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A SERIES OF LETTERS

BY

Manly P. Hall

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These letters have not been rewritten and most of them are exactly as originally dictated, except that names and identifying references have been omitted. In a few cases letters have been combined, in order to supply additional information.

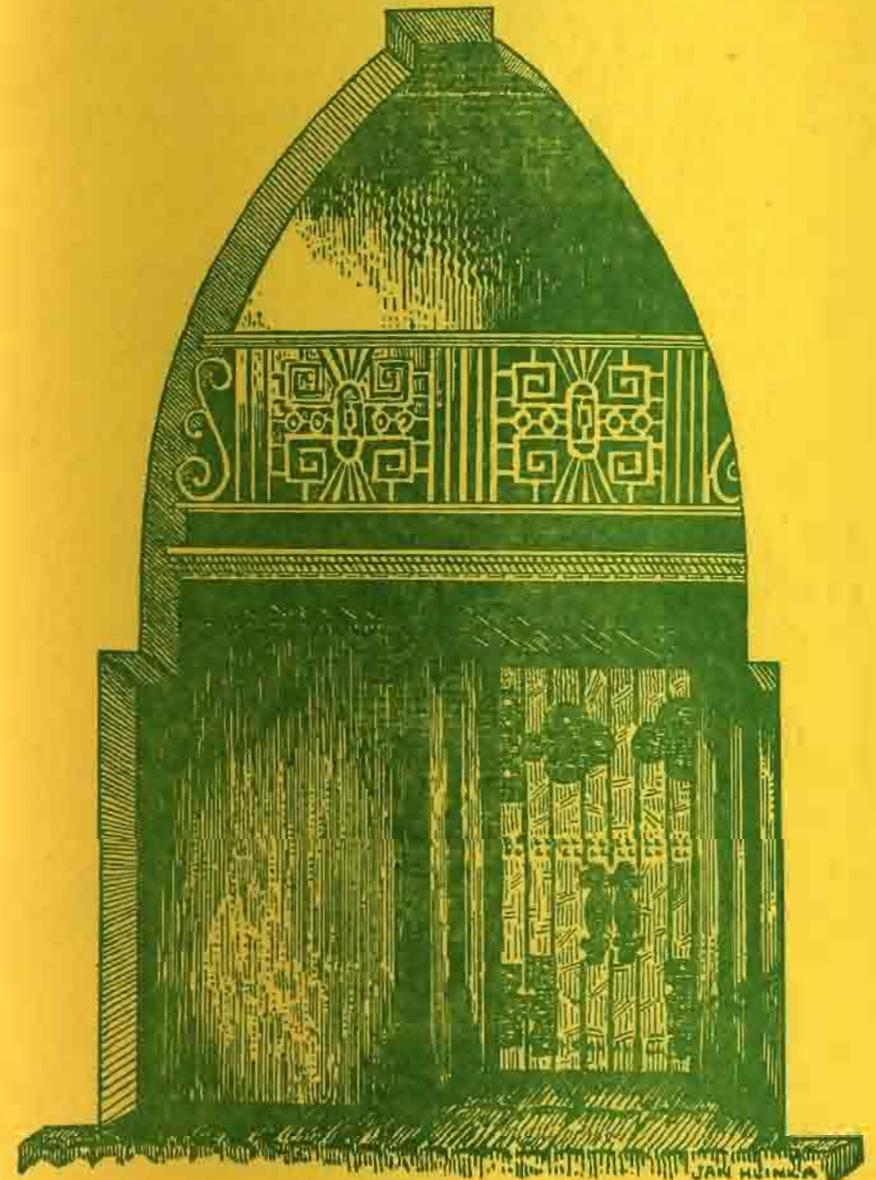
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HORIZON

Journal of the
Philosophical Research Society

SPRING
1951



ISSUED
QUARTERLY
VOLUME 10 No. 4

HORIZON
LINES

AN EDITORIAL

BY MANLY PALMER HALL



The Illusion of Mortality

THESE pseudo intellectuals who make it their career to impress upon their fellow men the futility of spiritual conviction are a weariness unto the spirit. They would bring us the glad tidings that we are "such stuff as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with a sleep." Even though we do not live as though we had any expectation of immortality, it is doubtful if we could accept stark materialism without serious damage to ourselves and others. As we scan recent publications by these overeducated unbelievers, we gain the impression that they assume that the doctrine of immortality has been disproved, and that their skepticism is founded on the solid rock of demonstrable fact. Actually, they have no more evidence that the soul perishes at death than that it survives the dissolution of the corporeal fabric. If immortality is a dream, the conviction of mortality is little better than a nightmare. Why must we argue these imponderables when all we can accomplish is a headache?

A survey of the condition of human society since it has been dominated by a group of materialistic schoolmen does not reveal any general improvement. Progress continues to depend upon that small group of idealists who refuse to accept the mechanistic concept, and most of our troubles have been multiplied by cynics who felt themselves predestined to indoctrinate us with the spritely convictions of Marx and Engels. How does the materialist expect to dissipate our

beliefs in God, immortality, and spiritual progress, and at the same time strengthen our ethical and moral instincts so that we can split atoms with a good hope? One is inclined to suspect an ulterior motive operating behind these evangelists of mortality.

It was proved long ago that you cannot enslave human beings in whose hearts a strong faith bestows the courage of noble purpose. To fit the human nature completely into a materialistic political, economic, and industrial concept, we must first of all destroy that spark of Divinity within man which revolts against mediocrity, selfishness, and tyranny. There is no place for human ideals in a world of technological processes, so it appears necessary to reduce man's individuality in order to insure the perfection of his technological institutions.

Fortunately, the materialist is such a startlingly bad example of his own doctrine that he has slight effect outside of a circle conditioned to accept his pronouncements. He survives largely by convincing himself that he is a brave man capable of facing oblivion with a rare quality of resignation. It also appears that the most loud-spoken of these apostles of negation are comparatively young in years. Most of them are on the optimistic side of forty, and their lives have been largely spent in cloistered sanctuaries of learning. After they graduated, they, in turn, became professors or technicians or associated themselves with laboratories for research projects. They had imbibed generously from the fountains of scholasticism and sincerely believed that the universe would ultimately be governed by Ph. D's and D. Sc's.

On the pessimistic side of forty only the hardest materialist can preserve his allegiance to the concept of a godless universe and a soulless humanity. Even physicists develop obscure aches and pains. The biologist marries and raises a family along most approved biological lines. The astronomer runs into human nature even as he peers at the stars, and he finds himself involved in astronomical politics. By degrees, very certain young men are transformed by the alchemy of time into very uncertain older men. The inevitable complications of living are common to the learned and the unlearned. The enthusiastic materialist may prepare for the battle by girding on the shining armor of cynicism, but it offers slight protection. Faith is older than doubt; hope far deeper than despair. In an emergency, the materialist becomes a traitor to his notions, and after an appropriate period of conflict emerges true to himself and to the convictions of his own heart.

There may be good grounds for agnosticism, and under certain conditions excuses for atheism, but man himself is a religious animal and will remain so in spite of the higher nonsense which passes off as critical scholarship. It is understandable that the medieval concepts of heaven and hell hold few charms for the progressive thinkers of this generation. No one in his right mind wants to sit on a damp

cloud playing a harp, nor can he be expected to appreciate the prospect of being perpetually parboiled in perdition. It is entirely understandable that the doctrine of immortality is unattractive while associated with such theological absurdities. But there is a better solution. Many great religious and philosophical systems have teachings about immortality that do not insult common sense or violate good taste. The doctrine of reincarnation, for example, is far more reasonable and in harmony with the visible operations of Nature than the concept of annihilation. In fact, it seems more attractive than the idea of biological salvation. If man lives in his descendants, then he must be the embodiment of his ancestors—a most depressing notion.

