and perfects in himself through enlightened skill can release him from his material prison and strengthen his resolution to find his true place among the stars. The moment selfishness ceases, the negations destroy themselves. Civilization emerges from the chaos when the individual dedicates his personal capacities to the unselfish service of his kind. Leadership is not opportunity to exploit

but responsibility to guide and direct. Greatness is not dominion over others but dedication to the preservation of the integrity of others. Here is an important philosophical point. In the old tradition men were saved by their gods, but in the new dispensation each individual experiences godhood through the enlightened administration of power.

As the story of Faust unfolds we perceive more clearly the true proportions of the cosmic drama. The first half of the drama is involutory; that is, it represents the gradual involvement of consciousness in matter and form. The second part is evolutionary, and sets forth the unfolding steps of the spiritual resurrection. It begins in heaven where God (spirit) and the devil (matter) lay their wager under circumstances reminiscent of the Book of Job. Deity knows that humanity (Faust) cannot be held

prisoner forever in the sphere of material illusion. The god in man will ultimately win freedom. In Goethe's delineation of Faust the scholar never repents, nor does he seek forgiveness; he is redeemed by the gradual and natural unfoldment of his own character. He lifts himself beyond the reach of matter by the discovery of a higher purpose within his own consciousness. The keynote of Faust's salvation is chanted by the angels as they soar into the higher atmosphere, bearing away the immortal part of the old magician: "Who'er aspires unweariedly is not beyond redeeming." The love of God descending from above accepts into itself the wanderer. Faust overcomes the pact with Mephistopheles by lifting his mind and purposes above the world and its god. The mortal sphere cannot hold or bind that which is by nature no longer mortal.



GEMS FROM THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM

BY BALTASAR GRACIAN

The man of one business or of one topic is apt to be heavy.

A beauty should break her mirror early.

Even knowledge has to be in fashion, and where it is not it is wise to affect ignorance.

A day without dispute brings sleep without dreams.

The greatest fool is he who thinks he is not one and all others are.

Alexander always kept one ear for the other side.

Before you begin to joke know how far the subject of your joke is able to bear it.

Nothing is easier to deceive than an honest man.

The idol never wishes to see before him the sculptor who shaped him, nor does the benefited wish to see his benefactor always before his eyes.

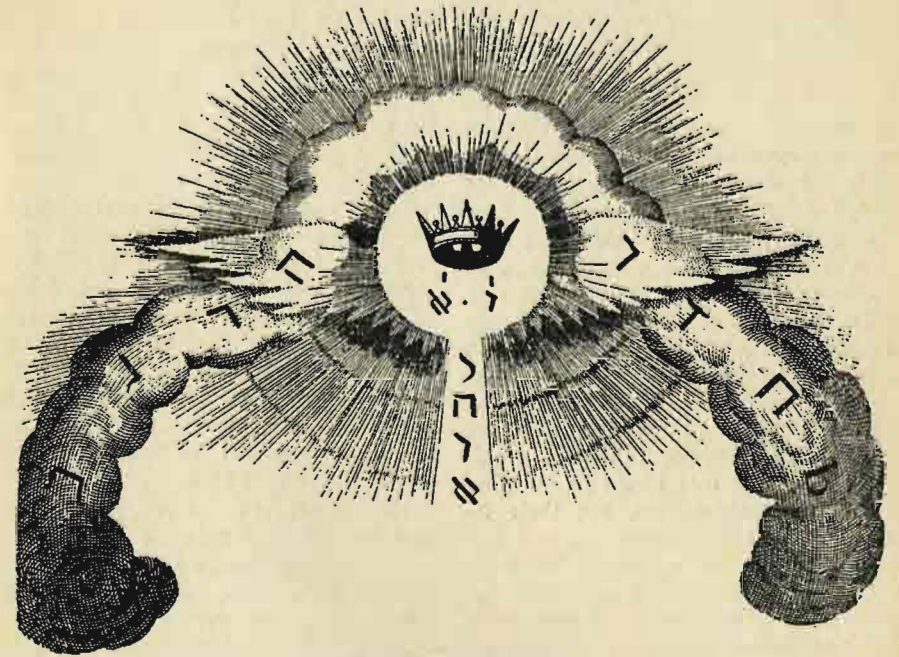
Do not become bad from sheer goodness.

At twenty a man is a peacock, at thirty a lion, at forty a camel, at fifty a serpent, at sixty a dog, at seventy an ape, at eighty nothing at all.

The victor need not explain.

Your refusal need not be point-blank: let the disappointment come by degrees.

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CABALA

The Esoteric Tradition of Israel

THE Cabala is a secret, mystical, magical, philosophical, and religious doctrine developed by ancient and medieval Jewish scholars as a key to the interpretation of the spiritual tradition of that race. The word itself, which in Hebrew is written QBLA, is derived from the root word QBL, which means 'to receive,' or 'he received'. Originally the Cabala appears to have been merely a mystical doctrine held openly by scholars and those inclined to metaphysical speculations. Later, however, an element of secrecy was introduced, and the word Cabala became a synonym for an elaborate unorthodox transcendentalism, held and practiced secretly by certain Jewish occultists. When not capitalized it may mean 'mystic arts in general' or

'any secret artifices or intrigues, as a political cabal, and the intrigues of state'.

By extension the Philosophical Cabala means a body of traditional knowledge perpetuated orally and with profound secrecy and constituting the keys of secret methods of interpreting the Old Testament with its Apocrypha and its commentaries. Presumably the Old Testament is a book or complex of books consisting of fables, myths, legends, allegories, symbols, and emblems, which can be interpreted only by the aid of certain rules and methods handed down by the initiated to their tested and selected disciples. Although the Cabala originally was limited to the Jewish sacred books, it intrigued early and medieval Christian scholars who discovered a Greek Cabala

as a New Testament. This Greek Cabala was an extension of the mathematical speculations of the Pythagoreans and the Platonists. Thereafter, two Cabalistic keys were recognized; the silver key of the Jehovistic mysteries of the old dispensation, and the golden key to the Messianic mysteries of the new dispensation. Cabalists insist that this is the true explanation of the crossed keys which appear on the papal crest of the bishops of Rome.

In modern metaphysics there has been a tendency to confuse the Cabala with numerology. Actually there is little similarity, as the Cabala itself is not divinatory. Both Jewish and Greek scholars assigned numerical equivalents to the letters of the alphabet. The Greeks at an early time began to speculate with the idea that the number values of words were keys to the true or divine meaning of the words themselves, but their interest was entirely philosophical and impersonal. They were seeking for clues to the locked secrets of universal dynamics and in these researches they paralleled closely the concepts of the Jewish metaphysicians. Numerology was a comparatively late by-product of their investigations. Modern numerology is closer to the Greek formulas than to the Jewish Cabala. The proper boundaries of these subjects will be more obvious as we unfold the essentials of the Cabalistic tradition.

The traditional history of the Cabala defines the doctrine as a system of theosophy which originated in the divine mind prior to the creation of the world. It was the science perfected and blessed by God, and was bestowed by Divinity upon certain of his selected creatures as the most priceless of all gifts and the greatest of all treasures. It was the science by which God intended that his own ways and his own nature should be discovered by the human beings he had fashioned.

Originally there was a divine school of the theosophic doctrine in Paradise. Here the vast company of the angels studied together and perfected worship and learning. With the rebellion of the angels the esoteric wisdom descended

into the abyss and was communicated to primitive humanity that man in time might become the agent for the restoration of the Golden Age. While Adam was in the Garden of Eden he was instructed in the secrets of the Cabala by the angel Raziel. After Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden the knowledge passed from generation to generation of patriarchs. Those mentioned as especially proficient in this heavenly wisdom include Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon. The angel Metatron was appointed as the heavenly instructor of Moses, and this great initiate of the Mysteries of Egypt is reported to have devoted forty years to the study, and transmitted it to the seventy elders of Israel. During all this time the Cabala was never entrusted to writing, but was revealed 'lip to ear' in accordance with the instruction of God.

Historically the subject is extremely obscure, but it is believed that the first treatise on the Cabala to be prepared in written form was compiled by Rabbi Akiba circa 120 after Christ. This is called the *Sepher Yetzirah*, or the Book of the Beginnings or Formations. Tradition ascribes the origin of this writing to the patriarch Abraham, and that Akiba merely wrote down the oral tradition.

The same flickering, faint, and uncertain light of history attributes the greatest of all the Cabalistic books, the *Sepher ha Zohar*, or the Book of the Splendors, to the Jewish Illuminist, Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai. He was a disciple of Akiba and was sentenced to death by Lucius Verus, coregent of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antonius, presumably for his philosophical and political heresies. To escape the imperial edict Simeon fled with his son into the wilderness and hid in a cave. They remained in this place of concealment for twelve years, undergoing extraordinary hardships. When their clothes wore out the two men covered their bodies with earth, and most of their food came to them miraculously. Rabbi Simeon spent most of his time in a state of mystical trance, and with the aid of his son wrote down the whole body of the Cabalistic doctrine. He re-

ceived visions of the prophets, especially Elias, and his book, the *Zohar*, is an extraordinary compilation of obscure mystical and esoteric information. It has not been possible to trace the descent of Simeon ben Jochai's manuscript, but nearly twelve hundred years later the book was published by Moses de Leon.

Moses ben Shem Tob de Leon, who flourished in the first half of the 14th century, presents a variety of difficulties to modern scholars. One school insists that Moses de Leon wrote the *Zohar*; therefore the book should be regarded as a forgery. A second group, after carefully studying the text, agrees that the *Zohar* could not have been composed by any one person at any time, but should be regarded as an elaborate compilation from several sources. If so, the book is not a forgery, and Moses de Leon was not a forger. A third group can see no reason for doubting that the manuscript could represent the descent of an oral line of tradition originating in the interpretation set down by Simeon ben Jochai. The confusion would be due to the gradual absorption of commentaries and glosses into the body of the work during those centuries when it was transmitted orally. Probably this confusion will never be entirely cleared away. The book must stand upon its own internal merits. It has long been studied with favor and genuine interest by both Jewish and Christian scholars, and is certainly a monumental commentary on the Pentateuch.

The first great Latin edition of the *Zohar* is included in the *Kabbala Denudata* published at Frankfurt in 1677, by Knorr von Rosenroth. This translation is the basis of most research into the Cabala since the time of its publication. No complete English edition was available until the present century. *The Cabala Unveiled*, by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, first published in 1887, is based upon sections of von Rosenroth's work. The *Zohar* is so elaborate and complicated both in structure and terminology that only those long familiar with the forms of the esoteric traditions can cope with its abstractions. It is the very obscurity of the basic text that has led to such

extravagant and fantastic interpretations of the Cabala as now burden the field of metaphysical literature.

It should also be pointed out that the Cabala has been considerably influenced by the wanderings and migrations of the Jewish people. It went through remarkable modifications among the Jewish scholars of Arabia, and took on entirely different coloring in Germany. The Spanish Cabalists developed a number of innovations, and with the Russians the magical aspects were highly prized. In each case the unfolding of the basic formulas was due to the emergence of venerated masters of the schools, who gathered disciples about them, claiming to possess new interpretations of the older interpretations. In most groups, however, the mystical experience, or the extension of consciousness through visions and visitations, constituted authority.

For practical considerations Cabalism as a whole may be considered under five general headings or sections:

- The natural Cabala.
- The analogical Cabala.
- The contemplative Cabala.
- The astrological Cabala.
- The magical Cabala.

Of course all such divisions are in a sense arbitrary, but they will help to keep the subject matter within certain frameworks, or comparatively natural limitations.

The natural Cabala corresponds with the modern concept of the sciences and aims toward the organization of knowledge in all its departments. It further establishes the dependency of all physical learning upon the great metaphysical principles or laws governing the creation, preservation, and ultimate disintegration of the universe.

The analogical Cabala emphasizes the symbolic relationships which exist between all the energies and forms of nature. It indicates the universal diffusion, fundamental designs or archetypes, and a system of analogies by which each form in nature explains all other forms in nature. Thus the universe is the great man, and man is the little universe.

Each grain of sand has locked within it the secret of the universe, and the universe itself is a grain of sand in space.

The contemplative Cabala is devoted to the rules by which the intellectual faculties of the human being may be extended and expanded so that consciousness may contemplate by inward experience the mysteries of the invisible world. The aim is toward the cultivation of the mystical experience, or cosmic consciousness.

The astrological Cabala is not a system of divination but an effort to show that the form of the solar system bears witness to a universal geometry and chemistry, and is the study of the laws governing the planets, their motions, relations, and substances. It is impossible to recognize in the outward machinery of the world the anatomy and physiology of God.

The magical Cabala was that part sometimes referred to as practical. It contained the formulas for the binding and loosing of spirits, the making of talismans and amulets, the working of charms, and the adapting of universal knowledge to the advantage of the Cabalist. It is this last branch which resulted in the opposition of the Church and the Jewish congregations to the subject of Cabalism in general. It came to be regarded as a highly complicated form of sorcery.

All great systems of metaphysical and philosophical speculation must attempt in some way to define the nature of first cause. Once the cosmic plan which resulted in the emergence of the universal form from its own source—the universal mystery—is organized into a rational concept, the whole plan of generation becomes comprehensible. All the creative processes are repetitions of this basic formula on various planes and levels and in the different degrees of matter. Obviously, the definition of the absolute method must be conceptional rather than actual. But the concept is demonstrated through its concatenation of repetitions in the sphere of observable phenomena.

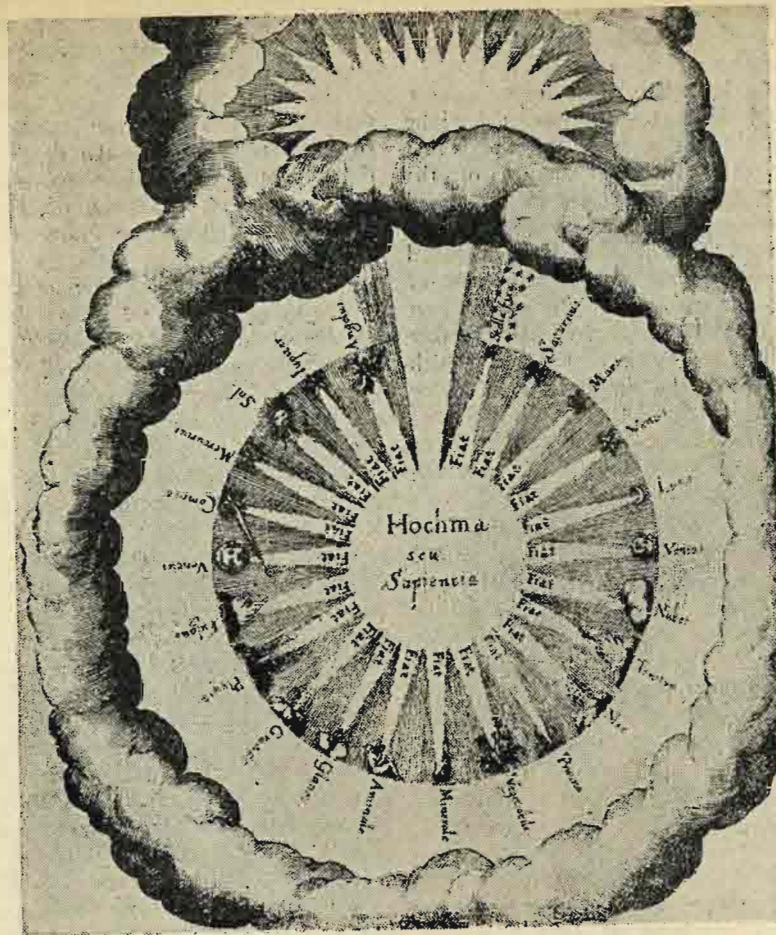
According to the Cabala the eternal root of all existence is an incomprehensible quality represented by the word *Ain*

which means boundless. This boundless quality is the absolute equilibrium of all conditions, energies, principles, and laws. Equilibrium manifests as a state of universal nonaction, or neutrality. By this concept the absolute is essentially passive rather than active, negative rather than positive, but it is the negation which results from completeness rather than a passivity due to absence or privation of inequality. According to the Cabalists the words negative and passive must be understood by their philosophic context. We think of these words as implying some kind of weakness, instability, or insufficiency. In the Jewish cosmogony, however, these terms imply a complete abstractness beyond positive definition or positive conception. They are the ultimate Sabbath, the perfect rest, the end of all striving, the mergeance of all states into a statelessness which is above and beyond the intellectual capacity of man to comprehend or even sense.

The second quality of Transcendent Being is *Ain Soph*, meaning boundless life. Here life is subordinated to existence. This part of the pattern requires careful thinking. The Cabalists contemplated existence as a condition without polarity and incapable of the absence of itself. In its presence and absence were an equilibrium. Life, however, is not completely self-sufficient. It is an emergence, and is therefore susceptible of submergence. Life can be absorbed back into Being, or the boundless, but Being is not susceptible of further submergence for it is itself absolute profundity.

Boundless life is a revelation of the potentials distributed without boundary throughout the substance of the boundless. Life, by extending outwardly in all directions from its own nature, causes the diversity of living things which come forth from it and are sustained by it, and which absorb its power into themselves. All life bears witness to the ever-living, and living in turn bears witness to the ever-existing, but the ever-existing bears witness only of itself.

The third state of existence is *Ain Soph Aur*, boundless light. As life is the witness of Being, so light testifies to the presence of life. Light thus becomes the



CABALISTIC DIAGRAM FROM ROBERT FLUDD SHOWING THE REVELATION OF THE WORLD FROM THE MYSTERY OF THE DIVINE MIND. The heavenly light descends through the sphere of the fixed stars to manifest as wisdom in the world of formations.

symbol of the concealed mystery. Light is the life of the outer world, while life is the light of the inner world; and both restate by revelation the reality of the dark existence which is their sovereign cause.

In Hebrew the word *Ain* is composed of three letters, *Ain Soph* of six letters, and *Ain Soph Aur* of nine letters. By the Cabala these numbers, 3, 6, 9, become the numerical equivalents of the powers of Being. As 9 is the last of the numerals before 10, which is the restatement of unity, the whole mystery of being is enclosed within this number. The

formula is restated by adding the numerals of the three states, that is, 3 plus 6 plus 9, which equal eighteen. This again reduced to 1 plus 8 equals the original 9. 9 is a 6 inverted, and this is also the number of generation deriving its shape from the human sperm. We have seen that 6 represents life and 9 represents light. Light is the inverted reflection of life. If the number of life, 6, be added to the number of light, 9, the result is 15. 15 is 1 plus 5, equaling 6, which restates life, or the principle of spiritual generation. If the 6 and the 9 are combined their result is the sign of

the constellation of Cancer, associated in the Cabalistic astrology with the symbol of generation.

Ain the boundless with its veils, *Ain Soph* and *Ain Soph Aur* form the triune divinity, the 1 that is 3, and the 3 that are 1. The threefold nature of the eternal cause is manifested in the threefold constitutions of all created things. Thus mankind has a body crystallized from light, a soul of the substance of life, and a spirit sharing the equilibrium of the eternal profundity. By further analogy the revelation of the law, which is the will of the deepness, is of three parts: the Torah, which is the light of the law, the Mishna, which is the life of the law, and the Cabala, which is the eternal profundity of law.

We have already pointed out that *Ain* and its two qualifications are regarded as diffusions rather than centers of existence. They are not beings, but rather states of being without dimensions or proportions. Creation, therefore, is not a motion from a center, but a motion to a center. As these principles must be explained symbolically, *Ain* may be represented by a circle, signifying an infinite area. Creation is a motion of forces in the area toward their own hypothetical center, that is, the center of the symbolical circle. This motion causes a condensation toward the center and a corresponding privation at the circumference. The privation caused by the contraction of Being toward his own central ground is the Abyss, the *Ungrund* of Boehme, the outer darkness of the Gnostic mystics. The contracted essences of existence result, symbolically speaking, in the appearance of the dot in the center of the circle. This dot is the primordial creature, the first creation—unmanifested Being become manifested as a being. Thus we have the concept of oneness in its two recognizable aspects: 1 as all or wholeness, and 1 as first or beginning. To use a Rosicrucian axiom: "Eternity gives birth to time." In another way of putting it, the divine manifests as the God.

One of the names for *Ain Soph* is 'the Aged of the Aged'. Here age signifies oldness in time, but an unaging time it-

self—the forever of time, which contains within itself the three aspects of past, present, and future. From the 'Aged of the Aged' comes forth by contraction that which is called 'the Aged'. Thus from eternity emerges the oldest of all things, a quality of oldness nearest to unaging time. As wholeness must precede division, and therefore unity is more aged than any of its parts, so 1 is the first-born of all and a parent of diversity.

The name of this first-born is *Kether*—the *Crown*, and in the Cabala it has several names and symbolic appellations. It is the *Crown* because it is the highest of all things that are created. It is the *Aged* because it is the oldest of all creations. It is the *Primordial Point* because it is the ultimate contraction of an area. It is the *White Head*, for it is the face of the eternal. It is the *Long Face*, called *Macroprosopon*, because it contains within itself the ten orders of generated existence. It is the *Inscrutable Height* because it is suspended directly from the causeless. It is the *Heavenly Man* because it is the archetype of all generations. It is the *Smooth Point* because it is in all parts equal and without distortion of any kind. It is the *Open Eye* because it is the first beholding of externals. It is the *King of Peace* because it binds all striving in unity. It is *Ehejeh*, or 'I am', because it is the first statement, the first witness, and the first word of power. It is in all creatures potential, and encloses all creatures as potency.

Kether is the One God bearing witness to allness and serving as a channel, or medium, and the dissemination of allness through manyness. The ultimate mystery of spirit is allness; the ultimate mystery of matter is manyness, and the manyness in turn is the eternal proof of the allness. The stick and the stone and the star and the man are aspects of the manyness, but they bear witness to the all-potency. Each creature manifests one aspect of power, and all these aspects stand as proof of the completeness of the parent power.

In the Cabala the Pythagorean law that division takes place within unity, but unity itself is never divided, is everywhere upheld. The creation does not ex-

tend downward from the *Crown*, but takes place within it by the setting up of internal patterns of diversity. Creation is therefore a tree with its roots in *Kether*, or unity, and its branches extending downward within the *Crown* according to the descent of numbers from 1 to 10. This tree of the numbers is called the tree of the *Sephiroth*, and the early Cabalists declared the word *Sephira*, plural *Sephiroth*, to mean "to number" or to bestow order according to number.

From this point on the subject increases in complexity into an elaborate mathematical symbolism which cannot be explained adequately in a brief space. We must, therefore, content ourselves with certain general conclusions and interpretations.

The universe is a vast tree with its roots in eternity and its branches in time. This tree bears blossoms and fruit, not only in the physical world but in the spiritual world. So vast are the proportions of this tree of life that every electron and atom in space is as a tiny blossom upon one of its countless branches. In the winter of time the leaves fall and the tree seems to be dead, but in the spring its life is restored. Each of the countless suns in the heavens is one of the fruits of the tree, and each wild flower that dots a broad, green meadow is a little sun upon the earth. The three great branches of the tree are wisdom, strength, and beauty, and these sustain all the diversity of nature. There is one life fulfilling itself in its creation, as there is one energy in a tree manifested through all its leaves and buds. Each of the fruits of the tree can fall back into the dark earth and in its turn become a tree. Thus creation is an endless process made possible by the fatherhood of light and the motherhood of moisture. As flowers of a hundred brilliant hues grow from one dark earth, each selecting appropriate nutrition according to the laws of its kind, so an infinite diversity of worlds, elements, creatures, and powers are nourished from the immeasurable depth of Absolute Being. Who understands the mystery of the lilies of the fields holds the key to the riddle of

life. It is all growing and flowering and bearing fruit.

As the tree of life grows from the *Crown* of eternal mystery, so there is another tree which has its roots in the shadow, for the darkness of matter is the reflection of the darkness of eternity. This second tree that grows from outer space with its roots in privation is nourished by the great pain, by the longing in all things to be restored to their glory. This restoration is obtained through the mystery of fruitfulness, for that which gives life knows the giver of life. This tree which reaches up toward the sovereignty of the eternal sun is the tree of knowledge. It is the tree of the knowing of good and evil, and those who eat of its fruits become as the gods.

The *Cultus Arborum*, a term which covers those who worship the tree as the symbol of the universal mystery, has flourished among all peoples. It is also customary in the classification of various kinds of human knowledge to systematize the growth and order of man's achievements in the form of trees. We speak of genealogical trees, trees of races and of laws, trees of religions and philosophies. This tree-form-concept springs from the same conviction that leads to the Cabalistic speculation. All orders of life and orders of thinking grow like trees from roots and send forth branches.

One of the primary considerations of the Cabala is the interpretation of the early verses of Genesis. The old Jewish Cosmogony was rather sketchy until the rise of the Cabalists. There was very little emphasis upon the mystery of the universal emergence, and the fragments that did exist were derived largely from the metaphysical speculations of the peoples of Chaldea and Babylon. Genesis opens with the statement that in the beginning the order of creators, translated God in the authorized version of the Bible, divided existence into an above and a below, that is, into a superior and an inferior part. The above was the spiritual world of causes; the below was the material world of effects. Then the creators moved upon the face of the inferior world and brought forth the orders of generated things. That which was

the constellation of Cancer, associated in the Cabalistic astrology with the symbol of generation.

Ain the boundless with its veils, *Ain Soph* and *Ain Soph Aur* form the triune divinity, the 1 that is 3, and the 3 that are 1. The threefold nature of the eternal cause is manifested in the threefold constitutions of all created things. Thus mankind has a body crystallized from light, a soul of the substance of life, and a spirit sharing the equilibrium of the eternal profundity. By further analogy the revelation of the law, which is the will of the deepness, is of three parts: the Torah, which is the light of the law, the Mishna, which is the life of the law, and the Cabala, which is the eternal profundity of law.

We have already pointed out that *Ain* and its two qualifications are regarded as diffusions rather than centers of existence. They are not beings, but rather states of being without dimensions or proportions. Creation, therefore, is not a motion from a center, but a motion to a center. As these principles must be explained symbolically, *Ain* may be represented by a circle, signifying an infinite area. Creation is a motion of forces in the area toward their own hypothetical center, that is, the center of the symbolical circle. This motion causes a condensation toward the center and a corresponding privation at the circumference. The privation caused by the contraction of Being toward his own central ground is the Abyss, the *Ungrund* of Boehme, the outer darkness of the Gnostic mystics. The contracted essences of existence result, symbolically speaking, in the appearance of the dot in the center of the circle. This dot is the primordial creature, the first creation—unmanifested Being become manifested as a being. Thus we have the concept of oneness in its two recognizable aspects: 1 as all or wholeness, and 1 as first or beginning. To use a Rosicrucian axiom: "Eternity gives birth to time." In another way of putting it, the divine manifests as the God.

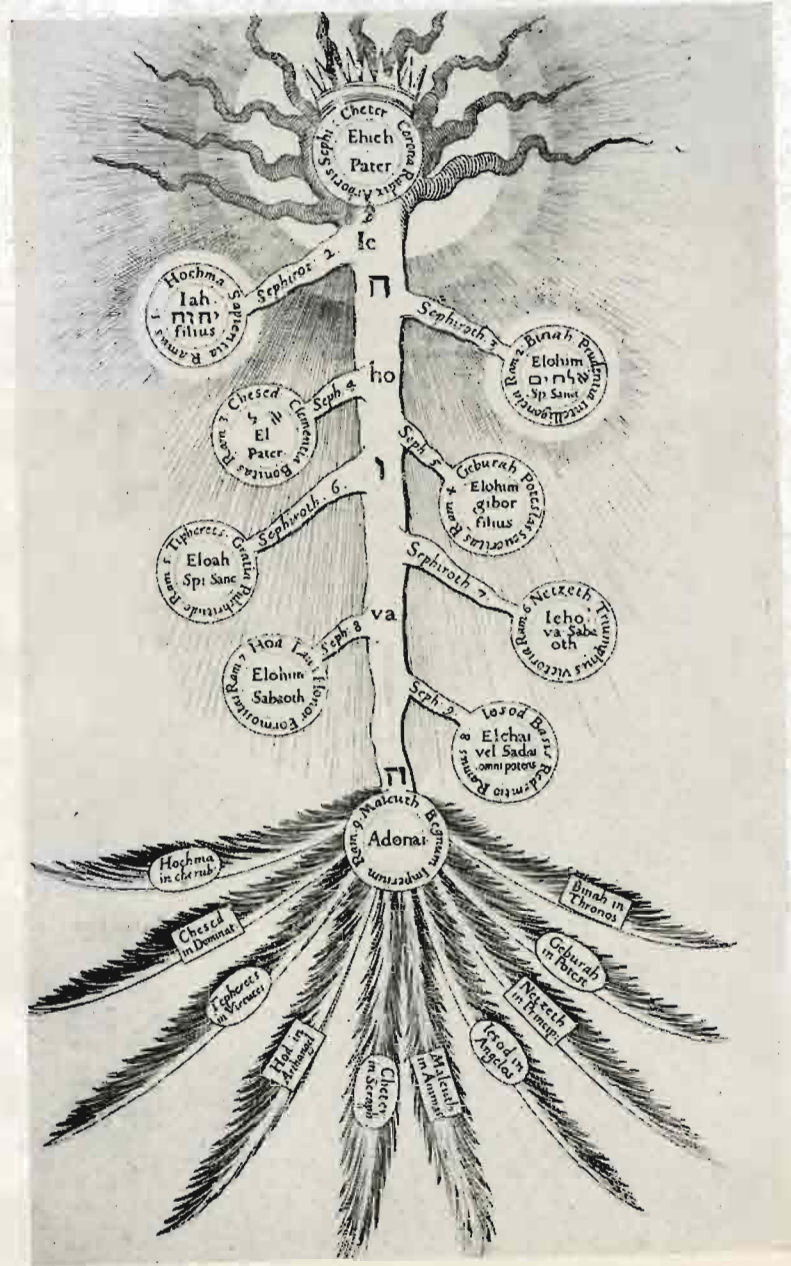
One of the names for *Ain Soph* is 'the Aged of the Aged'. Here age signifies oldness in time, but an unaging time it-

self—the forever of time, which contains within itself the three aspects of past, present, and future. From the 'Aged of the Aged' comes forth by contraction that which is called 'the Aged'. Thus from eternity emerges the oldest of all things, a quality of oldness nearest to unaging time. As wholeness must precede division, and therefore unity is more aged than any of its parts, so 1 is the first-born of all and a parent of diversity.

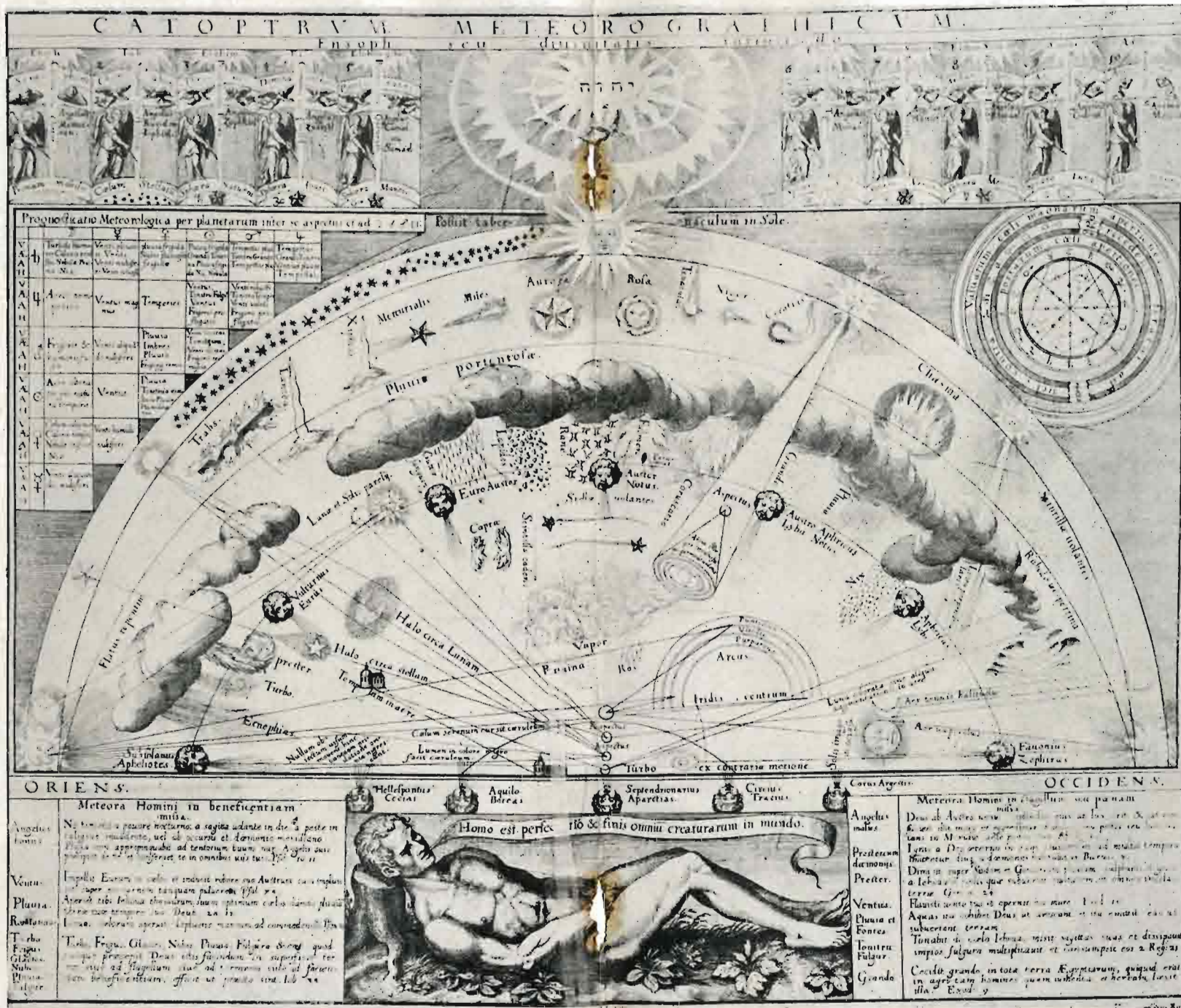
The name of this first-born is *Kether*—the *Crown*, and in the Cabala it has several names and symbolic appellations. It is the *Crown* because it is the highest of all things that are created. It is the *Aged* because it is the oldest of all creations. It is the *Primordial Point* because it is the ultimate contraction of an area. It is the *White Head*, for it is the face of the eternal. It is the *Long Face*, called *Macroprosopon*, because it contains within itself the ten orders of generated existence. It is the *Inscrutable Height* because it is suspended directly from the causeless. It is the *Heavenly Man* because it is the archetype of all generations. It is the *Smooth Point* because it is in all parts equal and without distortion of any kind. It is the *Open Eye* because it is the first beholding of externals. It is the *King of Peace* because it binds all striving in unity. It is *Ehejeh*, or 'I am', because it is the first statement, the first witness, and the first word of power. It is in all creatures potential, and encloses all creatures as potency.

Kether is the One God bearing witness to allness and serving as a channel, or medium, and the dissemination of allness through manyness. The ultimate mystery of spirit is allness; the ultimate mystery of matter is manyness, and the manyness in turn is the eternal proof of the allness. The stick and the stone and the star and the man are aspects of the manyness, but they bear witness to the all-potency. Each creature manifests one aspect of power, and all these aspects stand as proof of the completeness of the parent power.

In the Cabala the Pythagorean law that division takes place within unity, but unity itself is never divided, is everywhere upheld. The creation does not ex-



The Sephirothic Tree from an engraving in the *Opera* of Robert Fludd. The tree of the heavenly mysteries has its roots in the universal light, and bears the symbols of the ten worlds upon its branches. From the lowest of these spheres extend ten palm branches representing the hierarchies of spiritual creatures which govern the physical universe.



SYMBOLIC CABALISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE THREE WORLDS SPIRITUAL, SIDEREAL, AND HUMAN, ACCORDING TO THE MYSTICAL SPECULATIONS OF THE ENGLISH ROSICRUCIAN, DR. ROBERT FLUDD. Reproduced from *Meteorologia Cosmica*, published in Frankfort, 1626.

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above the firmament was the vast ocean of Being. That which was below the firmament was the great sea of beings, and the creative powers moved in the middle distance, spinning the threads like the web of a spider. The creation was suspended between the superior and the inferior darkness, and here creatures with spirits drawn from above and bodies fashioned from below built their habitations.

In Genesis all emphasis is placed upon the anthropological sequences. Cosmogony is merely a framework to explain the appearance of man and the method of his generation. The reader of the first chapters of Genesis will notice that there are two accounts which appear to relate to one circumstance—the formation of Adam. In reality two distinct creations are implied. The first is the creation of *the man*, and the second is the creation of men. We gain much from the writings of Philo Judaeus, 25 B. C., who goes into considerable detail on subjects of Christian and Jewish anthropology. The first man is the *Heavenly Man*, whose parts and members are composed of the ten *Sephiroth*. This is the grand man of the *Zohar*, with his head in heaven and one foot upon the earth and the other upon the sea. This is the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream with head of gold and feet of clay. This is the idea-man, the archetype of Plato, the Protagonos of classical speculation. The explanation of this account is that man in his human form is the most perfect of all generated symbols of the universal plan. Mortal man was fashioned in the image of the *Heavenly Man*, and embodies within his own structure and proportions the entire order of the universal scheme.