Many philosophers have been agnostics; that is, they refused to dogmatize about the substance, nature, and attributes of Deity. They have acknowledged the possibility, even the probability, of the existence of a divine power, but admitted that they were not in a position to prove this concept beyond possibility of debate and controversy. Their faith was a private matter. They held the right to worship God according to the convictions of their own conscience, and gave all other mortals the same privilege. Honest skepticism may lead to sincere investigation. This, in turn, ends almost inevitably in a strong and enduring faith. Even though we grant that theologies have perverted our natural religious instincts, it does not seem that materialism will improve the situation by extinguishing whatever faith remains.

It is unfortunate that the human mind is so often dominated by revulsion mechanisms. We are creatures of extremes, and, if disillusioned or disappointed, act without proper discrimination. Theists one day and atheists the next, we cultivate such excessive attitudes that we live in a constant state of extremity. Also, we exhibit a marked tendency to blame God and the universe for difficulties which originate among our own kind. If we do not like the preacher, we leave the church. I once knew a farmer who was a pillar of a rural kirk. After the ladies of the congregation had decided to paint the church a verdant green, he never darkened the door again because he disliked the color. Folks are forever becoming disillusioned by theological squabbles, but it seldom occurs to them that these dissensions reveal the frailty of man rather than the inadequacy of the divine nature. Faiths must change, for they reflect the moods of creatures growing slowly and painfully from a condition of ignorance to a state of enlightenment.

The average scientist would never think of renouncing biology because he has discovered that the biological speculations of ancient scholars were not entirely accurate. Change, guided by intelligence, is indicative of a natural tendency to progress. In religion, however, there is a definite inclination to resent improvement of any kind. Doctrines, no matter how obsolete or decadent, are infallible, and

those of more liberal tendencies are confronted with an unreasonable decision: They must accept all or reject all. Confronted by such an ultimatum, the liberal is inclined to select the course of intellectual emancipation.

Several agnostics and so-called atheists have discussed their convictions with me. It soon became evident that they were not by nature or inclination godless. They could not conscientiously accept the *only* concept of God with which they were acquainted. To them, it was utterly unreasonable that the cosmos should be governed by an irritable old gentleman, whose moods and fancies were bestowed as a priceless legacy upon his numerous progeny. Atheism is only an interlude. The mind, maturing under the pressure of experience, outgrows theology, but has not developed sufficient strength to orient itself in the sphere of philosophical religion. Some degree of skepticism is healthy, but it is unfortunate for the skeptical to become cynical.

Broadly speaking, the doctrine of immortality has dominated the moral and ethical life of humanity for nearly five thousand years, whereas materialism has been in the ascendancy for less than two centuries. It does not follow that the implications of life after death have been universally applied in the conduct of mundane affairs. It has been estimated that the essential progress of humanity has resulted from the inspired leadership and untiring devotion of less than ten thousand men and women. Many of these were persecuted or martyred in their own day, but have been exalted and recognized in later times. Of this ten thousand, which naturally does not include those remembered for their infamy, the overwhelming majority proclaimed strong religious convictions and was encouraged to bear all manner of adversity by faith in God and belief in the divine destiny of humankind.

Although certain physical advancements of comfort and convenience may be credited to conscientious materialists, the burden of progress has been carried by mystics and visionaries. This is especially true among philosophers, and in older times philosophy dominated the intellectual life of the race and bestowed the convictions which inspired and sustained constructive reforms and innovations. We owe far more to such devout idealists as Buddha, Plato, Jesus, and Confucius than we do to those irritable skeptics whose only claim to distinction was a militant unbelief. There is much substantial evidence that idealism contributes to essential progress, whereas materialism undermines any social order which comes under its domination. Those of little faith have committed the larger crime against their fellow men.

The trouble with religion has not been the belief in God, but the disastrous drift of faiths toward materialism. When religious institutions feel called upon to become dominant political and economic

structures, they fall into the very fallacy which they were intended to correct. When the materialist condemns the conspiracies of the clergy, let him remember that these plots and counterplots were caused and perpetuated by churchmen obsessed by "practical" considerations. When there is nothing to look forward to but oblivion, it seems especially desirable to be successful and comfortable in this world. It is useless to say that materialism is ethical. Like exact science, it is neither ethical nor unethical, but nonethical. One spokesman of science explained it all by saying: "We make the discoveries; others can use them according to their own convictions." To disclaim responsibility for the consequences of scientific discoveries is mere evasion. The manufacturers or distributors of dangerous weapons are just as guilty as the men who use them to accomplish nefarious schemes.



The doctrine of human immortality is a concept which gives sanction to a number of precepts. Continuity of consciousness, for example, implies the survival of memory. Human beings have struggled with their memories since the faculty was individualized. Most have discovered that the burden of memory is not always easy to bear. If the human soul passes to some other place or condition in which the policies of this world no longer dominate, memory may be especially troublesome. Human society emphasizes the continuance of present conditions. The individual proceeds with the expectancy that tomorrow will be the extension of today. We act as though we expect to remain in the same kind of environment for all eternity. We legislate for the ages, even as we amend the laws of the past. Under such a policy, the possibility that we might ultimately find ourselves in a completely unfamiliar environment is not reassuring. We bring nothing into this world but ourselves, and if we depart into a state where our worldly experiences are worthless, the prospects are disconcerting.

Imagine for a moment that suddenly, without warning, you are ushered into a qualitative universe, not only deprived of your worldly goods, but also of the world itself in which such goods are significant. You are cast upon a strange shore, like some shipwrecked mariner. If you give thanks for freedom from taxes, you also accept total loss of income. If you escape your enemies, you also lose your friends. Even as you give thanks for leisure, you are confronted with the

extinction of all the familiar pleasures and relaxations. Having highly specialized those faculties which advanced a physical career, you find a mode of existence in which selfishness is profitless, ambitions meaningless, accumulations worthless, and a bad disposition an affliction only to yourself. No wonder the materialist hopes, with almost theological intensity, that there is no life beyond the grave.

It seems better to some that they cease utterly than that they have to change their ways. Long years of physical existence narrow vision, restrict hope, and undermine faith. Obviously, our institutions are meaningless outside the mundane sphere. We cannot even conceive of the citizens of other planets having cultures similar to our own. A man who has just paid a fortune for a seat on the Stock Exchange seldom pauses to consider the insignificance of his attainment when measured in terms of the cosmos. His religious instincts, if any, are satisfied by a handsome contribution to a fashionable church. He knows that the previous occupant of his Wall Street throne died of apoplexy when Consolidated Barnacles dropped three points. He may even suspect that he will meet a similar fate, but a little greatness is comforting to the ego, even though all worldly things are transitory.

Only by becoming evangelists of materialism can moderns justify their own stupidity. If there is any other kind of life available to man, there is no excuse for his present conduct. The simplest answer is to close our eyes resolutely and then declare, with Scriptural finality, that there is nothing to see. Atheism increases, strangely enough, in eras of prosperity, and languishes in periods of adversity. When affairs run smoothly and our dividends arrive promptly, the man-made universe is an outstanding success. But when depressions afflict our purses and mysterious aches and pains attack our "innards," we develop an abiding hope that God is still in his heaven and that our physician is more ethical than we suspect.