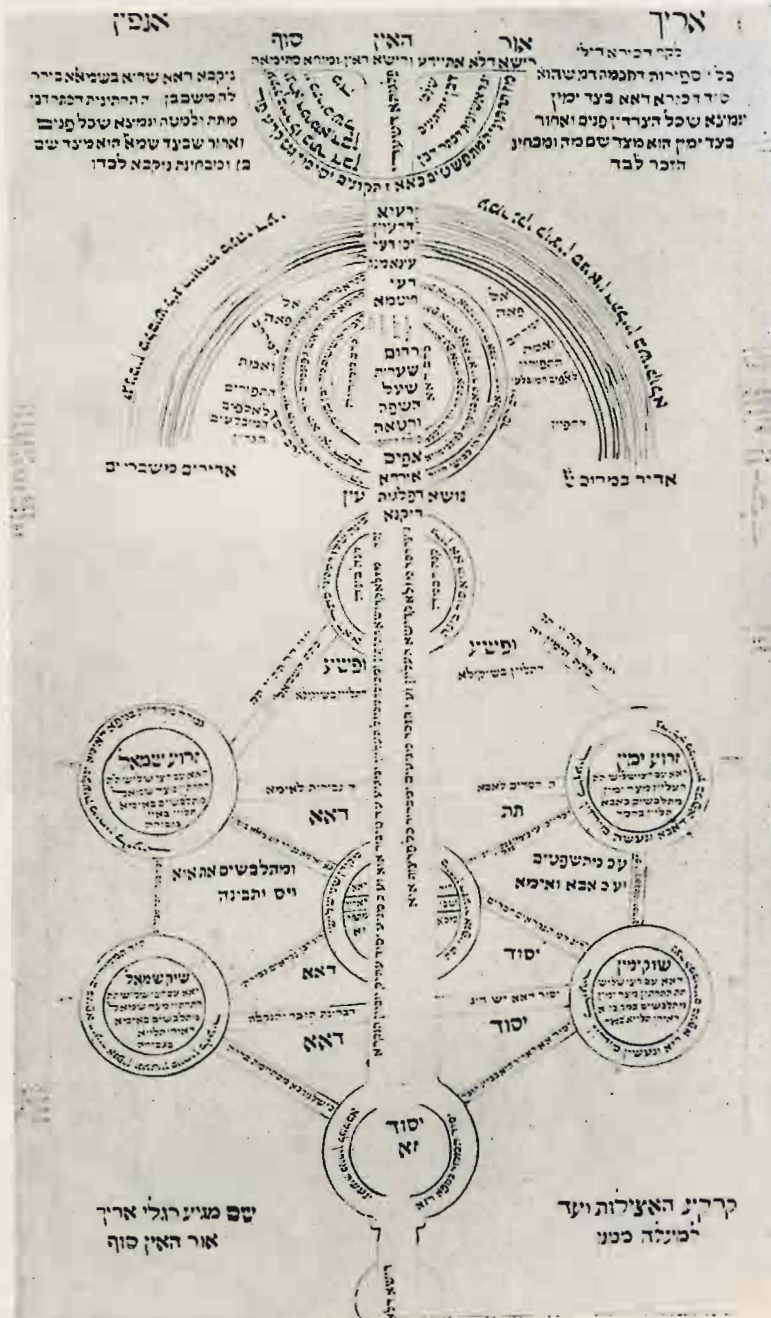
The idea of man which exists in the higher world as a thought in the divine mind is a restatement of unity on one of the planes of nature. This statement of unity divides within itself, but is not divided. Thus the one man contains the mystery of the races and of all the tribes and clans that have populated, or will populate, the earth. This archetypal being is the first unnamed man of Genesis. The second man is the human

species per se, represented by the word Adam from the Hebrew ADM, which means a species, a type or kind, but which never signified an individual.

According to the Zohar the Heavenly ADM emanated from the highest primordial obscurity and created the earthly Adam in his own likeness and image. Originally the earthly Adam dwelt in a luminous atmosphere above the surface of the earth. His body was composed of a kind of radiance like the world in which he lived. He dwelt with the angels but was superior to them. This sphere of light-ether was the Paradise, the heavenly garden, the abode of immortal beauties and a sphere of wisdom and happiness. It was while in this paradisiacal condition that the ADM attended the school of the Cabalistic mysteries, and became inwardly informed in all branches of the spiritual sciences.

The ADM was greater than the angels because in him converged all the laws, principles, and energies of the heavenly archetype. He was the perfect microcosm, whereas in the angelic order the principles of the physical creation had not been perfected or unfolded. In the parable of the prodigal son is concealed the Cabalistic account of the relationship existing between the angelic and human life waves. The virtuous son who remained at home signifies the angels, and the prodigal son who went forth in pride and arrogance to waste his substance in riotous living signifies humanity. After descending to the lowest and most corrupt condition the prodigal son repented of his sin and returned weary with worldliness to his father's house. For him the feast was prepared because he had been lost and had been found again. In spite of his numerous sins and failings, the estate of the prodigal was higher than that of his virtuous brothers, for he had gained experience, wisdom, and understanding, while they had remained secure in their heavenly home.

The paradisiacal light-sphere was of course the Garden of Eden, the abode of human souls before their descent into the dense humidity of the earth's atmosphere. The Jews believed in the pre-existence of human souls in a celestial over-region



Section from a scroll of the Cabala representing the emanation of the universe from the nature of First Cause. Manuscript on parchment probably written in Poland late 17th or early 18th century.

long before the rise of Cabalistic speculation. Philo Judaeus declared the air to be full of souls. Those nearest the earth were drawn into bodies, and having been tied to mortal form lose their spiritual perception and desire to remain in the material form. So complete is their absorption into the material state that they then pray not to die, that is, not to be separated from their bodies. The mystical sect of the Essenes tells that there was a storehouse of souls, and from this reservoir of lives those seeking birth descended from the pure air and were chained in vehicles composed of the elements. It may be worth noting that Plato believed that human souls descended into matter as drops of luminous light falling from the Milky Way, the heavenly seedground of lives. To descend into the illusion of the earth's humidity was to be intoxicated with darkness and to drink of the waters of Lethe, which flowed from the fountain of forgetfulness.

Genesis describes how Adam and Eve, cast out of Paradise, were given coats of skin to clothe them. (see Genesis 3-21) The coats of skin were physical bodies appropriate to their new mode of existence. The Zohar describes these coats as a kind of firmament or sky surrounding and enveloping the microcosm, or the little universe. Perhaps before we proceed we should retrace our steps for a moment and consider another interesting phase of the Cabalistic doctrine.

ADM, before his fall, is described in the mystical doctrine as an androgynous creature. He was male-female and the two personalities were attached to each other, back to back, having one spinal cord and facing both ways. It is written that God created ADM in his own image, male-female created he them. The form of the microcosm in Paradise was according to the four letters making up the secret name of the creative hierarchy. This name translated into English is Jehovah and is composed of the Hebrew letters Jod, He, Vav and He, or IHVH. Even in English, if the letters were arranged vertically, the letter I becomes the head, the first H shoulders and arms, the V the torso of the body, and the

second H the hips and legs. In ADM the four letters describe the perfect human being.

If the Jod, or I, is removed the remaining letters, HVH, become a form of Eve, or woman, who is therefore contained within the perfect body of the man, or as the Cabalists put it, is the headless man, for the head of woman is man, or the letter Jod. These letter Cabalas are very interesting. Take for example the character Shin, a Hebrew letter formed of three Jods bound together by stems, so that each looks like a long nail or tack, the three joined at their points. According to the Cabala these three tacks or spikes are the nails of the crucifixion. If the word name for Jehovah, IHVH, is divided in the middle and the letter Shin or S placed between, the result is IHSVH, or Jehoshua, which we translate Jesus. This phenomenon of letters is susceptible of elaborate philosophical extension explaining the mystery of the Messiah.

The creation of woman represented a division within the body of the ADM. By this separation the creature was prepared for the laws governing the spheres of generation. The Cabalistic doctrine does not lead naturally to the popular belief in soulmates; rather the androgyne, or asexual creature, became male-female, or bisexual. The cleavage was psychological—another division within unity but not a division of unity. Thus the ADM became the father of generations, and all the races which make up the ADM became races of male-female creatures.

There is an interesting psychological phase of this concept. Prior to the creation of Eve, the ADM created within itself a mate from imagination. This imaginary or magical complement, called a demon, was conjured up by the longings of life to be fruitful. This demon was called Lilith, the projection of the erotic instincts of the Adamic creature. Lilith is called the Adamic wife of ADM, from whom was born progeny of monsters. The mystery of Lilith is intimately involved in the circumstances of the 'fall.' After the creation of Eve the demon-angel, Samael, appeared to her in

the form of the serpent. Samael, the angel of poison or death, is Satan of the Bible. It is said in the Talmud that Satan, the angel of death, descends and seduces, ascends and accuses, and then descends again and kills. Cain, the fratricide, was the son of Eve and the angel, Samael.

The fall of ADM was not the fall of the whole of the species, but rather the extension of certain parts of the ADM into the material state. The human soul remains androgynous, and only appears male and female when it descends into the sphere of generation. The Cabalists accepted the doctrine of reincarnation and in their philosophy they describe the periodic descent into the abyss of illusion, in which the unity of the over-part of the consciousness is obscured.

The material creation composed of its four Cabalistic elements—earth, fire, water and air—is the Mercavah, the chariot-throne of the creator described in the vision of Ezekiel. The four-faced cherubim guards the throne. The cherubim is composed of four creatures and has the faces of a man, an eagle, a lion, and a bull. The faces are the four fixed signs of the zodiac, Aquarius, Scorpio, Leo, and Taurus. The cherubim is the governor of the world-form, and the Cabala recognizes four human types whose features are reminiscent of these creatures. These are also the holy animals of Pythagoras in whose forms men are born, according to the doctrine of metempsychosis.

After the fall or descent into the material state two orders of human beings appeared in the world. Cain, the son of the angel of fire and death, became the father of the race which built cities and went forth to conquer the world. In the sons of Cain ambition ruled all other considerations, for in them were the seeds of rebellion against the laws of life. Abel, who was the first-born of Adam and Eve, was murdered by Cain. He represents the agrarian way of life. His place was taken by Seth, and from the children of Seth came the shepherds and those who lived in simple ways and rejoiced in the goodness of God, and were humble in their hearts. In the invisible atmosphere, to be found only in sleep and

trances, were the demon children of Lilith, and their abode was the sphere of imagination, a false Paradise, which lured those who were discontented with their physical estate but had not the strength of character to build better lives for themselves.

Cain became the symbol of the mind which rebels against all limitation and seeks to master life by thought and reason. Seth became the symbol of the heart which would attain reunion with the spirit by mystical atonement. Today Cain and Seth are materialism and idealism, neither of which understands the other. Cain became statecraft, and Seth churchcraft. These are fire and water, the elements which strive against each other but must in the end be reconciled.

After the rebellion of the angels, as described in the *Vision of Enoch*, the angels descended upon a mountain of the earth and became the instructors of humanity. It should be understood that the primitive races which evolved upon the earth consisted of form, dwelling in the shadows without knowledge of their heavenly origin or of their heavenly estates. Thus they were the nurselings of the angels who guarded them and taught them. When the time was ripe, we read in Genesis, the sons of God beheld the daughters of men, and seeing that they were fair descended unto them. The sons of God were of course the souls, or spiritual entities, still dwelling in Paradise. The daughters of men were the bodies or forms fashioned in the world. When these bodies were ready, that is, sufficiently evolved to sustain consciousness, they were described as fair. Then the spirits or angels descended unto (into) them and quickened them and dwelt within them.

We gain some understanding of this concept from the *Chaldean Fragments* of Berosus. In this the ancient historian describes the monsters that crawled out of the primordial slime, creatures with many heads and arms, with wings and fangs, giants that were sightless, and horrible forms that hid in darkness. These monsters vanished, for they were the first experiments in form building in the laboratory of the earth. Some of these

forms were better than the rest and when they were ready they were ensouled by principle and mind. A consciousness descended into them and through countless ages molded and refined these bodies until the present humanity was fashioned. The forms that could not be used, the mindless, became the vehicles of the lower kingdoms, and the monsters vanished.

Long before the dawn of modern science the Cabalists were speculating upon the basic questions of anthropology. Humanity descended upon the earth from the humid atmosphere surrounding the globe. Here in bodies not yet dense life experimented with the geometry of form. Here races lived and died. Here a fantasy of generation occurred, but these children of the mists left no bones in the rocks, no clay vessels, no graves, and no writings upon the walls of caverns. They were called the softboned, with faces like the moon. They were shadows, and as shadows they lived, and as shadows they died. It was only after aeons of time that these shadows thickened, the bones hardened, the flesh became dense and the bodies were drawn by their increasing weight toward the surface of the earth. Even then it was a long time before these progenitors could leave physical remains as we know them. They did not have the forms of men or of beasts, but gradually they exuded bodies from themselves, as the snail exudes its shell. They generated by fission-like cells, and later they budded like plants and generated from the surface of their bodies and were called sweat-born. These were the dark forgotten days that linger only in the memory of nature. The secret of these times can be recovered only by turning the magic key seven times in the lock of memory.

We must now direct our attention to a consideration of the origin and rise of Cabalistic philosophy. It is important that there be no confusion about such facts as have been assembled within the reference frame of historical scholarship. The tendency in all metaphysical speculation is to lose sight of historical realities and to obscure the known by the glamor of the unknown. The case at

point is illustrative of nearly every school of mystical thinking. Perhaps we can state our problem through a series of analogies. For example, did Christianity exist before the birth of Christ? Did Platonism exist before the birth of Plato? Did the psychology of Immanuel Kant exist before the birth of Immanuel Kant? All these systems assume that they are merely stating eternal facts, and in each case the doctrine is regarded as a discovery, not an invention. Until the time of Plato philosophy had not been aware of its own treasures; therefore Platonism may be regarded as a clarification of previous misconceptions, a true definition of that which had been previously defined and corrected. In the same way Christianity is not a religion but *the* religion. It is what everyone of all time should have believed. It was a revelation of an ever-existing fact, and the same may be said for Kant, Buddha, and Mohammed. By such reasoning a school of thought not only lays claim to present virtue but assumes the right of imposing its designs upon all previous concepts.

If the Cabala be a true and perfect revelation of the universal procedure, it then becomes a name for an eternal fact. The name may be invented at any time, but it signifies something beyond time. There is something subtle and insidious in this kind of thinking, for it attempts to build a vast traditional background to sustain itself. It does this by affirming that all men or systems existing earlier were but stating the present conviction in other words. We have had an epidemic of this in Rosicrucianism. We know that this society was founded about A. D. 1600, but enthusiastic advocates insist that practically every creative intellect from the time of the Pharaohs of Egypt, reigning 4000 B. C., were really Rosicrucian initiates. The Rosicrucians taught the immortality of the human soul. Obviously Zoroaster was a Rosicrucian, in fact, an initiate of the highest order. This type of reasoning is hard to refute because there are no reasonable factors involved. By such perversions of logic a vast antiquity can be bestowed upon some modern concept, thus increasing the

prestige of something or someone lacking actual substance or importance.

A system of philosophy, like the Cabala, is not really important because it is old; it is important only if it makes a profound and significant contribution in its own field. There is very little proof that Cabalism as a formal system of metaphysical speculation existed as a school of thought prior to about the 12th century of the Christian era. We must therefore divide clearly between the school as a formal instrument and the lore and tradition which supplied the substance for its speculation. It is incorrect technically to say, for instance, that Solomon was a Cabalist, but it is perfectly fair and reasonable to point out that certain words and opinions attributed to Solomon are susceptible of interpretation according to Cabalistic formulas. The word Cabalism needs to be revised in terms of semantics. In popular usage it becomes a synonym for the whole body of mystical tradition composed of many schools of thought and a number of brilliant individual thinkers. If we regard Cabalism as synonymous with the entire secret doctrine of the world we dilute the word until it becomes meaningless for lack of dimensions and proportions. It is far wiser to recognize the Cabala as a particular school of mystical speculation among the Jewish scholars, and in this way establish certain reasonable boundaries. It is very easy for enthusiasts to gradually transform a concept into *the* concept. Thus *my* doctrine becomes *the* doctrine, and perspective is hopelessly lost.

All schools of philosophy derive a portion of their material from earlier traditional sources. In Cabalism we find evidences of the Pythagorean and Platonic systems, a generous borrowing from the Gnosticism of Syria and North Africa, and considerable material traceable to the Neoplatonic mysticism of Alexandria, Rome, and Athens. In fact, we may be inclined to suspect that the Cabalists were using Pythagorean theories to interpret their own religion. It is even possible that Cabalism was affected to some degree by the philosophies and religions of middle Asia. In the course of

time, however, the facts were revealed. The Cabalists were no longer Pythagoreans, and Pythagoras became a Cabalist.

The medieval effort to impose Cabalism upon Christianity is a good case in point. The whole idea was distasteful to both the Jew and the Christian, but a few enthusiastic esotericists made the attempt. Any effort to make Christians Cabalists would result in the Cabala becoming Christian. The Christian concept would then absorb the Cabalists' tradition as the Cabalists, in turn, had absorbed earlier traditions. If the Cabala declared Solomon a Cabalist, and then the Jewish school become absorbed in Christian speculation, it must end with Solomon as a Christian. All this is interesting, but confusing. It adds little to our knowledge on the subject but much to our understanding of our own psychological tendencies. We can proceed with impunity because the dead past cannot rise to refute our interpretations of its motives or its ideas.

Every religion has developed metaphysical overtones and magical undertones. The long history of Judaism reveals numerous mystical sects springing up among idealistic minorities not content to live by the letter of the law. There is always a conflict between principle and practice. Man-made laws and concepts cannot be equally just to all men, and the human soul yearns for a higher justice. Also all social orders include groups of scholarly men and women who desire to rationalize or organize and integrate beliefs in terms of logic and reason. These numerous groups may have nothing in common but their basic text. Each school of interpretation differs from the others, resulting in an endless conflict of cults, yet this conflict has a common denominator—dissatisfaction with the literal forms of acceptability. But dissatisfaction is not a synonym for Cabalism, although the Cabalists were among the dissatisfied. In fact the dissatisfaction extended further, and even the schools of the Cabalists were divided over points of belief.

We have mentioned undertones, for we must recognize that nearly all systems of

human idealism have been subjected to intentional or unintentional corruption. When noble ideals fall into the keeping of untutored masses, misinterpretation and actual perversion is inevitable. Nearly always esoteric doctrines are corrupted in the direction of sorcery. The individual gaining possession of a deeper or fuller understanding of the operations in nature may begin to think how he can adapt his new knowledge to his own profit, at the expense of the unenlightened majority. Knowledge is power, power is opportunity, and it requires a high degree of personal integrity to administer opportunity unselfishly.

Most of the world's religions have dealt with abstractions in a world of concrete problems. It is nice to believe that God's in his heaven—all's right with the world, but it is a little difficult to find in this affirmation an ever-present strength with which to combat the ravages of the seven-year locusts, the boll weevil, and the potato bug. If the clergy is worth supporting it must justify its claim of access to the divine ear in times of practical emergency. Most ancients, and most moderns for that matter, were more interested in their crops than in their immortal souls. We all want to be successful, and have an irresistible desire to make friends and influence people, and we can see no good reason why, if our religion is all-powerful, it should not make us all-successful. The result is magic. We bless crops, invoke protection for our livestock, hang charms on barn doors, perform spells, and use every means that our wits can invent to squeeze some utilitarianism out of our theology. We do not want to ascend to the divine bounty; we want the divine bounty to descend to us.

All religions, therefore, consist of three parts: a literal doctrine administered by a clergyman, a metaphysical or mystical overtone in the keeping of scholars, seers, and transcendentalists, and a materialistic undertone dedicated to peace, power, and plenty, with its hierarchy of sorcerers, magicians, necromancers, mental jugglers, and theologized business men.

We have already mentioned the controversy over the authorship of the Zohar.

Moses de Leon, the reputed author, died A. D. 1305. He claimed to possess an ancient manuscript of the Zohar in the autograph of Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai. Two distinguished scholars, desiring to test the authenticity of the report, and knowing the widow of Moses de Leon to be penniless, decided to offer a large sum of money as an inducement to secure the ancient writings. Both the widow and daughter declared that such a manuscript did not exist and that Moses de Leon had composed the Zohar himself. This seemed to settle a difficult issue, and these findings for the most part remain unchallenged. But the book itself is inconsistent with this account. If Moses de Leon wrote the work, he proclaims through it a degree of scholarship both physical and metaphysical that would justify his inclusion in the small band of the world's immortal thinkers. We are forced to the conclusion that Moses de Leon did not create the book, but derived it from some traditional source from within his own people. There are traces of Cabalism prior to the publication of the Zohar, but very little of the present form of the doctrine seems to be earlier than the 10th century of the Christian era. Older Jewish scholars did not seem to be aware of its existence, although their writings deal with parallel matters. We may therefore conclude that the formal school of Cabalists rose and flourished, and for the most part declined, between the 10th and 16th centuries of our era. After the 16th century writers upon the subject seemed to regard it as an old and curious tradition. It intrigued abstract thinkers of all branches and creeds, and mingled its stream with the Hermetic tradition, alchemy, and Rosicrucian mysticism.