An honest faith always carries honorable responsibilities. If we acknowledge a divinity in ourselves and others, we must act accordingly. We must respect our own internal divinity and also treat our fellow creatures with some deference and regard. Such noble instincts would interfere with our competitive inclinations and seriously undermine the practice of rugged individualism. A truly co-operative world would be happier but not richer. This would contradict the prevailing notion that wealth is indispensable to happiness. As we contemplate the consequences which would result from applying any enlightened religious code, Christian or pagan, we are appalled. It seems much simpler to ignore the entire subject, hope for the best, and wait until the inevitables assert themselves.

It is a mistake to assume that the policies of mankind are actually dominated by the religions which flourish in the various nations. Most

Christians, for example, are nominal believers. They would probably affirm their faith to the whole world, but the majority does not permit its creed to interfere with its career. There is no doubt that religion does sustain a broad framework of moral and ethical policy and is responsible for reducing private and public crime. We are all so strongly indoctrinated that large violations of our codes bring with them strong conscience mechanisms. Most human beings are kinder in their hearts than they are in their conduct. The trouble is due to the endless sequence of small compromises by which we undermine our own standard of values, and place others, also well-intentioned, in difficult situations.

Humanity taken as a group is overwhelmingly honest and consistently well-intentioned. The trouble is that the majority is static, and human policies are dictated by a small group of dynamic, but not necessarily honorable, opportunists. Advancement in worldly station is frequently accomplished by compromising principles. Leaders are more ambitious and frequently more acquisitive, intolerant, and fanatical than their followers. Thus, the human family gets a bad name because the few resolve to exploit the many. These same few are inclined to justify their own ruthless conduct by being staunch materialists. They may even go so far as to exploit what they consider to be the superstitions of their peoples. Atheists in high places are dangerous, for they become opinion-makers and excite the negative instincts of the masses.

A wave of disillusionment seems to be sweeping over the land. We have received several letters from individuals who feel that the world is dedicated to a policy of collective delinquency. As one indignant mortal expressed it: "My faith in humanity is decidedly shaken." Perhaps a few words should be addressed to these folks who are suffering from the impact of unpleasant realities. We can sympathize with their outraged sensibilities, but, unfortunately, consolation is no remedy. The real trouble lies in personality insufficiency. No one can afford to be blighted by the first frost of adversity. A solid philosophy of life equips the individual to meet the emergencies of world change with courage, patience, and understanding.

It has always been the tendency of the idealist to visualize human society in the terms of his own convictions. He decides that human beings should abide together in peace and amity, enjoying productive labor, and sharing their chattel unselfishly and cheerfully. Having addicted themselves to this standard of social relationship, these well-meaning optimists promptly become unhappy because others fail to justify the noble notion. The moment we expect more from human nature than can be reasonably hoped for, we open ourselves to receive a large disappointment. Even while we berate others for failing to

practice the higher abstract virtues, the chances are we are doing no better ourselves.

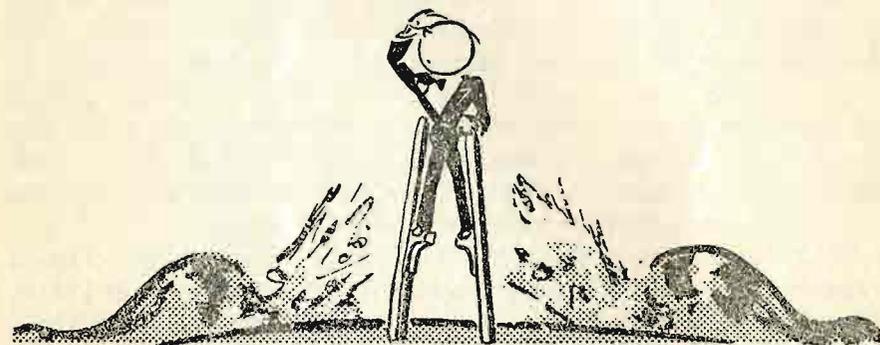
Philosophy, especially mystical philosophy, supplies a concept of the world plan and the divine purpose which is so reasonable and consistent with the evidence gathered by experience that it meets all the natural requirements of the normal person. The world and the creatures which inhabit it are unfolding through evolutionary processes suitable to the circumstances and occasions. As we watch the growth of a child, we may be irritated by its lack of wisdom and judgment, but console ourselves with the realization that time and experience will bestow maturity. There is no reason to despair because the adolescent lacks the patience of Job or the wisdom of Solomon. In fact, should such precocity occur, it would justify deep anxiety. Why, then, should we be out of sorts because an adolescent humanity fails to exemplify a way of life suitable only, and possible only, to the most learned, courageous, and skillful?

If prevailing conditions are disconcerting, our inability to change them appears even more devastating. The first is a collective calamity, but the second is a personal insult. Most enthusiasts refuse to accept the sober judgment of common sense. Overwhelmed by the magnitude of "conditions," they reject utterly the valuable lessons which might have enriched both mind and soul, and simply become disillusioned. These are, indeed, the ones of "little faith" referred to in the Gospels.

If you earnestly and sincerely desire to make your contribution to the progress of mankind, select some moderate and suitable endeavor and be satisfied with small or partial results. You have the privilege of sowing good seeds in a fertile field, but you cannot control those universal forces which determine the time and abundance of the harvest. There is very little happiness for those who, having planted one seed, stand resolutely by demanding that it grow, and also requiring that its growth conform with human expectations. Normal folks usually handle this kind of situation better than those who have been too heavily indoctrinated with strange and wonderful beliefs.

For example, I remember a young family that was preparing for the arrival of its first child. They had decided that it was going to be a boy and had prepared accordingly. Both prospective parents confided to me that they would be utterly devastated unless the new arrival were of the masculine persuasion. The powers that preside over such things presented them with twin daughters. There was a moment of profound consternation, but "the Lord giveth," and a few days later the little girls were the most precious things in the universe. It is always advisable to accept graciously and gallantly the wondrous workings of the universe, and not wait resolved to be disappointed by the unexpected.

Both belief and unbelief can cause us to defend false attitudes at the expense of happiness and progress. Religious teachings have burdened the world with sinners, and materialistic doctrines have plagued it with skeptics and scoffers. These two extremes have a common denominator. Each in its own way is trying to impose a concept upon facts. Striving desperately to defend preconceived notions, we waste our resources in hopeless conflict with truth itself. It is impossible to overestimate the danger of fixed opinions in a moving world. Fixations are a form of crystallization, and crystallization, in turn, is a form of death. There is no kind of crystallization more dangerous than mental ossification. When we become slaves to our own unalterable opinions, the best part of us dies, and living itself is only the perpetuation of bad habits.



This literary detour is justified because it reveals and exemplifies the consequences of hyperintellectualism. A cynical attitude on all matters relating to idealism is considered an evidence of sophistication. By doubting everything and everyone, we align ourselves with that small but elite company of emancipated mortals which has contributed nothing of lasting importance to the advancement of society. As a reward for cultivating unnatural instincts and attitudes, the devotee of modernism liberates himself from the pattern of essential progress. He accomplishes freedom from hope, freedom from beauty, freedom from faith, and freedom from usefulness. These are four freedoms which we can get along without.

When man exchanges his spiritual perspective for a magnificent doubt, he reminds me of an old story. A North Dakota farmer bought his son a racoon skin coat early one fall. The lad promptly exchanged it for a double-barrel shotgun. Father said nothing until the appropriate moment. One subzero morning, when a blizzard was raging and snow was drifting deep, the farmer called up to the boy: "It's four A. M., son, and cold as charity. Put on your shotgun; it's time to milk the cows."

World conditions, at the moment, give cause for deep concern. Wars threaten, and these mean inevitable suffering, crime, privation, pestilence, and economic disaster. Now is the moment for those who have traded their faith in divine providence for a sterile materialism to do something splendid and beautiful. It is also a rare opportunity to gather comfort from unbelief—if possible.

All religions, regardless of their involved structures of dogmas and rituals, are based upon three essential convictions: the existence of a divine, all-powerful, and all-wise creative agency, the immortality of the human soul, and the ultimate victory of good over evil. Obviously, these essential principles have not been disproved. Certainly, there are moments when the larger purposes are obscured, and we cannot estimate values by merely examining a single incident or even a short sequence of events. Even history, however, must convince us that despotism fails, and that a wonderful and protecting power has guided humanity through numerous disasters and has brought mankind to its present state. Even though this state is far from perfection, gradual and inevitable growth cannot be denied. History also shows us that the cultivation of godless attitudes and the denial of the essential dignity of the human soul always precede the collapse of civilization or the enslavement of peoples under a yoke of tyranny.

This does not mean that there is no excuse for skepticism. Honest uncertainties sustained by good character may advance human knowledge. We must recognize and strive against doctrines which have been corrupted, but this does not justify us in rejecting the good with the bad. The three essential convictions of religion are right and proper, but efforts to enlarge upon the basic concepts and interpret them may lead to confusion and even militant disagreement. Any man can be wrong in his interpretation of universal truths, but this does not mean that the truths themselves are without substance.

When we think that we are rebelling against divine edicts which appear unjust or fantastic, we are really renouncing man-made codes built around sublime facts. These codes reflect the limitations of time and place and opportunity. They remind us that fallible mortals can never create infallible institutions. Even this realization is of the highest importance, for it releases us from servitude to man-made interpretations of heaven-established laws. Religions may be corrupted, but religion per se is incorruptible. Philosophies may fall into errors, but the substance of philosophy is true. The sciences may be perverted, but the principles of science, when properly understood, are incontrovertible.

Those intellectualists who would emancipate us from the superstitions of religion are forever pointing out the fanaticism, intolerance, and reactionary tendencies of theological groups. The materialist is unfair

because he fails to present both sides of the case. He says nothing about the hundreds of millions of human beings who have been better citizens, better parents, and better friends because of a strong but simple faith, nor is there any mention of the unselfish service which is inspired by spiritual convictions.

The average person, who is never prominent for either his vices or his virtues, lives a code of responsibility and good intentions inspired by his belief in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Some of the devout may be ill-equipped to practice their convictions and limited in their perspectives, but all in all it is religion more than any other factor that has sustained and enriched the high aspirations and constructive resolutions of mankind. Men of strong faith founded this nation, conquered the wilderness, and made security possible for those without faith. In every religion, the overwhelming majority of the followers practices constructive codes of conduct and is more just with its weights and measures because it believes that to keep the law is to keep the faith.

Sometimes the devotees are urged to fanaticism by vicious or mentally unbalanced leaders, but such principles of right conduct as do exist in society are sustained, not by the legislation of governing bodies, but by the spiritual beliefs of the people. Faith leads to the quiet growth of the governed, and this is the secret of progress. The average cynic, while stating his complete disapproval of religious procedures, usually has a kindly spot in his heart for the codes and convictions which dominate scientific and industrial projects. In these brackets, he is convinced, lies the salvation of humanity. Yet, we may condemn science for crimes as terrible and deplorable as any attributed to religion.

If scientific progress has advanced us in several ways, it has also given us technological warfare, which is the greatest curse that the race has ever been called upon to bear. With antisepsis, vaccines, and serums in one hand, and the atomic bomb, bacteriological warfare, and horrible poisons in the other hand, the scientist stands forth as a relatively perfect example of inconsistency. If we point out this to the materialist, he insists that we should not blame science. May we request, therefore, that he does not blame religion for the crimes committed in its name. Nor is the modern industrial concept, with its incredible economic imponderables, without fault or blemish. Many of the troubles blamed upon science, religion, and philosophy originate in economic pressures which have been permitted to pass uncorrected. The rich have given us the poor, and, strangely enough, the poor have bestowed upon us the rich.

The burden of our boasted materialistic progress has caused more casualties than all the Holy Wars of history put together. We may

assume, therefore, that the fault lies not with the system, but within man himself. Until man recognizes his ethical and moral responsibilities, none of his institutions can be perfected. How does the materialist expect to perfect human ideals by removing those foundations which have always sustained ideals? Does he expect unbelief, which has always bred disaster, to suddenly change its complexion and support that which it has ever discredited?

If spiritual convictions are necessary in collective society, they are equally needed in the private life of the citizen. Faith is important to most of us because our peace, security, and usefulness are essential to our happiness. We must orient ourselves in the small sphere of personal action. We must continue from day to day doing the work of each day, and gaining from small happenings the courage to face the future. It is evident that we cannot impose our pattern upon others, and should not if we could, but each of us has the right to his own courage and the privilege of building a strength suitable to his needs.

The tragedy of the disoriented individual must be borne by that individual. If he turns to society for assistance, he is in constant danger of exploitation. He finds that he must buy the human consideration that he needs, and must pay for it in the coin of the realm. He must now hire the helping hand that was once offered without thought of remuneration. His top-heavy social system presses down upon him and restricts not only his activities, but also his good intentions. The ordinary man discovers to his sorrow that he is not safe as a person in an unbelieving world. The more completely the ideals of those around him are corrupted, the more quickly they turn upon him to deprive him of such security as his earthly possessions may provide.

As spiritual values vanish from his environment, he finds that he can no longer trust his friends, depend upon the honor of his business associates, or believe the words of his neighbors. It is hard to convince Mister Average Man that the failure of ethics is a blessing or the loss of morality a protection. Deprived of convictions about standards of conduct, society becomes a menace to itself and breeds further disillusionment and discord. The materialist will try to explain that this is not because he has decided that God is a figment of the imagination. Materialism is a release from error, not an invitation to corruption.

There should be a new standard. Men should be upright and virtuous from purely practical considerations. Conduct should be directed in accordance with industrial and economic laws. In other words, we need the same old virtues, but we must find a new way for justifying them. A wonderful vista is opened to that part of our natures superstitiously referred to as the soul. We have the privilege of maintaining law and order that we may continue indefinitely to

bask in the light and glory of financial progress. It is a new way of approaching an old dilemma. We are no longer threatened by perdition after death if we break the code. The present threat is pandemonium while yet we live. This is regarded as a far more practical approach, one suitable to enrich the minds of the young and to free us from antique superstitions.

The more we think about all this, the more it dawns upon us that the materialist has borrowed most of the machinery of theology and has been content merely to eliminate the hierarchy. Hope and fear still determine human conduct, but now it is hope of prosperity and fear of want. We labor no longer for the glory of God, but for the satisfaction of our stomachs. We should all be duly impressed by this wonderful example of human mentation. While men believed that they should store up at least part of their treasure in heaven, they were content with moderate physical holdings, but now, by the grace of sophistry, we are given a new Commandment: Get all you can, and get it now.

It might be well to examine into the superstitions associated with the doctrine of "grab." What strange perversion of human thinking causes us to devoutly believe that prosperity is the foundation of happiness or security? With everyone striving desperately to be rich, how many have examined critically the lives of those who have attained great wealth? Can we honestly say that the plutocrats are happy or even healthy? Do they live longer? Are their friends more sincere? Are their families more devoted? Do they enjoy life? Have they attained freedom? Are the successful *really* successful, or are they poor little rich people worse off in most particulars than their neighbors of moderate means? May we not hazard the speculation that excess, whether of poverty or of wealth, is equally troublesome, and that happiness lies in the quiet zone of moderation. Is there a worse superstition in all the world than the notion that a man can buy respect or honor? Honors he may purchase, but honor is bestowed by the admiration of those who respect character and not by those who envy wealth.