Like all basic systems of religious philosophy, the Cabala had to explain the primary circumstance of creation. As God was an eternal being, without limitation and without fault, this sovereign power could not be the creator of a limited and imperfect world, nor could it populate this world with creatures deficient in wisdom, strength, or beauty, and capable of spiritual, mental, and physical corruption. Furthermore, Deity could not be-

come the victim of Satan, for this prince of darkness was himself a fragment of the divine nature, and God cannot be evil in any of his parts. Here the Cabalists fell back on the Gnostic doctrine of emanations. Deity reflected from its own nature ten radiant qualities called the *Sephiroth*, and this emanation considered as a pattern or archetype gave rise to the creation of the material universe. There is a bit of Platonism here also. Inferiority is a matter of remoteness. Evil is not a principle in itself, but the privation of a principle. Imagining the divine glory to be a flame emitting life, light, and heat, these qualities decrease in effect as one retires from the flame. By holding a book close to a candle one may read its words, but if the book is twenty feet from the candle the light is not sufficient. Thus as we depart from proximity with the source of light, we are enveloped by an increasing darkness which is the absence of that light. The Cabala is therefore a science of qualitative intervals or a series of emanations, retiring sequentially from the center of light toward a circumference of darkness. Each center of emanations is less luminous than that from which it emanated, and gives birth out of itself to other emanations still less luminous, until all light ceases.

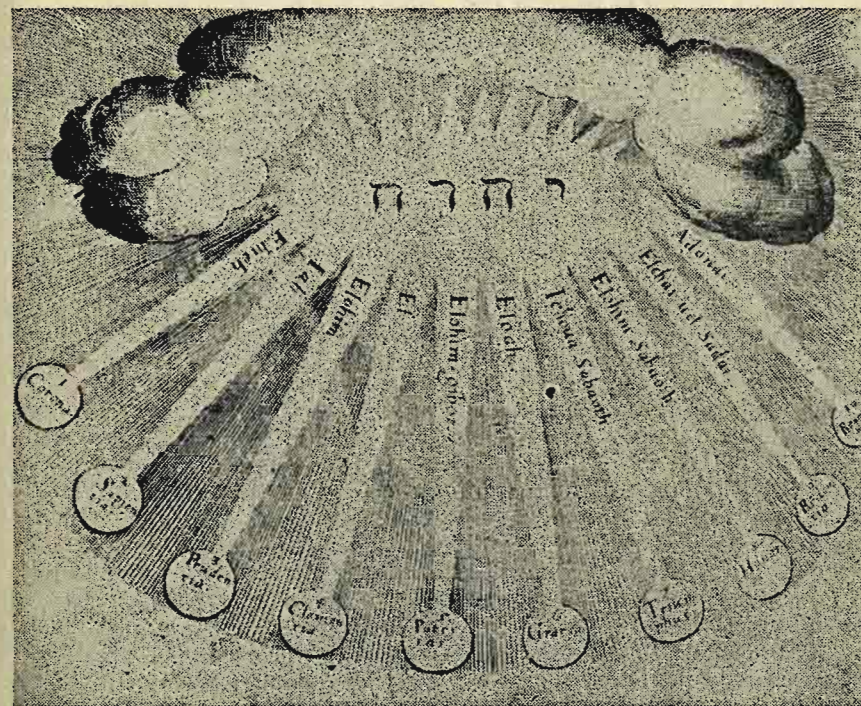
To make their concept still more rational, the Cabalists taught that each order of emanations was not an actual descent of principles but a reflection of principles in lower degrees of matter. As the reflecting surfaces in each case absorb a certain part of the light, these reflections or shadows are less and less brilliant. There is nothing essentially cabalistic in this doctrine, or in fact in most of the basic concepts of the school; rather, it was the arrangement or pattern formed by combining a number of concepts in a new arrangement that resulted in the Cabalistic pattern.

The Cabalist also made free use of the Hermetic concept of analogy. All medieval learning emphasized the analogical keys to the universal procedure. The Hermetic axiom: "That which is above is like unto that which is below, and that which is below is like that which is above" served Cabalistic speculation in

an admirable way. The universe was a descent of similars, identical in qualitative pattern but differing in quantitative magnitude and multitude. Here is a fragment of Pythagoreanism. Apparently the Cabalists selected wisely, for we know that today the smallest hypothesized unit of matter, the atom, bears many resemblances to a minute solar system. Creation is one seal or signature, as Boehme called it, pressed upon the face of matter. The mysterious ten-branched tree of the *Sephiroth* reappears diagrammatically in all the departments of form and in the constitution of all living creatures.

The ten *Sephiroth* were begotten of the infinite, and are in themselves both infinite and finite. These in turn create, that is, image forth all forms in their own likeness. From the spiritual *Sephiroth* all spirits originate, from the intellectual *Sephiroth* all intellects, from the formal *Sephiroth* all forms, and from the physical *Sephiroth* all bodies. Forms and bodies are not the same. A form is a pattern or an organization. Forms may exist in the mind as thought-forms. They are like drawings on paper from which a house is built. The architectural plans are formal, but the house itself is material.

In the Cabala it is taught that souls are pre-existent, dwelling first in a spiritual abode, self-conscious and knowing good and evil. This is their state of Paradise from which each falls, first into form and then into body. The Cabalistic concept follows rather closely the Greek myth of Narcissus. This beautiful youth, seeing his own reflection in a pool, became so enamored of it that he cast himself into the water to embrace the reflection and so perished. Souls, perceiving their own shadows or emanations in the world of form, and failing to realize that the original of the image is within themselves, hasten joyously toward union with the reflection. Having once become enmeshed in the illusion of form the souls could not extricate themselves and were drawn downward toward bodies, thus symbolically dying or losing their own sense of identity.



THE EMERGENCE OF THE TEN NAMES OF GOD FROM THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF JEHOVAH. Each of these names in turn manifests as a spiritual power, and the ten powers are the secret foundations of the universe and man. From the *Opera* of Robert Fludd.

Because each soul contained within itself the model of perfection which it derived from the spiritual *Sephiroth*, its ultimate state must be that of reidentification with the divine nature. It regained this reidentification through the conscious recognition of its own divinity by studying the sacred sciences, virtuous works, and obedience to the laws of nature. If it were unable to extricate itself from the illusion in any one life it would be born again, that is reincarnate, and be given further opportunities. If after many rebirths it were still incapable of self-release, it might be attached for a time to a stronger soul for guidance, instruction, and help. Christian Cabalists hit upon this idea to explain their concept of the Messiah. The Messiah was the strong soul that saved the weak and brought them back with itself to the heavenly condition.

When all souls have been perfected and released from the illusion of matter the paradisiacal state will be restored, Satan will again become the Prince of Light, hell and the infernal world will cease, and perfected souls will be reunited to the divine nature and will rule with God. Some Cabalists went so far as to affirm that in this time these perfected souls will command Deity, and Deity will obey. Here we have a doctrine of adepts, the initiated masters, who gained benevolent supremacy over life and nature.

It was inevitable that an elaborate and orderly concept of the emergence of life should intrigue medieval scholars of all faiths. It was a period of empirical thinking. Humanism had made few inroads, and learning was still a matter of formulas. All mysteries were explained on paper. There was a further interest

in that Cabalism claimed to interpret the Pentateuch, and the Old Testament was as sacred to the Gentiles as to the Jews. Speculation based upon the Bible and upon tradition were protected by a broad implication of orthodoxy. The great Jesuit scholar, Athanasius Kircher, devoted considerable part of his *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (Rome 1652) to a survey and examination of Cabalistical doctrines. The Christian mystical theosophist, Henrici Khunrath, transformed Cabalism into a mystic illuminism and illustrated his principle text with a number of figures, strongly Cabalistic. Robert Fludd, the so-called Rosicrucian mystic, included a variety of curious Cabalistic speculations and diagrams in his *Collectio Operum* and his *Philosophia Moysaica*. The field broadened to include such mystic visionaries as Jakob Boehme, and such scientific pioneers as Paracelsus. Figures and symbols from the rare early editions of these writers are included in the present article. The literature of the subject became extensive and the heavy burden of perpetuating the Cabala was shouldered largely by Christian writers. Scholars were seeking some semblance of order in nature. They were weary with the eternal fragmentation of knowledge. To them the Cabala was a vital contribution to the concept of an integrated world. Here was a chance to apply mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology, and chemistry to a problem large enough to challenge the mind and at the same time justify an over-all theological perspective.

Cabalism was to the 15th century what Einstein's theory of relativity is to the 20th century, a magnificent formula susceptible of an infinite variety of applications. Naturally, these old scholastics were able to find the Cabala in every subject which they contemplated. They were reasoning from a conclusion and not toward one, and they had been magnificently trained in this procedure by the whole program of scholasticism. The human mind is forever attempting to escape matter. In spite of the ballast present in every personality, the soul longs to soar upward toward the dizzy heights of abstract speculation. In some cases it is an escape mechanism. If we

cannot put our own lives in order, let us save the world. If we cannot understand the world in which we live, let us direct our attention to the vast reaches of space. By these cosmic labors we can forget for a moment our inability to cope with the imminent. There was no escape from this tendency in the middle ages, and there is little inclination to rescue ourselves from it even today. When plagued with little things let us do big things. If we cannot get along in the world we live in, we can always reorganize space to our own convenience. We do not intend to infer that the Cabalists were all escapists. Many of them were truly noble in their dream of the world order. But escapism did creep in, especially in those later centuries when the world was waking up to the challenge of natural phenomena.

Among Christian scholars who took a deep interest in Cabalistic speculation should be mentioned Raymond Lully, alchemist and Hermetic philosopher of the early 14th century; Johann Reuchlin, distinguished scholar and orientalist and father of the German Reformation, born 1445; Pico della Mirandola, philosopher and classical scholar, born 1463; Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, physician, divine, and transcendentalist, born 1486; Robert Fludd, English mystical physician and philosopher, born 1574, and Dr. Henry More, English scholar and Platonist, born 1614. All these men were distinguished for judgment, integrity, and scholarship. Through their efforts the Cabala gained wide dissemination and drew the attention of leading thinkers.

The works of Reuchlin are worthy of special mention. He learned Hebrew from Rabbi Jacob ben Jehiel Loanz, a most learned man and court physician to Frederick III. Having mastered the language, he immediately immersed himself in the metaphysics of the Jewish mystics, and in 1494 published his rare treatise *De Verbo Mirifico*. Then in 1516, after more than twenty years of additional research, he published a larger and more exhaustive treatise *De Arte Cabalistica*. Both of these works are in the form of dialogues between scholars of various sects. Reuchlin revealed a careful study

of Plato, Pythagoras, and Zoroaster, and considerable acquaintance with the then little understood teachings of the prophet Mohammed.

We have already mentioned the monumental work of the Christian scholar Knorr, Baron von Rosenroth. To him the intellectuals of the 18th century were indebted for the first comprehensible text of the Cabala. Although the authors previously mentioned had written extensive treatises, none of them had translated or republished any portions of the Zohar, or the important commentaries thereon. Baron von Rosenroth went so far as to include all the verses of the New Testament which appear to contain Cabalistic implications. His work is not well-organized, but is significant not only for the text but for the extraordinary plates and diagrams unfolding the doctrinal aspects of the subjects more completely than any other works previous or subsequent. We have in the library of our Society a manuscript roll of the Cabala on vellum, which follows closely the figures of Rosenroth. This roll from the writing probably originated in Poland about the year 1700.

The Cabala was one of the several esoteric branches of learning that languished in genteel obscurity during the pioneering centuries of modern science. Those still cultivated privately by isolated scholars have vanished from the popular mind along with alchemy, transcendental magic, astrology, and the Hermetic arts. The sweeping political changes that agitated Europe during the 18th and early 19th centuries obsessed the popular mind so completely that there was little mental leisure for the contemplation of abstractions. About 1850 there was a general revival of interest in subjects magical and mystical. A powerful force in this revival was the rise of the French school of transcendentalists under the leadership of the Catholic occultist Alphonse Louis Constant, who wrote under the pseudonym Eliphas Levi. His numerous books and manuscripts on the rituals and doctrines of transcendental magic are derived principally from the Cabala. He drew about himself a number of brilliant and eccentric minds whose interests were broad if

not always profound. The influence of this school was considerably broadened through the efforts of the English mystic, poet, and translator, Arthur Edward Waite. This worthy gentleman wrote voluminously and with intense opinionism on Cabalism, Rosicrucianism, and Alchemy. He had the rather disconcerting habit of introducing his translations with lengthy apologies for the faults, failings, limitations, and shortcomings of the authors whose works he was translating. Today most metaphysical and theosophical groups include speculations upon the Cabala, and several have attempted to identify this art with the tarot cards and the divinatory use of numbers and letters.

It appears to me that the contemplative Cabala requires additional consideration. The tendency is to intellectualize subjects of this kind, and to lose sight of the mystical implications. The Cabala, like alchemy, is a science of extending consciousness internally toward the apperception of the divine order of the world. It should be approached much as one might consider the East Indian schools of yoga. Its elaborate symbols are mandalas or meditation designs. The true Cabalist has accomplished a spiritual union within his own nature. Study of this kind must lead toward inward illumination. All religious and philosophical systems include mystical disciplines devised to bring about what may be called the mystical experience of truth, that is, a direct personal participation in the divine consciousness. Naturally such doctrines languish during periods of intense materialism, but they are the natural end sought by idealistic scholars who recognize the impossibility of understanding metaphysical mysteries by intellectual energy alone.

We must also mention the magical aspect of Cabalism. Here again we are in the midst of an elaborate symbolism. The adept or one proficient in the practical Cabala gains control of the laws governing physical phenomena. The belief that internal illumination gives power to direct natural forces is universal. The Indian yogi is able to perform miracles; so is the Taoist priest of China, the Siberian shaman, and the American In-

dian medicine man. All of these groups of metaphysicians claim that they can project consciousness into the invisible world, control spirits and demons, and bind elemental spirits to their purposes. It is not unreasonable, therefore, that Cabalistic initiates should claim similar abilities.

The European mind of the medieval period was dominated by a Faustian complex. Even the Roman Church publicly exorcised spirits, cured demoniacal possession, denounced witchcraft and sorcery, and condemned human beings and animals in the inquisitional courts. Most intellectuals were regarded as sorcerers, and a dog trained to sit on its hind legs was solemnly pronounced to be a demon in disguise. Even such psychical phenomena as are now associated with spiritualism were proofs of Satanic machinations, and the black arts were a popular ob-

session. The Cabalists suffered with all other metaphysical groups, and many of them probably were infected by the general belief in necromancy. In the main, however, these men practiced no sorcery other than that naturally resulting from the improvement of the mind.

The Cabala can be summarized as a philosophic mysticism grounded in the Jewish religion and serving as a scientific approach to a spiritual way of life. Its end was the reunion of the divinity in man with the divinity in space, and its means was a ceremonial art of exercises and disciplines intended to purify the body, refine the emotions, and elevate the mind. The Cabala was one of those many bridges set up by religion and philosophy to cross the interval between the world of physical effect and the world of spiritual causes.



THE LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS DEPARTMENT

The bridal veil was originally to prevent demons from discovering the identity of the bride, lest they desire her for themselves. The bridesmaids added to the bewilderment of the evil spirits who could not be certain which one was getting married. The best man protected the groom against similar hazards. (See *The Story of Superstition* by Philip F. Waterman.)

OUT-SCOTCHING THE SCOTCH

The people of the ancient city of Hermion believed that a chasm in the vicinity led down to the underworld. This chasm was a short cut which avoided the necessity of using the ferry across the river Styx. These thrifty citizens of Hermion did not bury money in the mouths of their dead, for by using the chasm the deceased could reach the underworld without paying the toll.

VITAL STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

In case anyone is interested, the brain of the average anthropoid ape weighs about 500 grams. The brain of Franz Schubert, the composer, weighed 1420 grams, and the brain of Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher, weighed 1650 grams. All things being equal, it would seem that the size is the measure of power.



In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *How important is the factor of duty in domestic relationships where there is evidence of basic incompatibility? Is it wise to attempt to hold a home together by imposing a sense of duty upon oneself, or trying to demand it from the other person?*

ANSWER: The word duty is variously defined as: Conduct due to parents and superiors, as shown in obedience or submission; respect. That which is required by one's station or occupation. That which a person is bound by moral obligation to do, or refrain from doing.

It is easy to see that these definitions can conflict. For example, one's station or occupation may require an allegiance that is not sustained by one's sense of moral obligation. Parents may demand conduct, especially obedience or submission, which they do not merit by the actual standard of their own conduct. In practice, duty is largely a matter of interpretation, and more persons are obedient to the word than to any integrity content that it may be assumed to contain.

Immanuel Kant regarded duty as the mainspring of action, but most philosophers have shied away from the word because of the peculiarly negative concept with which it has come to be identified. In usage and practice, duty usually means the acceptance and main-

tenance of an unhappy state of affairs because of some real or imaginary obligation.

Philosophy likes to think of the normal responsibilities of life in a positive rather than in a negative way. The civilized human being should not be motivated by moral or social compulsion. To live well, conduct oneself in a creditable manner, and perform graciously the works of daily living, is not a duty but a privilege. We should not be virtuous because we have to be virtuous, but because it is the natural and normal state of a human being.

In practical experience the sense of duty is closely associated with the conscience mechanism. We have learned from long observation that conscience is not a spiritual faculty infallible in its workings; it is no more nor less than the voice of our personal convictions. These convictions may or may not be true, but they overshadow our attitudes and dictate our courses of action. It has been proved in practical psychology that the average person has greater internal security if he

follows the dictates of his conscience. To obey conscience is to maintain consistency. Inconsistency sets up conflict detrimental to personality co-ordination.

It is the purpose of essential learning to dignify the human estate by establishing the conduct of life upon a level of ethics satisfactory to the individual himself and conducive to the well-being of his social order. There is little indication that duty, as we generally interpret the word, accomplishes these ends. Courts of law punish crime but are unable to prevent crime. The average man cannot be held to an ethical pattern because of rules and regulations, nor can he hold himself in adequate control by imposing arbitrary statutes of conduct upon his natural inclinations. Where a code contrary to instincts is forced upon him, the result must be a state of frustration.

Yet it is obvious that there must be some restraint placed upon private action or it would be impossible to maintain a collective state of security. The individual must recognize and accept his responsibilities as a unit in a complicated, cultural pattern, or he will endanger the sovereign rights of others to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. When the facts are examined the thoughtful person realizes that what he is inclined to call duty is nothing but common sense. The moment he realizes that co-operation and understanding are natural, normal, and intensely practical, he ceases being heroic and relaxes to the doing of those things which are eminently satisfactory to himself and others.

To advance a simple example, we have a duty to our own bodies commonly called eating. Failure to accept this responsibility is to pass out of this incarnation through starvation. But very few of us feel that eating is a morbid and depressing restraint upon free will. We have made nutrition both a science and an art, and unless our dispositions have ruined our digestions we accept mealtime as a pleasant interlude. In this detail we have learned that the necessary is not a cause of frustration.

It is just as necessary that we live well as that we eat well, and there is no reason why living cannot be as scientific

and artistic as a well-balanced meal, and equally enjoyable. We live badly, not because it is necessary but because we have not accepted right living as a charming privilege to work together, live together, and plan together. When living becomes a burden it is because we have failed to understand our proper estate.

At the moment, the American home is an exceedingly fragile institution. To many folks the challenge of homemaking interferes with the practice of that rugged individualism which is interpreted as freedom and opportunity. More and more people tell us of the sacrifices they have made to preserve the domestic menage. They suffer all, endure all, and sacrifice all, for a halo here or in the world to come. They sigh, develop grim lines about the mouth, get a faraway look in their eyes, and then observe with a terrible conviction of self-righteousness: "I have done my duty."

As we look at these people we realize that it must have been an awful fight, and we wonder just what they have actually accomplished. It is not conceivable that an individual who has done his duty with such devastating effects upon himself can be serious in his effort to make the family congenial. It seems more likely that the end intended was merely to impress others with how miserable he was for their sake. In other words, he wanted to make them suffer by the contemplation of his heroic virtue.

It seems doubtful if any home can be successfully maintained by a group of martyrs forever reminding each other by look, word, or action, of their martyrdom. A psychopathic situation of this kind is crying out for a little real honesty and common sense. It will never be straightened out by mountainous sighs, looks of injured innocence, tears, and pitched battles over principles. This technique belongs to an era which, by the grace of God, is rapidly coming to an end.

The modern, and incidentally most ancient solution to personality conflicts is a simple realization that the wise man or woman must keep his or her happiness in their own name. We can share happiness with others, and we can join

together in many pleasant and useful relationships, but we cannot depend upon other people for true happiness or security. Happiness is a condition we develop within ourselves, and the more of it we develop the more we are likely to attract from those around us. We can rejoice in the happiness of others and gain a pleasant and warm feeling over their joys, but we must have, deep inside, our own habit of happiness. We can cultivate this habit just as surely as we can cultivate habits of fear, worry, or suspicion. But it is not the God-given responsibility of any other person to agree with us, to like us, to obey us, or to make us happy.

When someone is nice to us, and this includes our own relatives, it is a gracious action which we should accept graciously and with appreciation. No one, including ourselves, has to be nice, patient, or tolerant, but we have a right to admire and respect those who choose to practice these commendable qualities. It might well be that we would encourage the finer inclinations of our fellow creatures if we did not take them for granted. It is just as remarkable that a person should like us as that a person should dislike us, and usually requires considerably more Christian charity.

Our own egos play quite a part in our untutored instincts. We all feel ourselves to be in some way admirable, and it seems perfectly natural that we should be admired. It seldom occurs to us that our own dispositions may stand in need of renovation, and that frequently we are committing the same offenses which we find disagreeable in others.

The modern home is composed of individuals each with a distinct personality, and each requiring a proper opportunity to develop that personality in a normal and natural way. The home is important to the degree that it strengthens the right of the individual to be himself, and protects the processes of spiritual, mental, and emotional growth; in other words, voluntary co-operation. This co-operation cannot be demanded or required; it must be bestowed as an act of the free will.

It is the opinion of a number of outstanding domestic psychologists that there

is a desperate need for complete reorganization of our concepts of personal relationships in the home. Most homemakers are still dominated by patterns historically and psychologically remote. It is not possible to build a 20th-century home according to rules which were reasonably successful in the 15th, 17th, or even the 19th century. It is another case of the human being progressing beyond the arbitrary rules which he has set up to govern his own conduct.

It is impossible for us to live as our ancestors lived for the evident reason that we are not living in their kind of world. It is just as essential that we live well and honorably, but we must find interpretations for these words consistent with present realities. A hundred years ago only one in ten of our citizens received an education beyond high school. Few traveled, and hardly anyone felt it necessary to concern himself with international politics or the general state of humanity outside of his own community.

Those were the days when milk was delivered at the door at from three to five cents a quart; eggs were ten cents a dozen, and strictly fresh. A good overcoat lasted a lifetime, and a pair of shoes neatly repaired was serviceable for ten years. Wedding dresses were handed down from one generation to another, and the squire was buried in the suit he bought for his wedding. Men worked from dawn to dark for a dollar, and a good house could be built for two thousand dollars, or rented for ten dollars a month. The church was the social center of the community; other entertainment was in the home, and involved few expenditures. In those days the family depended upon itself for its interests and activities, and most of its members had their appointed tasks and obligations. Pride of accomplishment centered around good management, and the outstanding homemaker was honored and respected for these accomplishments. Life was often dreary and there was incompatibility then as now. But there was little opportunity to break through the dominant pattern. The unhappy or discontented individual regarded his condition as inevitable, and adjusted to it

in the best way that he could.

The modern human being *will not* and *cannot* accept such a pattern of life. He refuses flatly to subject himself to a lifetime of dreary respectability; in fact, he no longer regards it as either virtuous or necessary. Any effort to impose such a code upon him usually ends in open rebellion. This does not mean that the homing instinct has died, but it certainly does mean that he has an entirely different concept of what constitutes a home. He would rather live alone than in a condition of aloneness with someone else.

All these considerations have brought a radical change in the meanings of such words as duty and responsibility. Most people now interpret duty as something they owe to themselves rather than to someone else. Perhaps this is selfish, but it is inevitable wherever a human being has been elevated to the estate of intellectual emancipation. We build homes today in order to advance causes rather than to set ourselves in static situations. The home must be a means of fulfillment, not frustration.

Young men and women fall in love today just as they did during the Stone Age. The word love, however, has also changed its meaning; it is no longer a blind devotion willing to suffer indefinitely. It no longer flourishes in spite of disillusionment. Now it survives only because it is justified in the object of its devotion. In simple words, we love that which is loveable, and when it ceases to be loveable our emotions fade. There is no good reason why this perfectly natural attitude should be interpreted as dangerous to the survival of the home. Is it unreasonable that individuals living together should develop and maintain attractive qualities? Is it fair that we should expect to be liked if we are not likeable? Should we depend upon some person's sense of responsibility to preserve a relationship that is not justified by our own contribution to the collective pattern?

In a world afflicted with an almost universal confusion we cannot expect a home to be successful by accident, or by an act of providence. Successful living must be planned and purposed with the same thoughtfulness and skill which we

would devote to a business or an individual career. Unless relationships are established upon a solid foundation of principles they will not endure the stress and strain of daily living. It is profoundly true that the best way to correct domestic difficulties is to prevent them by intelligent home planning.

The basic problem of compatibility must be considered first. Unless there is a reasonable degree of genuine compatibility, no marriage can be successful. Compatibility is a matter of disposition, temperament, and personality. Minor differences may be arbitrated, but fundamental differences are seldom reconciled in those who have reached adult years. The personality equations may result from early environment, racial background, religious affiliations, educational opportunities, and life experience. Once these have been bound together in a psychological compound they result in what may be called the individuality. The mental and emotional reactions originating in this compound make up the temperament. It is almost impossible for a person to function contrary to his own temperament for any extensive length of time. The exception occurs when the individual discovers and accepts as fact that his own temperament is inadequate.

If incompatible persons create a home there is very little chance of it being successful. Remember, compatibility does not imply identical viewpoint, but rather that both persons are functioning upon the same level of integrity and conviction. There must, however, be sufficient similarity in the sphere of motivations so that each is capable of understanding the basic qualities of the other.

Once a home has been broken by the loss of mutual understanding and mutual respect it is exceedingly difficult to effect a lasting reconciliation. There is too much suspicion, doubt, and fear of experience to permit a fair evaluation of future conduct. To perpetuate an intimate relationship under such conditions is contrary to integrity, decency, and common sense; it will destroy one or the other of the persons involved.

When natural affections fail they must be restored by the discovery of new

values, or else the failure must be honestly, if sadly, acknowledged. It is useless to invoke earlier promises, vows, or obligations, in order to force the continuation of that which has evidently failed in fact. Nor does it help much if we recognize this failure as the result of our own conduct and attempt to punish ourselves by enduring the consequences; we only succeed in further injuring the person we have already hurt. Hanging on to punish someone else for his guilt is also stupid; we only punish ourselves the more.

In the universe little atoms that have nothing to hold them together properly fly apart—so do people. Even where there are children it is usually wiser for them to live in comparative quietude with one parent than in a state of chaos with two who are incompatible. Domestic warfare is responsible for much of the delinquency of children, and may lead to criminal careers in later years. It is also the hidden cause of a variety of nervous and emotional ailments.

A sense of family duty can likewise contribute considerably to the delinquencies of marriage partners. A woman now in her sixties has been married nearly forty years to a shiftless husband with an all-ensouling case of hypochondria. She is well-aware of the facts, but she married him and feels it her duty to see it through regardless of the cost to herself. She does not love the stupid man, but she nurses him, humors him, waits on him, agrees with him, and has gained the reputation of a martyr. She is entitled to an E for endurance, but is responsible to a large degree for the present condition of the man she took for better or for *worse*. She has proved to him conclusively that one can have a bad disposition and all the comforts and security of home—why should he change? At the same time, if the truth were known, the man has been cheated of the challenge to accomplishment. He has never amounted to anything, and sometime, somewhere, somehow, he must face this fact.

Consider an entirely different kind of case history. A fine man married a young woman not especially charming

or gifted. A few weeks after marriage she was crippled for life by an automobile accident in which he was not involved. She has been a hopeless invalid ever since. He has waited on her hand and foot; fed her, nursed her, spent everything he earned for her comfort and happiness. Someone once said to him: "I profoundly admire you for the sacrifices you have made." The man replied: "My dear fellow, it is not a sacrifice; it is my privilege—you see, I love her."

Many people have come to me with one of the world's oldest stories. They are not happy, and it is becoming more difficult every day to fight the internal discontent and maintain any degree of external poise. The marriage partner is satisfied to let things drift along as they are, not at all sensitive to the true state of affairs. Often the complaints do not involve profound issues, but are an accumulation of small injustices, misunderstandings, and ineptitudes. The home has become purposeless; there are no dreams, no plans, no hopes—a static, depressing situation that evidently will continue to the bitter end. Is it right to break up such a home and seek happiness and fulfillment elsewhere? Should failure be acknowledged and faced, or is it a solemn and sacred duty to preserve the home at any cost?

It seems to me that the problem is incorrectly stated. How can we preserve a home that does not exist except as a sanctified boardinghouse? The home died when joy, peace, and mutual interests died. Somebody or everybody failed, or else there was incompatibility to begin with. To perpetuate the sham is to endanger self-respect. The question is whether to break the tradition or let the tradition break us?

Perhaps a wife has a wayward husband. She is all for responsibility and he will have none of it. To him home is a refuge in time of trouble—a convenience and no more. If a wife has this kind of husband, or vice versa, there is a splendid opportunity to work a reform. Here is a sinner who should repent even if it is necessary to thrust repentance upon him. Friends recommend that we go to work upon him and mold him

nearer to the heart's desire. The usual difficulty is that such a character has no inclination to be molded. Nagging may be tried, but this generally keeps him away from home for longer periods of time. Weeping is a possibility, but it usually makes him feel sorer for himself. How about appealing to his higher self? Press upon him the realization of his *duty*. Convey subtly but firmly that he has certain responsibilities which he has voluntarily assumed and must maintain if he wishes to be a man and not a mouse.

The reward for this preachment is generally that the mouse declares itself to be misunderstood. It is really a kind-hearted, well-meaning mouse, and someday, maybe, it will reform—but not now. It seldom avails anything to attempt to bring home wandering marriage partners by insisting that it is their duty to come home. The more the point is pressed, the less desirable the home appears. If the condition is chronic it is usually wiser to break up the pattern and let someone else attempt to work the miracle.

All other things being equal, the only good reason why anyone should go home is because they prefer to be there. Average folk will follow such inclinations without question or resistance. Unless the domestic pattern is sufficiently attractive to attract, it will not prove to be an unqualified success. No one person can make a home attractive, for the word home implies a co-operation of interests and endeavors. A man does not maintain his home simply because he pays the bills and is known as a good provider, nor does a woman deserve high rating as a homemaker merely by wearing the nap off the carpet with a vacuum cleaner. One may slave at an office, and the other may slave in the house, but all this slavery does not add up to a home.

Naturally, physical possessions must be protected and maintained, but I know of many cases where the grubbing and scrubbing has gone on for years, producing nothing but collective exhaustion. The truth is that these herculean labors were just outlets for frustrations, because the principal values had either been lost or had never existed. The home is an

imponderable, a fourth-dimensional equation by which chairs and tables, rugs and stoves, become part of something greater than themselves. If we just want to work for someone we can go out and make a good living working for ourselves. But if we are working for a home, then this becomes more important than any other work that we can do. The home factor is companionship; a serving, giving, sharing, and receiving, because of a profound internal regard. This extends to and includes children as well as adults. Parents are not merely biological progenitors; they are, first of all, friends. Companionship means much more than luxuries, and the finest mink coat is not even a poor substitute for companionship.

Every human being lives better, thinks better, accomplishes more, and is happier if he shares his life with others, and dedicates a part of himself to making someone else happy. Life is never truly rich for a person who labors or accomplishes only for himself. He is poor indeed who has not learned how to share and how to give. The home is the most natural solution to normal human instincts. The grace of giving and protecting, and the grace of receiving and being protected, are the true riches of living. Going home should be a natural motion away from the competitive material world toward a co-operative ethical and aesthetic sphere. This has nothing to do with the size of the house or the value of its furnishings. A home is a spirit, not a place, and until we realize this the place will have little meaning.

It is the privilege of those forming a home to make it interesting; to preserve in it something of the glamor of early romance and some of the gentle wisdom and maturity of life experience. There is simply no question of duty, but there is a wonderful opportunity to express deep and secret aspirations for which there is slight outlet in the world of industry and economics. We are all a little weary with the struggle for survival, and in our hearts we all long for peace. The citadel of this peace is our home, and if it fails there we might as well go to the club, or work out our frustrations in

political causes. But we have no right to expect someone else to build a security for us; we must build hand in hand with those we love. From early life the children should build with us, and learn to realize that when they grow up they too can look forward to home security.

This mystic dimension of spiritual communion can never be experienced by those addicted to a concept of duty. This cold, tired word, grim with frustrations, should be outlawed from the vocabulary of the homemaker. Flowers do not grow because it is their duty, birds

do not sing because it is their duty, and human beings should not be true to themselves and those they love because it is their duty. Giving and sharing, loving and serving, are the proper ways of growing. If we cultivate this concept until it sings in our hearts we will have happy homes dominated by complete freedom rather than despotism. The free man and woman who choose of their own accord to work out their problems together as nature's wisdom intended will discover that it is a beautiful and blessed privilege and not a grim and inevitable duty.



QUOTATIONS FROM JAKOB BOEHME

Without the light of nature, there is no understanding of divine mysteries.

* * *

Our whole teaching is nothing else than to show how a man may kindle God's light-world in himself.

* * *

You must be born again through a living movement of the will.

* * *

Beloved reader, if you wish to understand the high mysteries you need not put a university upon your nose as a pair of spectacles.

MARK OF GENIUS

Hideyoshi, a man of the common people, became by his extraordinary abilities the Napoleon of Japan. There was a famous proverb in his time about the cuckoo, a bird whose song announced the spring. The proverb ran, "The cuckoo—if it does not sing, put an end to it." Hideyoshi reformed the proverb, saying, "The cuckoo—if it does not sing, I'll show it how." Hideyoshi was nicknamed 'cotton' because he could adapt himself to such a multitude of unexpected uses. His philosophy was summed up in the thought, "Never do anything that bores you." This does not mean that you must change your work. Change yourself and all work is interesting.

Biographies in General

Blavatsky in Particular



A BOOK entitled *Priestess of the Occult*, by Gertrude Marvin Williams, (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1946) purporting to be an unprejudiced biography of the celebrated occultist and theosophist, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, has recently been brought to my attention. As Madame Blavatsky herself, the writings which she left, and the society which she founded, are held in the highest esteem by thousands of thoughtful men and women throughout the world, this alleged biography has stirred up widespread indignation. In response to a number of requests this article has been prepared not as a review but as an attempt to evaluate Mrs. Williams' literary production, as well as other works of the same nature.

The book under consideration is not especially important in itself, but it indicates a trend in modern journalism worthy of some notice. The main concern is not the person maligned, but a directional misuse of the power of the written word contrary to ethics, good taste, and general semantics.

Reliable and unbiased histories and biographies are extremely difficult to compile even when intentions are of the best. Authors in this field must be entirely impartial and extremely skillful in the weighing of evidence. We find Mrs. Williams deficient in both of these qualifications. But whether these ineptitudes

are due to inexperience or a deliberate intent to malign we cannot pretend to know. Perhaps if we examine the complicated factors involved in biographical writings we shall be able to judge more effectively the present work, and others of a similar nature.

Before it is possible to estimate the importance of a series of conclusions, the reliability of the data upon which they are based must be tested. We must weigh all things and cling unto that which is true. If we accept without question we shall accumulate a quantity of worthless opinions.

The first rule of authentic writing is that only that which is known with certainty can justly be stated with certainty. Our first task then in a work of this kind is to deglamorize the text to the end of discovering that which is certain, and separate it from that which is not certain. The dictionary defines a certainty as 'a fact unquestionably established', but unfortunately in modern writings the term usually implies an opinion vigorously defended at the expense of contrary evidence.

In the present case we know that Madame Blavatsky died in 1891, approximately fifty-six years ago. Unless Mrs. Williams is a septuagenarian at least, it is most unlikely that she ever had any extensive personal contact with the mysterious madame. As she makes no claim

to such an acquaintance, and her picture on the jacket of her latest production does not indicate that she is a septuagenarian, it seems reasonable to infer that her opinions about Blavatsky are not founded on firsthand association. Therefore she has no certainties of her own, for no matter how you look at it, that which is not firsthand must be second-hand.

Lacking original knowledge of her subject Mrs. Williams had to depend upon such accounts as are available to any industrious compiler with reasonable opportunities. In dealing with the life of Madame Blavatsky these sources are: autobiographical fragments, earlier biographies favorable or unfavorable, memoirs written by her relatives and friends, anecdotes reported by her followers, statements of various groups and organizations, letters published or unpublished, records in the archives of her society, recollections of persons still alive who knew her, articles appearing in magazines, and news items from the press of various countries. Unless we include extrasensory perceptions, this about exhausts the possibilities.

In fairness it must be pointed out that information merely accumulated from the sources listed above cannot be accepted *per se* as certain, or used without examination as the basis for a statement of certainty. Each of these fragments bears witness to a conception or a preconception and must be weighed carefully and critically to establish its possible or probable truth content. Throughout this long and exacting process the biographer must be both fair and discriminating. It is useless to weigh evidence if he has already seated himself in one pan of the scales. That we may appreciate more fully the magnitude of the problem at hand let us examine somewhat critically the sources of possible information which we have enumerated.

Madame Blavatsky is an especially difficult subject, and autobiographical material is extremely fragmentary. She kept no diaries and prepared no systematic account of her complicated life or activities. It is most improbable that she could have remembered the exact dates

and circumstances involved in all her numerous adventures. It is proved every day that honorable witnesses speaking under oath in a court of law become confused and contradict themselves when attempting to explain their own actions and whereabouts a few days or weeks previous to the time of giving testimony. Only the guilty are likely to have a perfect alibi. Offhand remarks made in ordinary conversation can be regarded only as generalities, and may conflict without any intention to deceive.