Among other superstitions, we may mention the ultimate state of human civilization emancipated from the errors of a sickly idealism. We are promised an efficient world smoothly governed by experts. We shall enjoy incredible technological advantages and shall live much longer for reasons not quite clear. We shall have everything, do nothing, and be nothing. There will no longer be any inducement to become a conscientious workman, for everything will be made and assembled along principles of mass production. It seems to me we will be the ultimate example of the "bird in the gilded cage." By the time science can protect us from every other ailment, we shall lie

down and die of boredom. We may even look back longingly upon those good old days when we all had something to complain about and the courage to proclaim our discontent from the housetops.

It is assumed, of course, that by the time this Nirvana of plastics and synthetics is attained we shall have bred several generations of unimaginative mortals who will fit into the scheme, because they have never known anything else and have gradually lost the skill to think outside the field of technology. The experts fail to tell us, however, who is going to run this terrestrial paradise which will be without any snake—unless it be management. This wonderful world is going to be controlled by rules of biology and physics. The college professor will come into his own, unless he happens to be a D. D. There will be little room for him unless he mends his ways. It all suggests a kind of regimentation and absolute addiction to an authoritarianism with scientific rules submerging all individual incentives. By the time it is well-organized, this concept of life will probably make us wish that we could have back our good old-fashioned purgatory.

Fortunately, this materialistic superstition will never come to pass. The human being is a creator, a dreamer, and an incurable romanticist. He can never be made to accept a way of life that is inconsistent with his own instincts and inclinations. He will never permit a minority group of technicians to deprive him of everything that makes life human. Materialism itself is merely a reaction to abuses which have existed in our society. When materialism, in turn, becomes abusive, there will be a further reaction and men will turn from it to the cultivation of some more attractive concept. We will swing from extreme to extreme until evolution and experience reveal the pressing need for moderation.

Whether or not we believe in immortality, we must face the fact that physical existence is transitory. We can build any kind of a world we want, but we must leave it behind. If the patterns we serve imprison us, it is only for a little while. Each must make that transition from a concept of human institutions to the fact of the universal plan. We may prolong human life, but the very civilization we are constructing is itself death-bestowing. As long as there are machines, laboratories, and the like, there will be accidents. Technical progress itself requires much sacrifice, and no matter what kind of a world we fashion we must pay for it, even as we build. The materialist holds that oblivion is the inevitable end. It seems to me that this is the most frustrating and melancholy doctrine that has ever been devised. Even our remote ancestors believed that the ghosts of their forefathers could drop in for lunch occasionally.

When ancient man was laid in his burial mound, his favorite goods were placed beside him so that he could enjoy familiar things.

The human mind cannot accept the concept of an ultimate oblivion. Even to think about it or to rationalize such a doctrine is to develop a destructive and insidious melancholy. Once this neurotic condition develops within the personality, worries and fears not only destroy future hope, but also interfere variously with present functions. Utility alone requires the internal security of man. Why, then, does the belief in the extinction of the personality at death hold attraction for certain sophisticates?

It seems to me that the answer is evident. The individual whose conduct here is so purposeless, meaningless, and worthless as to violate all constructive impulses has much he would like to forget and nothing which needs to be remembered. Oblivion is the refuge of mediocrity. Those who have made no important contribution to the past have been forgotten by history, and those who do no better at the present time will be perfectly willing to forget themselves. There is no excuse for immortality in a theory which has given the human heart and soul nothing to live for. It would be impossible to reconcile the material ambitions of the so-called successful with the doctrine of immortality. Nothing we do here, little that we think here, and very little of what we are here would be of the slightest significance anywhere else. It is consoling, therefore, to assume that there is nowhere else to go. In a universe ruled by merit, there is no use for our friends to stand around our casket wishing us good luck.

Immortality is part of a large conviction. It preserves our faith in justice. It gives us the hope that we can sometime, somewhere, grow into the fulfillment of ourselves. Unless we want to grow, unless we are willing to assume the responsibilities for our own action, unless we have dreams that need to be fulfilled and aspirations beyond this mortal span, immortality is not an acceptable belief. Instead of looking forward to death as the end of suffering, why not give more consideration to a program of essential education which will prevent suffering? Is it easier to believe in oblivion than it is to unfold character potentials that justify a hope of eternal life? Why should we function so badly that death becomes the easy way out? There is something wrong with the world in which many persons wish they were dead, and many others wish someone else were dead.

The philosophical doctrine of reincarnation meets all the requirements for a sound code of human survival. The mind is liberated from theological absurdities, and, at the same time, the human being unfolds as part of an orderly evolving cosmos. Belief in rebirth confers practical incentives to personal improvement and world progress. We have a reason for dedicating our efforts to the advancement of spiritual, moral, and ethical standards and ideals. As originally taught, metempsychosis caters in no way to the delinquencies of human

nature, nor does it burden human consciousness with unreasonable fears and doubts. There is no controversy between the doctrine of reincarnation and the basic principles of religion, philosophy, or science. At the same time, the individual is liberated from such depressing concepts as completely hereditary domination of instincts or personality defects bestowed by prenatal influences for which there is no internal compensating power.

It is not wise or practical to indoctrinate the human mind with the conviction that the individual is merely the victim of pressures which he cannot understand and lacks the courage or incentive to overcome. As we cannot answer such a question as: Is a certain doctrine true? we must pass this difficulty and attempt a simpler and more direct query: Is a certain belief useful and necessary? Lacking the faculties required to examine absolute facts, we must compromise with the unknown by accepting with reservations such relative facts as have the most immediate utility.

The materialistic code is not essentially useful. It enriches nothing and impoverishes everything. As materialism itself is only a concept among many concepts, there seems no advantage in accepting and defending that which is least inspiring and helpful. If we must live in a dream, we are happier and better when we build castles in the air than we are when we build dungeons in a dark underworld of negative values. Hope and faith sustain the troubled mind. Fear and doubt only perpetuate the prevailing discontent.

There will be endless arguments about the ultimate state of things until the human consciousness develops those apperceptive faculties which can contemplate the spiritual mysteries of life. There can be no proof of spiritual convictions except internal enlightenment. Those mystics who have received into themselves the light of God abide in truth. For them there is an end to doubting, but for the rest of us strength is born from qualities of conviction which sustain a high standard of personal conduct. Why anyone should want to undermine faith is difficult to understand. Yet, there are always some who feel it their peculiar responsibility to trouble the lives of others. These missionaries of faithlessness insist that we should be strong and brave enough to live without overtones, and to depart from this mortal sphere cleaned of all superstitious optimism. Even if they should be right and "the rest is darkness," what does it matter whether we believe or disbelieve? But as we approach the darkness, we are apt to depart from this vale of tears with more gentleness and dignity if a strong faith sustains us through the hours of transition.

A biochemist, who was on the faculty of a large university, said to me one day: "I don't believe in immortality, but I think I shall continue to conform with the doctrine just in case I should be wrong."

It seems, therefore, that even well-educated uncertainty considers it wise to carry a minimum insurance policy as a protection against acts of providence. We know but little here below, but are very sure of our unleavened notions. Even as we contemplate what we consider to be the rational boundaries of probabilities, we are moved to some noble theorizing.