Biographies can be friendly or unfriendly, and contemporary biographers nearly always lack perspective. Personal devotion to an individual or the cause he represents, fear of offense or libel, and a variety of ulterior motives are likely to influence the selection of material. It is virtually impossible for any man or woman to be prominent, especially in a controversial field, without being attacked on some grounds, real or imaginary. It is necessary to weed out the products of blind adoration and just as thoroughly clear away the productions of personal malice and spite.

Memoirs of relatives and friends must be examined with special care, for they are likely to be dominated by some kind of prejudice. Relations can be the least reliable of witnesses, as they are almost invariably biased. There is no feud as bitter as a family feud, and in such a circumstance truth is of no consequence. Memoir writers, though a lovable lot, may be a trifle egocentric. They usually exaggerate the dramatic content of their associations with famous persons in order to gain luster for themselves. If they cannot be famous the next best thing is to know someone who is famous.

Anecdotes enlarge with the telling, and in a group surrounding a brilliant man or woman these cameos of conversation increase in number and size by a process of competitive exaggeration. The facts are lost sight of in an effort to top the preceding story. This type of myth-making is also regarded as proof of devotion to the hero.

Reports of rival or unsympathetic organizations must be heavily discounted, especially in the field of religion or in a

conflict between religion and the sciences. One might as well go to his worst enemy for a character reference and expect fair treatment. It is a mistake to assume that learned societies are necessarily honest. They can descend to taproom ethics as easily as the worst illiterates—perhaps more easily.

Letters offer a confidential means of circulating gossip, rumor, and unproved opinion. They were never intended to be documentary, and are as incomplete and misleading as one side of a telephone conversation. Often they are the only means of dating occurrences, and occasionally they contain priceless side lights on significant incidents; but for the most part they are unfair because they do not tell a well-balanced story.

It is doubtful if the archives of the society that Madame Blavatsky founded contain much that has not already been used in preparing biographical articles now in print. Information about her is of such interest to the members of her own organization and other students of esoteric philosophy that it is most probable that all available records have been carefully inspected by both friend and foe.

There are not many now alive who knew Madame Blavatsky personally. Many interesting stories, subject to the vicissitudes of descent, have come down from various families, but most of these are impressions of single incidents. Some are remarkable to say the least, and probably true, but impossible to prove at this late day. Years ago I knew several of Madame Blavatsky's friends, and I have heard literally hundreds of anecdotal narratives. While they cannot be accepted as certainties, it is only fair to say that practically all of the stories were completely favorable.

Magazine articles divide under many headings. Those appearing in periodicals essentially liberal in policy, or published by branches of Madame Blavatsky's society, are more or less serious efforts to establish facts. Those in national magazines are not so valuable. For the most part they are products of professional journalists seeking to capitalize on a spectacular personality in order to make an

honest penny. In these Madame Blavatsky emerges as a seven-day wonder, and the writer was not too much concerned with facts.

As for the press—the less said the better. We all know so well the policies of the fourth estate, and that it is excessive optimism to expect either fairness or accuracy. The press has an unfortunate habit of building up circulation by tearing down reputation, and no wise biographer will depend upon the daily paper for much more than vital statistics, and these he will check elsewhere.

In our search for certainties, then, what do we have left? In sober fact, just what we started with—a mass of confusing, contradictory data which we must attempt to integrate into something resembling the truth. Each incident has several possible interpretations, each argument at least two sides, and each action a number of probable motivations or explanations. The obvious may not be true, and it is just as likely that the seeming impossibility may be the reality. It requires much more than a neat job of journalism to prepare an authentic biography of Madame Blavatsky from the material available.

It might be mentioned that Madame Blavatsky being Russian, and having contributed considerably to Russian journals and papers, it is important to check Russian sources of information about her life and activities. Since the Revolution, and especially during the last several years of war and turmoil, it has been difficult if not impossible to explore this aspect of the subject. This presents further problems to the conscientious biographer.

In a literary crisis of this kind the personality of the author of a biographical work becomes an intangible but vital element in the final product. Of the material available the choice he makes reveals his own character and convictions to a large degree. The problem is one of selection and interpretation. Instinctively we seek for that which we desire to find, and of course we always find what we seek. By a systematic use of this method we end up with a book that tells much more about ourselves and our

pet peeves than about the person we are purporting to describe. The moment that prejudice is apparent in our selection and presentation of material the value of our efforts, historical or psychological, is destroyed for the intelligent minority of readers.

In the preparation of a work dealing with Madame Blavatsky, prejudice must be expected. She was an occultist and a vigorous defender of Oriental metaphysical philosophies. It is practically impossible for the average materialist, steeped in the sublimity of his own unbeliefs, to tolerate even mentally an exponent of transcendental magic, alchemy, cabalism, and Tibetan Buddhism. Only a person well-versed in almost all branches of curious lore is even decently qualified to pass judgment upon the outstanding modern authority on these subjects.

In matters relating to occultism, the least informed have always felt themselves especially well-equipped to pass judgment. The critics do not feel that it is at all necessary to investigate, for it is preposterous to assume for a moment that there is anything worth investigating. The great sages of Greece, Rome, Egypt, India, China, Persia, and Arabia, who believed in and practiced magic were branded either impostors or insane, and anyone in modern times who attempts to defend them or claims to possess similar abilities is called a charlatan or a superstitious fool and a menace to society.

It is unreasonable, unfair, and unjust for a biographer dominated by such negative convictions to attempt to delineate the life and character of an occultist. It is inevitable that consciously or unconsciously he will set to work systematically to destroy the character of the subject of his endeavors. He may be quite convinced of the integrity of his motive and viewpoint, and it becomes a pious duty to unmask the impostor. If his premise be correct, then all the evidence in favor of the metaphysician *must* be false, and all the evidence against him *may* be true.

Let us apply this process of building a case, to the one in question. A hundred reputable witnesses declared that Madame Blavatsky could produce psychical phen-

omena, and did so in various places at different times. Five prejudiced and obviously insincere critics insist that the phenomena are fraudulent, but they are unable to produce any actual evidence to prove their contention. According to materialistic reason and logic it is overwhelmingly evident that the five must be right. The reports of the hundred favorable witnesses must be discredited by any means possible—fair or foul—and regardless of consequences. At the same time the five critics must be thoroughly whitewashed. It requires no evidence to prove that their motives are above question, their judgment above doubt, and their characters above reproach. By this technique, plus a bit of literary artistry, almost anyone's reputation can be destroyed in a few neatly written pages.

Obviously, anyone attempting to write a biography of George Washington or Abraham Lincoln in this way would bring down upon themselves the wrath of public opinion. It is not likely that a legitimate publisher could be found who would risk his reputation by sponsoring such a work. It is essential, therefore, to the success of an enterprise of this kind that the victim of the biography should not have too many friends. The occultist fits this requirement perfectly. Most orthodox religious groups have no great love for metaphysicians, especially Orientalists. The educators and scientists will be well-pleased for the most part. The average citizen enjoys a good scandal whether or not it is true. The million or two who will be sincerely hurt and righteously indignant are a minority group, not large enough to interfere much with the sale of the book.

In her search for certainties Mrs. Williams makes the most of the memoirs of Madame Blavatsky's cousin Count Witte. In this she is not original, for the Count's rather stodgy opinions are one of the principal sources to which scandalmongers have turned in their search for bits of unsavory gossip about the life of Madame Blavatsky. These memoirs, therefore, will serve as well as any to illustrate the fallacy of building mountains out of molehills.



FAMILY CREST OF H. P. BLAVATSKY

In fairness to the facts involved we must be as thorough in our appraisal of condemnations as we are of commendations. We hope to be forgiven then if we evaluate somewhat critically this distinguished gentleman's personal disposition and motives. These are rather well-revealed in the very paragraphs dealing with his cousin Helena. The fact that Witte was related to her adds nothing to his stature as an historian, especially when he admits that he had but slight acquaintance with her until she had reached middle life. His earlier remarks are based upon family chatter, than which there is nothing less important. It requires only a fair knowledge of human nature to estimate the devastating effects of Helena's unconventional conduct upon a conservative aristocratic family deeply immersed in orthodox traditionalism.

Count Witte tells us that life after death consists of hell, purgatory, and paradise, and it is not difficult from his intimations to decide in which of these future states he expects Madame Blavatsky's soul to find its ultimate abode. The Count emerges as a solid if not dense religious fundamentalist. It would be incredible that such a man would devote much time or thought to understanding his heretical cousin, who had already been elected by many of her relatives as the black ewe of the clan. Here indeed is a fine source of certainty.

A careful perusal of Witte's findings reminds one of some of the reasoning

processes so elegantly presented in that grand old inquisitorial textbook the *Malus Malificarum*. The sentimental Count mentions Helena's big blue eyes, the like of which he never saw elsewhere. After knowing her better he becomes so liberal as to hazard the opinion that in reality she was not malevolent; in fact, she was a rather kindly creature. He ventures the guess that she suffered from a demoniacal possession, from which we are to infer that she possessed some kind of mysterious or occult power most easily explainable by recourse to the theory of witchcraft. The Count is led to the reasonable conclusion that the devil had a particular fondness for his cousin, because there seemed no other way to explain certain of her unusual accomplishments. It is evident that here we have a perfect witness for the prosecution, a man whose mental processes are above reproach.

Witte, possibly unwittingly, supplies some incentive for astonishment. He tells us that although she had never taken music lessons Helena played the piano so brilliantly that she gave concerts in London and Paris. She mastered the theory of music sufficiently to become the orchestra leader and choir director for Milan, King of Serbia. Never having seriously studied languages she spoke English, French, and other tongues as well as she did her own. Without training in grammar or literature she wrote long letters to her acquaintances and relatives entirely in verse, and with such ease that the Count could not equal her rapidity in prose. She wrote folios of rhyme, the verses flowing like music. She prepared all sorts of articles on serious themes, and these were accepted and published in some of the most critical literary journals of her time.

All this was too much for Count Witte. Some of the miracles that she performed with or without provocation still further perturbed the good man. Evidently he was not entirely convinced that these miracles were fraudulent or he would not have fallen back upon the medieval doctrine of demonism as the most likely answer to the riddle.

The bewildered Count generously acknowledged that his eccentric cousin possessed superior talents ranging from the manufacture of artificial flowers to coaching a basso in the vocal, lingual, and dramatic requisites of Russian grand opera. Incidentally, the basso made good. If we choose to give Witte's observations importance equal to his criticisms, Madame Blavatsky emerges by the most conservative estimation as a universal genius. Her abilities were the more remarkable when we realize that her family certainly did not encourage them nor supply her with the type of basic training conducive to such a diversity of specialized accomplishments. Even a brilliant mother does not satisfactorily explain the prodigy.

The Count also makes much of the point that no matter where Madame Blavatsky journeyed she almost invariably arrived at her destination without funds. After a shipwreck she landed in Cairo with no personal effects except a water-soaked dressing gown. Such a predicament would not be especially pleasant today, and must have presented even greater complications for a woman traveling alone in strange and far-off places nearly a century ago. It required rather expert management to extricate oneself from such plights, not once, but many times.

Madame Blavatsky proved that she could put her hand to almost anything, create solutions where they did not otherwise exist, and with that magnificent belligerence for which her temperament was justly famous, come through innumerable difficulties.

Even her worst enemies have been inclined to admit that Madame Blavatsky's face was not her fortune. Mrs. Williams seems to be about the first to hazard the opinion that her female charms were the secret of her success. Her appeal was almost entirely intellectual, and even Count Witte implies that she was accepted by the brilliant minds of her times as a dynamic, original, and talented woman eminently worth knowing. She possessed an excellent memory, was an astute observationalist, and had a natural flare for drama. Her early life, unconventional as it was, equipped her admir-

ably for the activities of her later years.

Most scholars, especially those in the fields of comparative religion and philosophy, lead rather sheltered and conservative lives. They wander about the campuses of universities mingling with their own kind and solving one abstraction with another. Madame Blavatsky brought a wealth of diversified personal experience to the field of comparative religion. This fact alone was sufficient to attract liberal scholars and theory-plagued intellectuals.

In a day when ladies poured tea, painted in oils, and received genteel and impractical educations, Madame Blavatsky must have appeared as a barbarian from The Steppes. It was horrible to contemplate her traveling in the most distant parts of the heathen world—and without a chaperone. She smoked in public, and sat in train carriages with her feet on the seat in front. Under the proper provocations, and they were frequent, she swore like a Cossack. It was usually a mistake to insult her, as she could top nearly any insult quickly and with finesse. No doubt she would have found her niche in the Hall of Fame between Dr. Mary Walker and Amelia Bloomer had it not been for her interest in things esoteric.

Certainly Madame Blavatsky was a rugged personality. She was the very stuff from which myths and legends are made. For example, Mrs. Williams takes exception to her claim of having discussed metaphysics with American Indian medicine-priests. To anyone who understands Amerindian mysticism there is nothing remarkable in such a claim. The house in which she lived in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was pointed out to me several years ago by a local newspaper man who had no interest whatever in things metaphysical. It would seem, therefore, that she did live, at least for a time, in an important center of American culture. She was there many years ago when the Indians were not nearly as reticent as they have become since the advent of prying, discourteous, and bigoted missionaries and tourists.

There are several records in that area alone of highly informed Indian mystics explaining their ancient traditions to sym-

pathetic and qualified Caucasians. They have even permitted motion pictures to be taken of some of their most sacred ceremonials. There is now a museum of Navajo ceremonial art made possible through these old priests preparing their religious paintings in permanent form for the benefit of posterity.

It was my privilege to have one of the most venerated priests of the Navajo nation as my guest in California for several weeks. He was perfectly willing to discuss (through an interpreter) the mysteries of his faith with anyone who shared his basic idealism, but retired to a state of complete self-contained silence when in the presence of the superficial-minded.

No consideration of a prominent person is complete without some effort to measure the result of the impact of his personality upon his contemporaries. Thorough and impartial research proves that the sphere of Madame Blavatsky's influence for good has been enormous. Through her efforts the lives of numerous prominent persons have been greatly improved and strengthened. Many, afterwards famous in their own right or already well-known, knew her intimately as an intellectual teacher and friend.

In his autobiography Mahatma Gandhi mentions his meeting with Madame Blavatsky and states definitely that through contact with two members of her group he was inspired to begin the study of the religions and philosophies of his own people. How can we estimate the effect of this brief contact upon the life of the greatest Hindu of modern time, and through him the lives of four hundred million Asiatics. These are the things that justify admiration and respect, and always lead to jealousy and condemnation.

Among those known to have been influenced by direct contact with Madame Blavatsky were the poets Browning and Tennyson. She was a moving spirit behind the Irish revival of letters and arts, a fact testified to by both William Butler Yeats and George William Russell. She contributed to scientific progress through her effect upon the minds of such men as Sir William Crookes and Thomas

Edison. Edison was for some time a member of her society, and retained his interest in esoteric speculations throughout his life. This list of distinguished names could be extended to great length. Appreciated by the learned and the gifted, she was condemned by the small-minded simply because she was an occultist.

The authoress of *Priestess of the Occult* has resorted to a technique of implications and innuendoes that would do credit to a devout Shakespearean writing a biography of his blessed bard. There is one difference however; the Shakespearean would be trying to create a life, and this anti-Blavatskyian has attempted to destroy one. Mrs. Williams assumes, infers, implies, intimates, and concludes, from the beginning to the end of her opus. She cheerfully does Madame Blavatsky's thinking for her, reads her mind and the minds of her associates, and in moments of doubt always suspects the worst.

There comes to mind a delightful picture from a recent biography of Shakespeare. The author describes the aging poet—even to the cut of his long coat—seated under his favorite tree in his beloved Stratford enjoying the quiet dignity, the well-earned rest, and the gentle plaudits of an adoring world. It is a masterpiece of sweetness even though it does not contain a word of truth.

May we quote a few lines from Mrs. Williams' touching description of Madame Blavatsky's death: "She who had failed so signally to attain self-control during her life met this final challenge without a murmur, her eyes open, her face composed and thoughtful. Fully conscious, she lingered on until Friday, May 8. In those last hours of exile from her beloved Russia, memory must have carried her back to the Caucasus. Perhaps she felt again the wind in her face as she galloped across the steppes with her Cossack escort, watched the glow of their evening campfires, and felt once more the choking thrill of their wild songs and dances. Her thoughts may have come back to Avenue Road. Through the window the fresh young green of Annie's garden came to meet

her dying gaze. This was indeed her tidal wave, a high wall of greenness, shot with sunlight, rolling toward her faster, faster. Nothing could stop it now."

Perhaps nothing could stop this tidal wave that was engulfing Madame Blavatsky, but Mrs. Williams' literary tidal wave appears to have stopped the book, for it is the closing paragraph. There is no shred of evidence that Madame's memory must have carried her anywhere. Perhaps she felt the wind in her face, and perhaps not; no one actually knows. Her thoughts may have come back to Avenue Road, but it is just as likely that they may have been focused on the opposite side of the world, or not on this world at all. Literary excursions of this nature belong to the realm of fiction where they have a ready market.

If some of Mrs. Williams' notions are subject to miraculous growth reminiscent of the Hindu mango tree, others are passed over with astonishing lightness of touch. On page 157 of *Priestess of the Occult* our authoress disposes of Buddha with neatness and dispatch. She writes: "Although Gautama was an Indian prince, his religion had failed to take root in his own land, except for colonies in Ceylon at the southern tip of the continent and in Tibet on the northern border."

The average reader not too well-informed could easily imply from the above quotation that Buddha was rejected by his own people, and that his doctrines found favor only in a few outlying districts. In sober fact, this great Indian sage founded a religious philosophy which flourished as a powerful force in his own land for more than a thousand years, and is still one of the world's great religions. Many distinguished Occidentals have devoted themselves to the investigation and study of Buddhism. Why not acknowledge that Madame Blavatsky was one of the first to encourage Western intellectuals to investigate this magnificent system of Eastern ethical idealism?

Twentieth-century naturalism—a somewhat better sounding word than materialism—rejects utterly and finally anything and everything which flavors of the super-

natural. All phenomena must be explained without departing from the rigid requirements of an absolutely physical concept of life. What cannot be explained must be ignored. The materialist even frowns upon concepts, except such as are necessary to justify his own conclusions. He is not sufficiently subtle in his thinking to realize that materialism itself is only a concept, or more correctly, a preconception which he is seeking desperately to sustain with methods reminiscent of the heyday of scholasticism.

We may go so far as to compromise with materialists and reject with them the concept of the supernatural. Better-informed esotericists are not addicted to a belief in miracles, and have no intention of overthrowing the concept of an orderly universe. They are not fighting to defend the supernatural, but they do insist upon being given the honorable right to believe in the existence of the superphysical. They reject the concept that the universe is a self-creating, self-preserving, and self-destroying machine. They do not deny the existence of the machinery, but hold the conviction that it is controlled and directed by a consciousness or intelligence superior to itself. They also affirm the utility of such arts and sciences as may lead to the discovery of those superphysical causes by which the physical world and its motions are explained and justified.

Even Sir James Hopwood Jeans, one of the outstanding physicists of the 20th century and for years an enthusiastic defender of the mechanistic theory, was finally forced to reform his belief and admit his convictions that the universe is governed by an intellectual power superior to and permeating its physical structure.

The difficult and delicate position in which the metaphysician finds himself is due to his inability to accept without reservation either the prevailing scientific or the prevailing theological concept of life. He can view God neither as an hypothesis nor as a venerable old gentleman snooping about in space, perturbed over the sectarian affiliations of his beloved creations. The moment his voice is raised the scientist thunders lunacy, the

theologian shouts heresy, and the common folk gather from far and wide to enjoy the spectacle.

If we wish to assume that the various attacks upon Madame Blavatsky and her work are essentially sincere, they must originate in one or the other of these large opposing factions. Both groups are bent on 'saving' the human being from some kind of corrupting influence. The scientific evangelist is fighting for his concept of law and order, and the religious evangelist is resolved to save the world for the God of his Fathers at all costs. These two camps of opinion fight each other until the situation is triangulated by some one who differs from them both. Under this new challenge it cannot be said that science and theology unite forces, but they certainly converge upon the new menace.

In addition to the sincerity theory, we must also look for possible ulterior motives when folk write books against folk. In these agitated and somewhat delinquent times we are forced against our inclinations to consider the possibilities that an appearance of righteousness may cover a diversity of unrighteous motivations. Sometimes principles are compromised if such compromise is profitable. Just why should a modern journalist decide all of a sudden to make a vigorous attack upon a comparatively little-known woman who has been dead for more than fifty years? Are the teachings of Madame Blavatsky dangerous to our times? Do they incline to radicalism, moral corruption, crime, sedition, or the disintegration of our social fabric? Must the 20th century be saved from Madame Blavatsky? Is this subject so important to a world burdened with weighty problems that a conscientious citizen must rise up in all the dignity of her constitutional rights and attempt a literary crusade? If the crusading instinct had reached uncontrollable proportions could nothing of greater importance have been discovered upon which to direct attention? As we meditate upon these questions we are inclined to suspect that there may be 'something rotten in the state of Denmark'.

Naturally, *Priestess of the Occult* received many enthusiastic reviews, several of which appeared in national publications. One of these placed the numerical strength of the society which Madame Blavatsky founded at between eighty and one hundred thousand at the present time. As many of her most enthusiastic followers and admirers have never been members of her society, the total of those strongly influenced by her teachings might reach two million throughout the world. These figures are entirely arbitrary, as no statistics are available. I am in a position to estimate the number, however, as I have been in contact with many of her followers throughout this country and in foreign nations for nearly twenty-seven years.

At best, then, we have a small minority group hardly in a position to exercise a force likely to menace the structures of either orthodox religion or orthodox science. If these vast organizations can be damaged by such a minority it can only mean that the majority groups are in a fragile condition.

And just what kind of people are these gullible and misled Blavatskyites? As their normal course of studies requires an extensive examination of a wide range of obscure subjects and years of patient reading of highly specialized texts generously sprinkled with Sanskrit, Greek, Persian, and other obscure languages, it may be hazarded with some justification that they belong in a reasonably high bracket of intelligence. Certainly they are not below the level of those who dedicate their lives to motion pictures, detective stories, bridge parties, and radio serials.

Careful investigation will likely indicate that these esotericists contribute very little to crime waves, black market operations, drunk driving casualties, and those epidemics of murder, rape, and arson, that at present are offending our delicate sensibilities.

As a group I know for a certainty that the Blavatskyites are a quiet, thoughtful, studious, idealistic lot, inclined to mind their own business and likely to vote for fair and progressive legislation. This does not imply that they are without

faults. Perhaps in some things they are a trifle gullible, overenthusiastic, and overoptimistic, but when it comes to a conscientious effort to live well, honestly, and constructively, I am convinced from contact with them that the followers of Madame Blavatsky are well above the average of our citizens. They may hold beliefs regarded as eccentric by the majority, but these beliefs incline to a solid standard of conduct and personal integrity which it might be well for non-believers to emulate.

Our Denver authoress can hardly have devoted so much time and 'research' in order to save the world from the law-abiding. There is nothing very menacing about quiet, elderly gentlemen wandering about with Madame Blavatsky's great text book *The Secret Doctrine* under one arm and a Sanskrit grammar under the other. Nor can we become unduly agitated over the disastrous results of a group of twenty or even two hundred respectable middle-aged persons studying rounds and races, or trying to find out some reasonable explanation for the unreasonable conduct of their contemporaries. Humanity has never had stronger apologists nor more generous well-wishers than the followers of Madame Blavatsky. Except for the morbid possibility that they might attract a few disillusioned rebels from other groups, they appear comparatively harmless.

There is also a fine point of ethics involved. The sincere religious convictions of law-abiding citizens are entitled to respect by all men and women of good faith. Any religious teacher can be attacked on some grounds, for after all they are human beings. If, however, they have brought comfort and satisfaction to other mortals struggling to understand life we have no right to ridicule nor expose to ridicule that which is sacred to others.

The very spirit which permeates Mrs. Williams' book forces upon us the suspicion that she might have had other motives than an overwhelming urge to save the world for some kind of orthodoxy. We hate to frame our thought into words, but is it possible that she

could have been interested in royalties? I only hazard this disagreeable speculation because such things have happened in the past on a few occasions, and to a degree the circumstances fit the crime. Gossip is still one of our most popular forms of entertainment, and if something miraculous or mysterious is involved the appeal is well-nigh irresistible. To a professional writer a best seller is always comforting, and if he can build himself up by tearing someone else down it is all in the spirit of good, clean journalism. Needless to say, if this book is a financial success there will be a deluge of such productions, for authors must live in these days of inflation.

But we must not nurse a notion of this kind too far. There are other possible explanations. There is always the grudge motivation. Perhaps our authoress for some real or imaginary reason does not like Madame Blavatsky. The book seems to convey the feeling that the writer had some deep-seated resentment against the Russian theosophist and everything she stood for. Perhaps her scientific or theological convictions have been outraged. Certainly one does not settle down to the deliberate destruction of another character just for fun.

We should also pause to consider possible psychological factors. Our authoress could be a neurotic suffering from some deep-rooted frustration, complex, or phobia—perhaps a persecution complex. Does she feel that in some way the followers of Madame Blavatsky menace her own survival? It might help if someone would do an exhaustive biography of Mrs. Williams. If we understood her motives more thoroughly we might be able to evaluate her works more accurately. Some years ago she published a biography of Mrs. Annie Besant under the title *The Passionate Pilgrim*. Possibly these two books should be examined according to the Freudian technique of association symbolism; it would be nice to know if they are psychological autobiographies. There is an old literary rule that most successful fictional works are to a degree autobiographical. Could Mrs. Williams herself be the passionate pilgrim?

If our authoress hoped to accomplish a devastating disintegration in the field of esotericism she made one serious yet common mistake—she overplayed her hand too obviously. To deliberately ignore a mass of constructive evidence is to defeat the very purpose of a book, if it has any genuine purpose.

Public personalities have been subjected in recent years to so much defamation of character for motives manifestly ulterior that thoughtful persons are no longer convinced by an avalanche of accusations. There is no particular end to be accomplished by attempting to defend Madame Blavatsky's writings from those who would gnaw at the margins of her pages. The works themselves stand, and those who would understand her must read and study the books which she has left, and needless to say they will continue to do so. Regardless of these little tempests which break periodically, it is foolish to attempt to defend that which is in substance unassailable.

Lord Bacon recommended that the studious should not read to criticize or condemn, but soberly that they may understand. Each person has the right to reject or accept according to the dictates of his conscience, and no one has attempted to force Madame Blavatsky's writings upon an unbelieving world. Even those with whom we differ are entitled to the same respectful consideration that we demand from those who differ with us.

In substance, *Priestess of the Occult* is not in any sense of the word an important book. It belongs to a class of penny-dreadfuls which enjoy a passing vogue. A world seeking solution to its problems finds little of permanent value in that which offers nothing but a stone to the multitudes asking for bread.

Some very constructive and informing biographies of Madame Blavatsky are available to those interested. The great biography has not yet been written, and probably cannot be compiled for some time to come. Too many sources of information, especially in Europe, have not yet been adequately investigated. Some conflicting accounts may never be fully

explained or reconciled, but it is not necessary to assume that the unknown must be unfavorable. Little by little the fragments of an extraordinary life are being fitted together, but many of these fragments are not in themselves of primary importance.



H. P. B., A SELF-PORTRAIT

The world is not much concerned with a day by day report of the personal lives of such immortals as Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo. The fact that Diogenes accused Plato of being more proud than befitted a philosopher, or that Socrates was convicted by a corrupt Athenian court of law, means nothing. These men deserve and have received the gratitude of mankind. We are grateful, and rightly so, that human beings have lived in this world who were moved from some deep source within themselves to bestow beauty, wisdom, knowledge, and generous leadership upon their fellow men. That they were human we assume; that in some cases they were delinquent we suspect; but these derelictions belong to the minutiae.

Every faith, philosophy, and science, had its martyrs, revered now but cheerfully tossed to the lions by the small minds of their own times. Today all Christendom and most of the non-Christian nations honor the name of Jesus Christ, but when he lived they condemned his every action, crucified him as a common criminal, and executed most of his disciples and intimate followers. Homer wandered blind and poor through the states of Greece, but today he is revered by the whole world. An indignant and self-righteous mob scraped the living flesh from the bones of Hypatia, the mathematician, with oyster shells.

Gutenberg was dragged into the Inquisitional Court for the invention of printing. Bruno was burned at the stake for denying that the stars were candlesticks. Savonarola met a similar fate for preaching the rights of man. Galileo was forced to recant his discoveries on bended knee, and Copernicus escaped the Inquisition only by dying a natural death. Dante was exiled. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake for saving France, and then canonized as an afterthought. It took months of campaigning, pleading, and begging, to get George Washington elected President of the United States, and Lincoln was subjected to constant vilification by the press.

It is important to remember that these noble men and women who suffered and died and were variously mistreated, were persecuted by the good and honorable folk of their time. Each was condemned by a formal or informal jury of his peers. It was a smug, self-righteous, self-complacent kind of judgment, and not one of the inquisitors, be he cleric or layman, considered himself either fanatical or unjust. He felt it his solemn responsibility to prevent troublemakers from disrupting long-cherished traditions and well-worn patterns.

The viewpoint of Mrs. Williams' book is so characteristic of the attacks made on religious and mystical leaders for the last twenty-five centuries that we need give it only a brief summary. Madame Blavatsky was a brilliant and gifted impostor. All of her miracles were fraudulent, and all of her doctrines were cribbed from other writers. Those who believed in her were dupes or else parties to her plots. Her personal life was unsavory, and she exploited the gullibility of her followers to advance herself and her false cause. In substance, Madame Blavatsky was not nice.

Mrs. Williams accuses Madame Blavatsky of compiling her books from standard texts, and goes so far as to suggest a bit of ghost writing. While the ghost she advances was certainly a man of ability, none of the works published under his own name, and there were a number, reveals a fraction of the brilliance which ornaments Blavatsky's printed page. All

writers must derive certain material from standard authorities, and the authoress of *Priestess of the Occult* has done approximately a one hundred per cent job of compiling from other sources.

The numerous condemnations which have appeared in print relative to Madame Blavatsky are not the results of any sincere indignation over her private life or public character. These petty descents into personality are the frantic efforts of exasperated opponents who are unable to maintain their objections on a dignified level of debate. When a man loses his temper he loses his mind at the same time; he pouts, frets, and finally loses all vestige of acquired culture. The simple and honorable way to differ in print from another person whose ideas are already adequately presented in print is to advance sufficient proof that the statements themselves are basically incorrect or have been incorrectly developed from their premises. There is no need for literary tantrums.

It is not entirely convenient to attempt a frontal attack on Madame Blavatsky's books. Such a procedure would require a lifetime—perhaps several lifetimes of highly specialized research. Before the would-be attacker was equipped for the job it is quite possible that honest objections would be dissolved in honest admiration.

Madame Blavatsky taught an esoteric tradition which has existed in the world from ancient times, perpetuated in secret by schools of adepts, initiated disciples, and their selected students. This secret doctrine was the knowledge of the spiritual causes which lie behind natural phenomena. The material universe is suspended from these spiritual causes, and the nature of these causes is to be discovered only by the release of the spiritual and extrasensory faculties and powers of the human being. Materialism is a blind alley in the mental world, a man-made concept in eternal conflict with a God-made plan. The end of all learning is the knowledge of the self and the disciplines by which the self may be released from the darkness of its material nature. Evolution is the growth of all things to-

ward union with the divine cause of themselves.

It is this broad philosophical program, traced to its pagan sources, thoroughly documented and extended throughout all the religions of the world, ignoring the arbitrary man-made limitations of creeds and cults, that constitutes the substance of Madame Blavatsky's teachings.

It is this universal perspective and not Madame Blavatsky's personal eccentricities that has inspired the animosity of her critics. For the crime of daring to point out that the human being is capable of a magnificent spiritual unfoldment within a universe of law and order she has been declared a heretic, a fraud, an adventuress, and like Socrates a corruptor of private morals. She would advocate idealism in a smug, self-complacent period of history when materialists who make the laws proceed to break them for lack of any sufficient spiritual, moral, or ethical culture.

This is the substance behind the shadow. If Madame Blavatsky had lived in the most sanctified seclusion she would have been pronounced insane. Had no historian been able to discover any gossip about her she would have been called an ingenious hypocrite who covered her tracks well. Regardless of her personal conduct the verdict would have been the same. She had committed the unpardonable crime of differing with the majority.

In this article I have purposely refrained from any lengthy discussions of the details of the accusations made by Mrs. Williams; others are already at work refuting these charges. My interest lies solely in the sphere of principles, and I have no desire to descend to a battle of personalities. In this I feel that I am being consistent with Madame Blavatsky's own attitudes. When she translated *The Voice of the Silence* she was accused of having written the book herself because her critics were unable to gain access to the original, which was in Tibet. In a

letter on this controversy she wrote; "Say (to) friends, I and I *alone* am its author, and I will feel most flattered; you don't want Truth? Then take a lie and stick to it."

The secret doctrine that lies behind *The Secret Doctrine* is as old as human aspiration. It is supported and sustained by the religious literature of all ages and nations, but nowhere else in print has this information been gathered into one connected story. The basic concept may be attacked, ridiculed, denied, and distorted, *but it cannot be disproved*. We are so deeply grateful and so profoundly indebted to Madame Blavatsky for this magnificent piece of work that the frailties of her personality are of no concern. As it was her privilege to give so generously, it is our privilege to be kind.

Madame Blavatsky was a powerful, brilliant, and purposeful woman. She refused to accept the domination of a man-made world, and rebelled against the traditional limitations which burdened the women of her time. She did what she pleased, thought what she pleased, and did not hesitate to differ with any authority living or dead. She demanded and attained her right to function as an individual, and to select her friends without any regard for prevailing conventions. She met most of the objections to her life and work with the single word 'flap-doodle'. She applied it as generously to adoring worshipers as she did to relentless enemies. She recognized no authority over her intellectual life except her initiated teachers, and she cheerfully complicated her own affairs in their service. In substance, this exploring, adventuring, dynamically courageous woman accomplished many things that might excite the envy of those less valiant. Perhaps the biography of such a woman should be written by some one who has faced life as she faced it, fought for ideals beyond the appreciation of the majority, and left an enduring work that has brought inspiration and comfort to many.



Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

The Mystery of the Trembling Rod

The use of a forked hazel rod for purposes of divination was known to the Greeks, was practiced by the Romans, and was popular throughout the middle ages. The divining rod is usually associated with witching for water, and is still used for this purpose in many farming districts. Not everyone can make the divining rod work, but in each community there will be found one or two simple folk who have gained a considerable reputation with this curious device. The rod is held with the two hands by its forked end, and when directly over water becomes agitated. It bends abruptly toward the earth, so that in some cases it must be released or the wrists will be broken.

In olden times the hazel rod was used to discover various metals, sometimes by attaching a small amount of the metal to the rod and then walking about in areas where veins of the metal were supposed to exist.

On rare occasions the rod has been used successfully in discovering lost treasures and even for the detection of crime, and in recent years the sights for a number of successful oil wells have been discovered by this method.

The great hero of the divining rod was a humble French peasant, Jacques Aymar. In 1692 Aymar was in the midst of his career of discovering water, mines,

and hidden places with his hazel fork. Later he turned his attention to tracing robbers and murderers, and at last he was brought to Lyons by the French police to assist in the discovery of the murderers of a wine merchant and his wife who were found in a cellar with their throats cut.

Aymar entered the cellar, and holding the divining rod in his hand it immediately turned and pulled toward the two spots where the corpses had been found. The diviner remained for a few moments in the cellar, and then the rod began to pull toward the stairs that led up to the level of the street. Accompanied by the police Aymar climbed the stairs, passed through the door of the house, and began a long and complicated journey through back lanes and alleys. The stick drew Aymar across the courtyard of the archiepiscopal palace, out of the city of Lyons by the bridge across the Rhone, and after crossing the bridge the rod pulled to the right along the banks of the river. It then led the way to a small house, and through the house into the kitchen. There on a table were three empty wine bottles. The rod touched these, indicating that they had been in the hands of the murderers. This was later verified by two children who had seen the men slink into the house where they had hidden for a short time.

Aymar followed the trail of the three villains to a camp at Sablon where it appears they had taken a boat. He then returned to Lyons and went by boat to the town of Beaucaire, where his witching rod indicated that he go ashore. The rod then pulled him through the town and to the front door of the local prison. Inside the prison the rod drew Aymar to the cell of a hunchback who had been arrested shortly before on some minor grounds. The rod came to the end of its mission when it touched the body of the hunchback. This prisoner confessed that he was one of the three men responsible for the murder of the wine merchant and his wife. His two accomplices had made good their escape across the frontier and were beyond the jurisdiction of the French police.

Aymar attempted to follow the other two criminals, and with the aid of his mysterious rod tracked each one of them step by step until they left France. In many cases he was able to find witnesses who had seen the fleeing men. Before the hunchback's execution — he was

broken on the wheel—he gave a detailed account of the road which the murderers had followed escaping from the scene of their crime. His description agreed in every detail with that indicated by the motions of the divining rod. Needless to say this incident caused a great stir in France, and the popular belief that the willow witch was nothing but an ancient superstition received a serious jolt.

M. Chauvin, Doctor of Medicine, published a "Letter to Mme. la Marquise de Senozan, on the means employed to discover the accomplices of a murder committed in Lyon, on July 5th 1692." The Procès-verbal of the Procureur du Roi, M. de Vanini, is also extant, and published in the *Physique Occulte* of the Abbe de Vallemont.

Pierre Garnier, Doctor of Medicine of the University of Montpellier, wrote a *Dissertation Physique en Forme de Lettre*, a M. de Seve, seigneur de Flecheres, on Jacques Aymar, printed the same year at Lyons, and republished in the *Histoire Critique des Pratiques Superstitieuses du Pere Lebrun*.

Napoleon and his Fortuneteller

Like most Corsicans of his time, Napoleon Bonaparte believed in fortunetelling, astrology, magic, and the evil-eye. One night he had a strange dream in which he saw the royal family of Russia murdered. The next day he observed to one of his friends, "Woe to Russia when the Czar shall wear a beard." The first bearded Czar after Napoleon's time was the ill-fated Nicholas II, who was murdered with his family exactly according to Napoleon's dream.

The first emperor of the French considered himself rather clever in palmistry, and he liked to read the fortunes of those about him from the lines in their hands. One day he studied very attentively the hand of Prince Talleyrand. He refused to divulge what he saw in the hand of the prince, but exclaimed, "My astonished spirit trembles before him."

Like Caesar and Alexander, Napoleon studied the courses of the stars before battle in order to take advantage of the heavenly influences. He claimed to be able to read the outcome of a war from the positions of the planets.