We hear, for instance, that the probabilities are that the atmosphere of Jupiter and the general condition of the planet make it unlikely that it can sustain a highly organized form of life. It is quite conceivable that the citizens of Jupiter have come to precisely the same conclusion about the earth as a suitable environment for an advanced culture. Viewed from another planet, it may seem improbable that we exist at all, and even more improbable that we shall amount to anything even if we have survived this long. It is hard for us to imagine that even worlds like our own are part of some vast plan.

Our very existence is a miracle, which would be completely denied unless the evidence were overwhelming. Does it require, then, such heroic optimism to accept the probability that a universe that gave us life has also the power to preserve and perpetuate that life? Just because we are a bit neurotic, due largely to our own foolishness, there seems no reason to believe that universal intelligence is also psychotic, creating orders and species of animate creatures only for the pleasure of destroying them. To the idealist, it would seem the cruelest kind of madness to bestow consciousness so that man can think and hope and dream and then frustrate all that has been accomplished by the dreamer by condemning him to eternal darkness.

Every instinct that is meaningful, every impulse that is purposeful emerges from a deep conviction of eternal life. We believe in life, not death. We may abuse our beliefs and betray the life which sustains us, but even in our extremity we take consolation, not from the world, but from the hidden depths of our own hearts. The vision of immortality lifted us from the state of the brute, has given us poetry, art, and music, has inspired us to dream of the perfection of civilization, and has built courage in each of us. A fie, then, upon that scurvy breed, who, to say the least, would spoil a pleasant afternoon; and, to say the most, would bring down upon their heads those very institutions of higher criticism which have spawned the breed. If we must be superstitious, let us cling to kindly fantasies which are helpful and decline to have any part in those superstitions that are so unpleasantly superstitious.

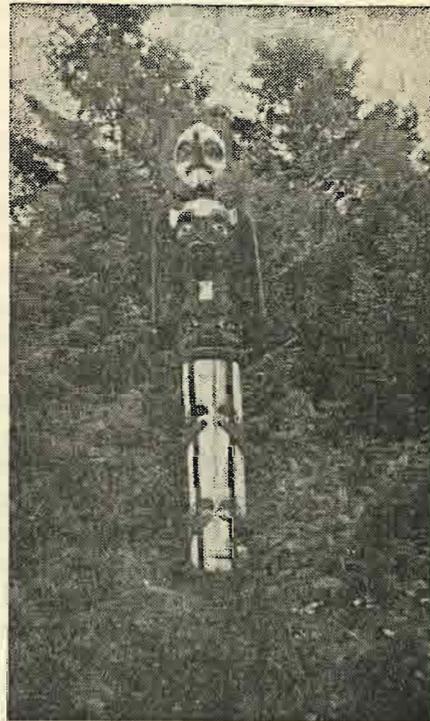
The great Bion, one of the most celebrated of the Sophists, said it neatly: "It is a very great misfortune not to be able to bear a very great misfortune."

A Legend From Totem Land

The word *totem* is derived from the Ojibway language, but in popular usage it is identified with a form of social organization widely distributed among primitive peoples. Totemism existed among the Australian aborigines throughout Melanesia and Polynesia, can be traced in Africa and India, and flourished among many tribes of North American Indians. In some instances, as in Australia, totemism was involved in a concept of reincarnation. Human souls had totemic natures which endured through a long cycle of physical incarnations. Sometimes the totem incarnated with the soul, but according to other beliefs it overshadowed the physical body, becoming a spiritual guardian capable of answering prayer and responsive to magical rituals. With the unfoldment of social consciousness, the totemic concept was refined and became a simple kind of heraldry. By means of totems, the genealogies of families were recorded together with historical records and religious legends and myths.

It is difficult to summarize totemism because it developed in many areas and was dominated largely by local convictions. Originally, totemism emphasized man's attitude toward the several kingdoms of Nature which flourished in the human environment. Animals fascinated the primitive human being. He was impressed by the powerful instincts of beasts, birds, and reptiles. He observed the skill and intelligence with which they protected themselves and solved the problem of survival. The aborigine soon realized that various members of the animal kingdom possessed highly specialized abilities and attributes. Some were remarkable for their strength, others for their speed, and still others for their cunning. Primitive man had no way of estimating mental and emotional pressures except in the terms of his own personal reactions. It

did not occur to our remote ancestor that the animal consciousness was different from his own. When he saw animals performing certain actions, it was the natural assumption that the creatures were motivated by the same consideration that impelled man to similar or identical actions. The only difference was that the human being could articulate and communicate, whereas the beast was locked within itself. But there were exceptions even to this rather obvious limitation. The animals could appear to men in dreams or during fasts or vigils. At such times the spirits of the animals could speak, and when they did it was in the prevailing idiom.



—Photographed by M. P. H.

TLINGIT TOTEM POLE AT WRANGELL

Medicine priests had long heart-to-heart talks with beasts and birds, and not infrequently these creatures were kindly disposed and ready to assist humans in their various enterprises. Even among the more advanced classical civilizations, animal fables, such as those by Aesop and Fontaine, have enjoyed wide popularity. There seems nothing especially unreasonable in assuming that brutes have private opinions on such important subjects as religion, philosophy, politics, and morality. There has also been a marked tendency to use animals to caricature qualities of human nature.

Early physiognomists (for example, Porta and Cardan) following certain hints derived from Aristotle, remarked that if some animals strongly resembled men it was equally true that many men decidedly resembled animals. The observation led to the development of a concept that similarity of appearance indicated similarity of temperament. A man who remotely resembled a hog would probably be hoggish, and the lady with feline mannerisms was described as catty. We have developed quite a vocabulary to describe the virtues and vices of mankind by reference to animal groups. The tragic misfortunes of Louis XVI were partly explained by the fact that his profile recalled that of a fish, and a well-known American politician of the last century, who possessed a keen and critical mind, a large hooked nose, and scanty hair, was frequently referred to as the bald eagle of Congress.

Lavater wrote an extensive work running into several volumes unfolding the theory of character analysis. He classified human temperaments and reproduced many portraits of bovine, equine, canine, and feline humans. He was quite certain that human temperament could be neatly interpreted by this system of analogies, and the general theme survived to the days of the celebrated Dr. Fowler, who analyzed human heads and faces on the Coney Island ferry boat. Although the popularity of such analyses dwindled after the advent of

psychoanalysis, the subject is still of interest to many and has enjoyed the support of several distinguished savants.

It is quite possible that totemism was influenced by the fauna of regions in which early tribes developed their cultures. With later migrations disrupting the geographical patterns, peoples from different areas were identified by the symbols which they had brought with them. After all, tribes are small nations, and each has its own history and a rich legendry to explain both origin and destiny. Groups lacking written languages resorted to symbolism to perpetuate their records. The symbols were a kind of pictorial shorthand. They jogged the memories of the old men, and by their arrangements these figures and designs preserved the chronological sequences. Picture writers were early confronted with a serious difficulty. It was easy to represent visible forms and incidents, but extremely difficult to depict abstract ideas. Thus, it was necessary to associate symbols of quality with those representing persons and things. After drawing a crude likeness of a man, it might be important to record whether he was a good man or a bad man, a wise man or a foolish man. It was also helpful to identify that man by his name or some distinguishing mark by which he could be separated from the general concept of man.

The presence of his totem revealed his clan, and it was also possible by combining several creatures to record his personal name. In the Central American carvings, we can tell by animal and compound devices that one warrior was called "Flint Knife," and another "Spotted Jaguar." All this meant something to the local historians, who were able to unfold the wonderful accomplishments of these heroes from the symbols that accompanied them in the paintings or carvings. Occasionally, the totems were glorified to become god symbols. This is well-typified by the feathered-serpent device which represented the deity Kulkulcan, and when placed over the head of a king or warrior implied that the

mortal man was under the divine protection of the deity.

Totemism had several other interesting specializations. It mingled with the mask cult and was deeply involved in magical rituals. Human beings could become embodiments of totems by wearing the faces of the totemic creatures. There are numerous instances among primitive religious groups of mysterious transformations by which mortals became embodiments of spirits and demons by putting on the regalia associated with supernatural beings. Vestiges of such practices are found in Egypt, Greece, and among many American Indian nations.

The totem, like the heraldic devices of Europe, also became a symbol of prestige, aristocracy, and the record of hereditary rights and privileges. A man whose house or adornments revealed a particularly illustrious descent was entitled to honors appropriate to his state or estate. The emphasis upon descent through clans was significant because it bound rulers to the divine founders of their tribes. This descent testified to ancestral overshadowing which bestowed special protection and also implied extraordinary abilities. Primitive peoples are often delightfully inconsistent. Their concept of reverence may include numerous amusing particulars. Among the totem Indians of the Canadian Northwest and southern Alaska, a totem may serve as an instrument of conscience. There are records of including upon totem poles the figure of the owner pointing his finger in the direction of the house of a man who owed him money.

The familiar totem poles associated with the cultures of the Haidas and Tlingit Indians have fascinated many tourists. These frequently purchase miniature representations, more or less accurate, and bring them home as souvenirs. Each of the correctly designed poles can be read and tells a complete story. A limited number of devices are employed, but unfortunately in different areas the interpretations vary. Totem

poles can be divided into three basic groups: heraldic, historical, and mythological. The divisions are not entirely clear, because the elements of all three may be mingled. Nearly all genealogies include mythological factors, and histories are little more than the reports of local myths. In early days, the totem poles were comparatively simple, but after steel tools were available, the artistry became more complicated.

There is a legend that the first totem pole in the great area which centers in Ketchikan was washed ashore from some distant land. Perhaps it floated from Asia on the Japanese current or had adorned some lost ship. In any event, it stimulated the imagination of the Indians and caused them to develop their image-making instincts. Artistically speaking, totem poles and related ornaments have unusual merit. The designs are strong, original, and reveal considerable imagination. The Indians began to visualize supernatural beings and followed one of the earliest trends of which we have evidence. Most aboriginal peoples, when trying to escape from the familiar, followed the simple expedient of creating composita; that is, they combined several creatures to form something that was strictly speaking "out of this world." If imagination lagged, it was possible to intensify or glorify common attributes to give them added importance. After all, the totem was more than the mere animal by which it was represented. It was a spirit creature, and this overtone could be indicated by creating an impression of difference or separateness. We admire primitive art today because of the vitality of its impact and because it conveys an impression which escapes from the literal.

The totem pole in its earlier forms was but slightly colored, if at all, but with the availability of paints took on a brilliant and spectacular appearance. The Indian villages included a veritable forest of these poles, but the privilege of having one prepared was strictly guarded. At one time these poles had

mortuary significance, and some contained openings to hold the ashes of the cremated dead, but this practice does not seem to have had general dissemination. Human beings have always been a little terrified by their accomplishments, and totem poles took on mystical and magical significance. They belonged to the old way. Many of them had been carved in the distant past and were sanctified by association. Furthermore, the creatures that adorned them were highly venerated, and the compound carried all the implications of totemism.

The Kad-a-shan totems were named for a great chief of the Haida peoples, whose ancestors had intermarried with the Tlingits and were established in the village of Stikines. At the root of the Kad-a-shan symbolism is a legend of cosmological significance which will indicate the trend of tradition in the area. Chief Kad-a-shan's totems now stands in Wrangell. To understand them, it is important to listen to the wise man when he says: "Hear now, O my people."

Once upon a time in the great long ago, there was darkness upon the face of the earth. All the light that came was from the sheen of the sea which glowed with a dim white radiance, and from the little fires which men built to warm themselves. It was very cold, and the human creatures huddled close for warmth. They were miserable and ignorant, and they did not know the joys of the hunt or the songs and stories of the old men, and there was never even a potlatch. In those days, one of the rude creatures, a little stronger than the others, had gained the respect and fear of his fellow mortals and had made himself head man of the Haidas. In his soul there was ambition, and he was resolved to extend his power and domain over all the people who dwelt in the darkness. As he thought about the project, it so possessed him that he carried it with him into sleep. Now this head chieftain had a dream, and in this dream something strange and bright

and shining filled the air, and he knew that this mysterious substance was light. He also realized that if he could control the light he would be master of all creatures.

When he awoke, the chief man waited for the fulfillment of the dream. In the fullness of time it came to pass that the great white bird, Yahl, which was really a raven but had not yet turned black, flew down from the sky carrying the sun box, or, according to some versions, the light bags, which were three in number. The box, or the three bags, contained the sun, the moon, and the stars, but they were all carefully concealed, so that only occasionally a little spark escaped. The great white bird was a servant of the Good, and he had brought to the chief the privilege of placing the sun and the moon upon the highest mountains of the earth, and tossing into the sky all the tiny bright pebbles that would become the stars.

But the chief, because he was selfish and ambitious, did not wish to give light to others; he wanted to keep all the radiance and glory for himself. By so doing, he and his descendants would always be headmen, and others would fear and serve them. Yahl, the white raven, did not read the heart of the chief, but gave him the box which was to be placed in the house of the headman. This chief guarded it carefully and revealed it only to his own family, and forbade it to be shown to anyone else or even the existence of the treasure to be told. The white raven hovered in glory over the house of the chief, waiting for the fulfillment of the work to be done. As time passed, the people began to ask why the heavenly bird was there. Some thought that it was a good spirit sent from the Good, and others feared that it was an evil omen threatening punishment or disaster. Actually, Yahl was trying to recover the box, but so carefully was it guarded that not even the bird of heaven could rescue it.

Let us pause for a moment and examine this legend, which is almost certainly of Asiatic origin. The world liv-

ing in darkness represents the ignorance of primitive men. They had only the light of Nature indicated by the phosphorescence of the ocean and the little fires of their own minds. The great bird that came from the Good is the Holy Spirit, which brought from a superior world the treasures of wisdom and learning, the sacred arts and sciences, and the Mystery Religion, here referred to as the sun, the moon, and the stars locked in a box. The selfish chief personified those antisocial forces which have always sought to keep the light of truth from the people and to use wisdom and knowledge to exploit the ignorance of their fellow man. The similarity between the word *Yahl* and the sacred name of God in the language of the early Jews is worth noticing.

But we must listen again to the words of the old one. The great bird was not easily outwitted, and prepared a strategy to bring the light to all mankind. The chief had a daughter, a fair and beautiful maiden. The white raven followed her whenever she left her father's house, hoping that she would leave a door open so that he could enter and rescue the strange and wonderful casket. But she was obedient to the will of her father, and because he had so ordered she was very careful never to leave the door ajar. Watching this maiden who went each day to the spring for water, *Yahl*, by his heavenly magic, transformed himself into a very tiny pebble and fell into her drinking cup. The little stone was so small that she did not notice it, and she swallowed the stone as she drank from the wooden bowl.

Thus it came about that shame and sorrow descended upon the house of the chief. His beloved daughter conceived and bore a child without ever having known a man. At first it was believed that she had been seduced, and it was blamed upon the presence of the great white bird. It was all the more mysterious because at the time of her pregnancy the bird vanished and was no more to be seen. Things were difficult for awhile, but then there were further



—Photographed by M. P. H.
TOTEM POLES IN FRONT OF CHIEF
SHAKES' COMMUNAL HOUSE AT
WRANGELL

strange signs and wonders, and finally the father was convinced that magic had been responsible. He forgave his daughter and restored her to his affections and became the protector of the little one.