Prior to her marriage to Napoleon, Josephine visited the salon of the brilliant French palmist and card reader, Mlle. Le Normand, to enjoy the thrill of having her fortune told. When the seeress met the young woman she immediately fell to her knees and said, "Welcome to my house, Empress of the French."

When Josephine became empress, Mlle. Le Normand gained access to Napoleon, who consulted her on numerous occasions and bestowed several honors upon her. It should be said to the credit of the seeress that she repeatedly warned Napoleon against the danger and ultim-



Mademoiselle LENORMAND.

ate disaster which awaited him if he attempted a campaign against Russia.

Mlle. Le Normand possessed strange mystical powers. As a child she would fall into trances and was given to dreams and visions. To her the cards which she used and the lines in the hands which she studied were merely means of concentration; the readings came from within herself. Sometimes the pictures on the cards changed before her eyes, and at other times she would speak prophetic words without being able to control her lips.

Fortunetelling with cards has been popular for over three hundred years,

and the most famous of all the cartomancers was Mlle. Le Normand, who interpreted these curious little pasteboard symbols for most of the famous persons of her time, including Robespierre, Marat, Danton and Talleyrand. Before the time of Mlle. Le Normand, card reading was largely done by gypsies and old grannies, but the brilliant French seeress brought dignity and prestige to the art, and her salons attracted both the rich and the learned.

Napoleon was so superstitious that it was not until 1807 that he would permit Mlle. Le Normand to examine his hand. The seeress immediately revealed to him the most secret details of his character. Most important of all, she announced the famous divorce which was only a project at the moment, but was alarming Josephine. Napoleon requested that Mlle. Le Normand compile a complete record of her predictions as they related to the future of his family and the destiny of France, and he caused this document to be deposited with the prefect of police.

After the amazing reading Napoleon developed a definite fear of the strange gifts which Mlle. Le Normand possessed. It appeared possible to him that she might use her uncanny foreknowledge to interfere with his plans, so on December 11, 1809 he caused her to be secretly arrested and prevented from communicating with anyone for twelve days. It was during this confinement that the divorce of Josephine was accomplished. Mlle. Le Normand then warned him that there would be no happiness or success for him after his faithful wife had been cast aside. *Memoires Historiques et Secretes de l'Impératrice Josephine* (Paris, 1827) by Mlle. Le Normand.

THE RED QUEEN

In *The Magic of Jewels and Charms* George Frederick Kunz mentions a curious superstition held by Queen Elizabeth of England. At the bottom of the chair, in which she often sat, was the queen of hearts from a pack of cards, having a nail driven through the forehead of the figure. Kunz wonders if this could have been a spell of witchcraft used against her hated rival, Mary of Scotland.

The Art of Short, Swift, and Secret Writing

A few years ago a London bookseller offered for sale a tiny volume by Thimothe Bright, "Doctor of the Phisike." The book was published in 1588. It enjoyed but one edition, and only three copies are known to be in existence. It was therefore quite a bargain when it sold for \$3750.

Thimothe Bright will ever be held in loving remembrance by the learned, and in peculiar abhorrence by business college students, as the inventor of modern shorthand writing. We say inventor, although as Doctor Bright modestly observes, abridged forms of writing were known in ancient times. A means of brief notation by small marks and symbols was invented by the Greeks, and it is probable that the disciples of Plato and Aristotle made use of this form to aid memory. A few specimens of Greek shorthand are extant, but nothing is known as to the principles upon which the system was built. What the Greeks discovered they passed on to the Romans. The system found especial favor with Cicero, who termed this writing *notae Tironianae* in honor of Tiro, a freedman for whom Cicero had a special friendship.

In his dedication to Queen Elizabeth, Thimothe Bright summarizes the accomplishments of the Romans in swift and secret writing. Cicero, deciding that the speeches and discussions of public men should be accurately recorded, devised a speedy kind of writing by small characters. This Plutarch reports in his *Life of Cato the Younger*. The invention was improved and amplified by Silica, until the number of characters was increased to seven thousand. Unfortunately the tediousness of the system resulted in its general disuse, and finally all memory of the method was lost. The darkness which overwhelmed the world after the fall of the Roman Empire, and the general decline of literacy through the Dark Ages, re-

sulted in an almost total eclipse of all intellectual efforts.

To all intent and purpose, therefore, Thimothe Bright, although stimulated by the Roman tradition, is entitled to the distinction of being the first modern to design a practical system of abridged notation. His arguments are in substance as follows: "Because of the great use of such a kind of writing, I have resolved upon the invention of the like. Being of few characters, short and easy, every character answering a word, the invention is upon English only, and without imitation, original, and new. The uses are divers; short, that a swift hande may therewith write Orations, or publike actions of speech, uttered as becometh the gravitie of such actions, verbatim. Secrete, as no kinde of wryting like."

Doctor Bright had a vision beyond the Court of Chancery. He could see no reason why his simple arrangement of lines, dots, circles, and semicircles could not be amplified into an international form of writing whereby men of strange countries and differing tongues could have a common understanding.

Having perfected his method, Bright petitioned the queen for the right to control, teach, and communicate his method to such as might profit thereby. It was touchy business in those days of state ciphers and political intrigues to be found in possession of written documents which could not be quickly deciphered by the bailiff. It was universally assumed that material not easily intelligible was probably highly treasonable.

The queen was supplied with the whole formula, examples of the writing, and such sundry, divers, and various matters as pertained thereto. As it is probable that she was the most misquoted person in England, a ready method of perpetuating her remarks without error of line or word must have

seemed beneficial. On the 26th of July, 1588, she graciously granted to Thimothe Bright, "Doctor of the Phisike," letters patent for a period of fifteen years. During this time no one had the right to infringe upon the doctor's magic language. He was privileged to teach, convey, bestow and impart, and at his pleasure to print books in his method. At the queen's pleasure these books could be circulated throughout the domain, "In, or by character not before this tyme commonlye knowne and used by anye other houre subjects."

The two copies, (both imperfect, as the book dealer probably knows), known to exist, are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, and the Library of Magdalene College, Cambridge. There is no copy in the British Museum.

From the period of Doctor Bright to the middle of the 17th Century very little was done to spread the use of

shorthand. Beginning about 1645 a number of systems appeared, and books and pamphlets multiplied rapidly. Some of these have delightful titles. In 1680 Jeremiah Rich published *The Pen's Dexterity Invented and Taught*. In 1696 George Ridpath issued his *Short Hand Yet Shorter*. In 1695 William Mason devised a most poetic title for his method, *A Pen Plucked From An Eagle's Wing*. William Hopkins, in 1674, suggests the acrobatic quality of swift writing by his title, *The Flying Penman*. But it remained for Gregg and Pitman of modern sainted memory to bring this art to its present imperfection. Today, long and difficult, and often meaningless speeches can be speedily taken. All that remains then is for the modern artist to discover the meaning of the signs which his flying pen has so arduously recorded. Perhaps stenotype is the answer.

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Library Notes: *Cabala*

A. J. HOWIE

The Cabala section of the library is a good group of books on which to base a discussion of the problems of being helpful to inquirers into philosophical and metaphysical subjects. Its titles are alive with a halo of fascination that surrounds the unprobed realities of mystical subjects and anything that savors of the magical or miraculous. The name Cabala itself seems to connote the paraphernalia of scrolls, pantacles, invocations, spirits, angels, and wonderworkings.

Although interest is easily voiced, we accept all inquiries as sincere. But much interest is volatile and quickly diverted when confronted with even slight obstacles. Unfortunately a true knowledge of the Cabala can neither be offered nor secured for the simple asking. Practically nothing has been written on the subject in streamlined language, and the student has to delve through many words, many opinions, and much pretended secret knowledge, as well as see through the intentional blinds that obscure the true Cabala with the essential secrecy that must surround a key to powers that can be wielded as well for evil as for good.

The speculative Cabala is frequently preserved in parables, allegories, figurative language, and hints that range from the bizarre to the absurd. It requires a strong unbiased mind in the student to approach cabalistic literature without bigotry or prejudice, to achieve delicacy in observing similarities and significant differences, to grasp abstractions, to analyze apparent incongruities and in-

consistencies, or to follow very subtle inferences.

A flare for language is a great asset in a serious study of the Cabala. The traditions and literature of the Cabala are a concatenation of translations and redactions of early works, the originals of which have been lost, and which themselves were based on a secret knowledge that was passed orally from teacher to especially trusted pupil.

Webster's International Dictionary has simplified the spelling to Cabala. Hence, at the outset the student must not be confused by the different spellings of the word, not fail to recognize some of the more eccentric ones, such as *Qblh'*.

Also the student must orient himself to the opinions of translators as long as he is unable to check the older texts for himself. The same attitude will protect him from the personal interpretations of those who write introductions to translations.

Students of esoteric lore will find that scholars other than occultists concealed their discoveries for reasons known only to themselves. Myers cites the instances of Leibnitz publishing his *Acta Eruditorum* with the scheme of differential calculus in such a way as to hide both the method and object from the uninitiated.

Myer quotes Frederick Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling on the Cabala: It "contains ruins and fragments, if you will much distorted, but nevertheless remnants of that primitive system which is the key to all religious systems, and those do not

speak falsely who say that the Kabbala is the transmission of a doctrine which existed alongside, but outside, of the original Holy Writings...."

We have enough textual material in English to introduce the beginner to the Cabala, and to further the researches of more advanced students. For a fine introductory text that is simple and readable we suggest:

The Cabala, its influence on Judaism and Christianity by Bernhard Pick, 1913. This is a small work that will help establish a background of the history of the Cabala, vocabulary, bibliography. Its general interpretation is quite consistent with the more wordy authorities, and its text will not confuse or burden the student too much with the conflicting problems of origins and authorship.

A little more advanced, but still introductory text is:

The Kabbalah, its doctrines, development, and literature by Christian D. Ginsburg, 1925. This will serve to introduce the various basic diagrams of the relationships of the sephiroth, principles, and individual letters, with considerable but not obtrusive Hebrew notes, as well as familiarize the student with the Hebrew characters for the cabalistic words in the text.

One of the pre-Zohar cabalistic works is the *Alphabet* of Rabbi Akiba (variously spelled). This alternately treats each letter of the Hebrew alphabet as representing an idea or abbreviation for a word, and as the symbol by which to interpret moral, theo-anthropic, angelological, and mystical notions. We have only the Latin of this in Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*.

Another pre-Zohar work is the *Book of Enoch* which we have in English as translated by Richard Laurence, 1883 from an Ethiopic manuscript in the Bodeleian Library. This work describes the glorification of Enoch and his transformation into the angel Metatron.

One of the early cabalistic works is the *Sefer Yetzira* (variously spelled), the Book of Formations. We have three translations into English. The translation by Isidor Kalisch, 1877, has a parallel Hebrew text, and contains some fine

explanatory notes and a glossary. A translation was made in 1896 by P. Davidson. Our third English text is by Knut Stenring, who has pointed up correspondences related to the Tarot, and the book is supported by an introduction by Arthur Edward Waite, 1923.

The Zohar is the great cabalistic work. Myer gives a good brief summary of its contents: "The book Zohar proper is a Qabbalistic commentary on the Pentateuch... is a mine of occultism, giving the mystical foundation of the Mosaic ordinances, poetical and philosophical views on the Kosmogony and Kosmology of the Universe, soul, redemption, triad, sin, evil, etc.; mystical expositions of many of the laws and appearances in nature, e. g., light, elements, astronomy, magnet, etc.; explanations of the symbolism of the Song of Solomon, of the construction of the Tabernacle, etc; forming a complete Qabbalistic Theosophy."

There are two contemporary so-called "first" editions of the Zohar, one printed at Cremona and the other at Mantua between 1557 and 1560. There are eighteen independent works imbedded in the Zohar. The sections are variously titled, as The Book of Concealed Mystery, The Great Assembly, The Small Assembly, The Hidden Midrash, A Midrash to the Song of Solomon, Discourse Come and See, The Discourse of the Youth, etc.

We have a translation of the Zohar by Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon in five volumes, published in 1931. There is an extensive glossary in each volume to help the student.

The *Kabbala Denudata* of Knorr von Rosenroth, 1677-1684, is an introductory work on the Cabala on a comprehensive scale. Of course, being in Latin, it is a closed book to most students. Portions of it have been translated by S. L. MacGregor-Mathers in his *Kabbala Denudata, the Kabbalah Unveiled*, 1938, which contains: 1. The Book of Concealed Mystery; 2. The Greater Holy Assembly; 3. The Lesser Holy Assembly. There is a word reference index.

The *Aesch Mezareph or Purifying Fire* we have as translated in olume IV of

the *Collectanea Hermetica* edited by W. Wynn Westcott, 1894.

Franck pays high tribute to Rosenroth's *Kabbalah Denudata* as follows: "There are precious texts in that book which are accompanied by generally faithful translations, among them the most ancient fragments of the Zohar, the most important work of the Kabbalah; and where there are no texts it gives extensive analyses and very detailed tables. It contains also either numerous extracts or entire treatises from modern Kabbalists, a kind of dictionary which prepares us more for the knowledge of things than of words."

The Kabbalah or the Religious Philosophy of the Hebrews by Adolph Frank is an example of what we meant when we said that the student who must pursue his studies through translation will have to penetrate a maze of conflicting opinions. Frank, frequently quoted and recognized as an authority on the Cabala, wrote and published his book in French. Jellinek translated it into German. Then a Dr. Sossnik translated the German text

into English. He assures the English reader that he has "translated all the notes made by Dr. Jellinek, and followed his example in omitting the translation of the Appendix." But the bottoms of the pages are peppered with his own notes too where he has weighed and compared the original French with the German translation and finds himself disagreeing with everybody. This spirit is typified by his own words in the introduction: "At times, though, I was compelled to take the part of critic; especially where I met with discrepancies between the French original and the German translation. In such cases I was naturally compelled to look for arbitration in the original sources, and I had to venture my own opinion at times when neither the translation of the author nor that of the German translator seemed to render the true meaning of the original Hebrew or Aramic text." In the meantime, the student reader must decide whose interpretation to accept. But in spite of this handicap the book is an excellent work on the Cabala.

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If I were to be limited to one book for the study of the Cabala, I would select:

Qabbalah. The Philosophical Writings of Solomon Ben Yehudah Ibn Gebirol or Avicebron and their connection with the Hebrew Qabbalah and Sepher ha-vohar, with remarks upon the antiquity and content of the latter, and translations of selected passages from the same. Also, *An Ancient Lodge of Initiates*, translated from the Zohar, and an abstract of an essay upon the Chinese Qabbalah, contained in the book called the Yih King; a translation of part of the Mystic Theology of Dionysios, the Areopagite; and an account of the construction of the ancient Akkadian and Chaldean Universe, etc. Accompanied by diagrams and illustrations by Isaac Myer, 1888.

We have quoted Myer frequently, but the following items taken at random from the table of contents suggest the scope and interest of the work: Quotations from the Zoharic writings, elucidating passages in the Old and New Testaments. New Testament and Pagan writers on the Invisible and Visible. Pastor of Hermas on the Nature of Christ. The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles on the Kosmic Mystery. Three Conceptions of Jesus. The Theory as to Ecstasy. The Qabbalah of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Law. Curious parallels regarding the Serpent, the World-tree, and the Seven Kings of Edom, in the Zoharic books and the Cueiform Tablets.

.. *The Secret Doctrine in Israels a study of the Zohar and its connections* by Arthur Edward Waite, 1913, is an effort to codify all the references to topics he includes under the general terms of 'Secret Doctrine. This book will prove of interest especially to the occultist and theosophical student.

The cabalistic techniques of interpreting the sacred writings are given under three headings: *Gematria*, the "art of discovering the hidden sense of the text by means of the numerical equivalents of the letters." *Notaricon*, a method whereby each letter of a word is used as the initial letter of another word for expanding the hidden meaning of names and entire texts. *Temura*, a system of permuta-

tion wherein one letter may be substituted for another letter preceding or following in the alphabet, and thus from one word may be formed another word of totally different spelling. These permutations are contained in various tables.

An example of the application of *Gematria* is:

The Canon—an exposition of the pagan mystery perpetuated in the Cabala as the rule of all the arts, 1897. The author remains anonymous, but he is obviously a person of culture and learning who has been seeking the philosophical patterns that can be applied to the arts. He discusses man as a symbol of the universe, as the basic patten for church architecture, the cross (which he calls the "holy rood" or measure)—all cabalistically interpreted. The following is a quotation from his chapter on the "Music of the Spheres":

"The theory of ancient music seems to have been constructed from a study of the harmonic relations existing between the parts of the universe; and the musical canon, like that of architecture, was probably based upon certain symmetrical consonances, discovered in the proportions of the planets, and the intervals between their orbits. Yet none of the ancient rules of harmony, which are now intelligible, can be directly or simply traced to the known ratios of the planetary orbits. But all the ancient expositions of the science of music are very obscure, and give the reader the impression that, as in the case of other arts, there is something behind their obvious statements which the writers did not choose to disclose."

Another text applying *Gematria* is *A Preliminary Investigation of the Cabala contained in the Coptic Gnostic Books and of a similar Gematria in the Greek text of the New Testament* by Frederick Bligh Bond and Thomas Simcox Lea, 1917. This work will be of especial interest to students of the Cabala from a Christian viewpoint.

Another Christian approach is exemplified in *The Book of Light and Lives or the essence of the Sohar, pertaining to the mysteries of man, the Christ, and his coming kingdom* by Peter Davidson,

1891. We previously mentioned that we have his translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah*. Mr. Davidson burdens his introduction with a recital of the evils of the 1890's, which he interprets as identical with those that will presage the second coming of Christ. His studies of the Cabala are to substantiate the immediacy of the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

Locked in the Latin of the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* by Athanasius Kircher, 1652 are important evidences of the interest taken by the Church Fathers in the cabalistic subjects. Almost 200 folio pages of volume II are devoted to the Cabala, with many examples of *Gematria*, *Notaricon*, and *Temura*. There is a unique section on the aracen Cabala, which he curiously describes as concerning the superstitious philosophical hieroglyphs of the Arabs and Turks. In volume IV he discusses cabalistic amulets, numbers, and the Pythagorean Cabala.

An example of the purely magical aspect of cabalistic research is *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* as delivered by Abraham the Jew unto his son Lamech, A. D. 1458. (Translated by S. L. MacGregor-Mathers.) Here are the names and seals of the angels, prayers for the invocation of spirits, modes of conjuration, spells, etc., the whole system supposedly derived from the secrets of the Cabala.

The outstanding modern exponent of cabalistic or transcendental magic is Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant). In English we have his *History of Magic*, *Transcendental Magic*, and *The Paradoxes of the Highest Science*, the first two translated by Arthur Edward Waite, and the last by an anonymous theosophist. In the original French we have *La Science des Esprits*, and *La Clef Des Grandes Mysteres*. A unique item is a Levi manuscript of an unpublished biblical drama entitled *Nimrod*. We also have 13 volumes of Levi notes attributed to his pupil the Baron de Spedalieri, *L'Evangile Kabbalistique*; also a two-volume manuscript, *Prophetie ou Vision d'Ezequiel* from the same source. Both of these manuscript collections are believed to be unpublished.

In addition, we have *Les Mysteries De La Kabbale, etc.*, by Levi, in the autograph of Nowakowihhi, one of his disciples. This contains over one hundred drawings in line and wash, dealing with magic, hermetic and cabalistic mysteries, and the Apocalypse of St. John.

Space does not permit mention of many curious manuscripts and the less important books. We have a parchment scroll that visitors to the library should examine. And there are related references in other sections, and numerous uncollated magazine articles.

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