The infant boy was in every way what a young Indian should be. He was a model of propriety and courage, and his mind was far older than his years. About his head darted little rays of light, and when the time came he was silent and strong and gave grave counsel beyond his years. As the boy grew up, he took on more and more of the attributes of the hero. He was a child of destiny, immaculately conceived, and predestined to bring the light to his people. After a time he used to go and play with the treasure box. He

would open the lid a little way, and wonderful shining beams would come out and dart about the room. Then, in the midst of the light, the little boy would stand and laugh and sing and make sweet cries and songs like the voices of the birds. Everyone wondered why he so loved the light and why his only toy was the magic box.

As he grew stronger, he could raise the lid and take out the bright little things which it contained. But he was also a sly lad, for once in awhile when no one was looking, he would take one of the tiny, shining stones and throw it up in the air through the smoke hole in the roof of the house. Each of the pebbles darted upward until at last the sky was filled with shining little lights. The people who lived in darkness wondered where the stars had come from, but not even the chief realized or discovered that they had been taken from his treasure box.

At last the sky-boy grew to manhood, and the old chief loved him greatly and admired his strength and his skill in all things. Now the young man could carry the box on his shoulders and toss it into the air, but it was not good to be careless with the treasure. So finally, the chief told him the whole story and warned the young man that under no condition should he give the light to the others, but should keep it so that he could be a ruler over men.

Then, on a certain day, a terrible storm came. Thunder rumbled in the mountains; lightning flashed through the sky; torrents of rain fell, and a great wind shook the house of the chief. In the midst of the storm a blast of the tempest tore off the roof of the chief's

house. Those huddled in fear then beheld a miracle. The young hero seized the box containing the sun and the moon, and, with a strange, loud cry which only the white bird could make, rose with the speed of thought from the roofless house. As he ascended his form changed, and he became again the white raven. Thus it was that the light was saved, and *Yahl* took the sun and the moon with the stars that were left and placed them forever in the heavens, so that the light would belong to all men.

The interpretation is so strictly in conformity with the universal distributions of the Messianic *mythos* that explanation is hardly necessary. The white bird, which is the breath of the Father, took upon himself the likeness of a man, was born of a virgin, and became the Saviour of his people. He revealed his wisdom and power first by making many little lights, which are the religions and philosophies of men which guided them in the early days. At last, in the great storm which rent the roof of the chieftain's house, he fulfilled the mystery of his own divinity. He returned to the heaven from which he had come, but first gave to all mankind the great light, which from that time on lighted every man that came into the world. Such is the story marked by crude emblems upon the totem poles. Although none of them contain all of the account, one can observe many things. There are strange symbols: the protection of men from the deluge; guardian creatures; old chieftains with their tall hats; and all the friendly and wonderful creatures who served together to protect and enlighten mortal beings. The white raven is also there protecting life with its wings.

Part V of THE ADEPTS IN THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITION, by Manly P. Hall, will be ready for distribution approximately May 1st. This Part is titled AMERICA'S ASSIGNMENT WITH DESTINY, and is devoted to the unfoldment of the Great Plan for universal enlightenment in the Western Hemisphere. You may place your order now for delivery as soon as the work is available.

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Mystical Sects of the Near East

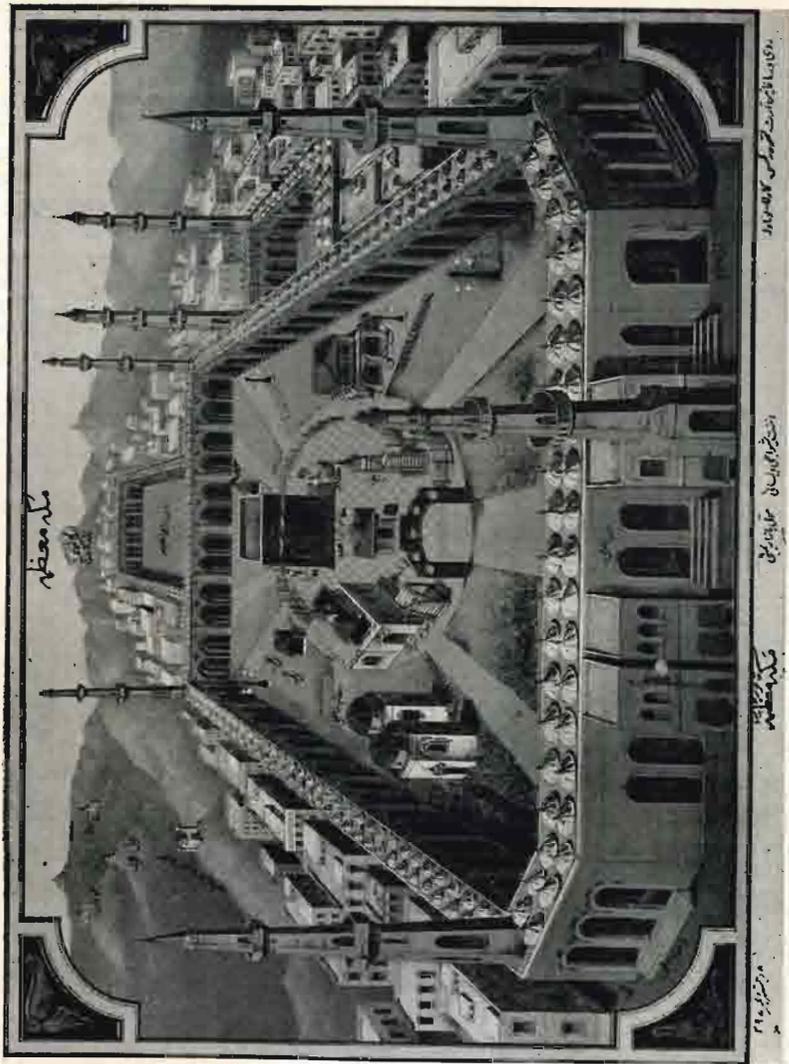
THAT geographical and political distribution which is commonly called the Near East includes the Balkan States and the countries of southern Asia. The countries of this region are rich in traditional and national cultures, but the peculiar atmosphere of remoteness which surrounds them and the language barriers which have divided them from northern and central Europe have proved most discouraging to ethnologists and historians. In broad usage, the term *Near East* covers two distinct areas of culture. The Balkan States include those European countries situated on the Balkan Peninsula and European Turkey. The Asiatic part is composed of the Arab States, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Iraq, Iran (Persia), and Asiatic Turkey. Broadly speaking, the Balkan area is dominantly Christian and follows divisions of the Eastern Church. The Asiatic countries and Turkey are dominantly Islamic with the exception of Israel, which is divided and has Moslem, Jewish, and Christian communities, and Persia in which there are vestiges of Zoroastrianism.

In spite of geographical accessibility, the Near East contains many areas which few travelers have penetrated and which have changed but slightly in the last two thousand years. In these regions, remnants of religious groups once powerful perpetuate the beliefs of their ancestors and preserve both written and oral traditions of profound interest to students of the spiritual convictions of mankind. Efforts should be made to preserve these ancient records or they will vanish completely from the impact of political, social, and economic forces. When one realizes that the Near East was the cradle of Christendom and the first testing ground of Western cultural convictions, the need for research becomes apparent. Many modern sects plagued with doctrinal confusion would do well to examine the old records and traditions which are available only in isolated Mesopotamian communities.

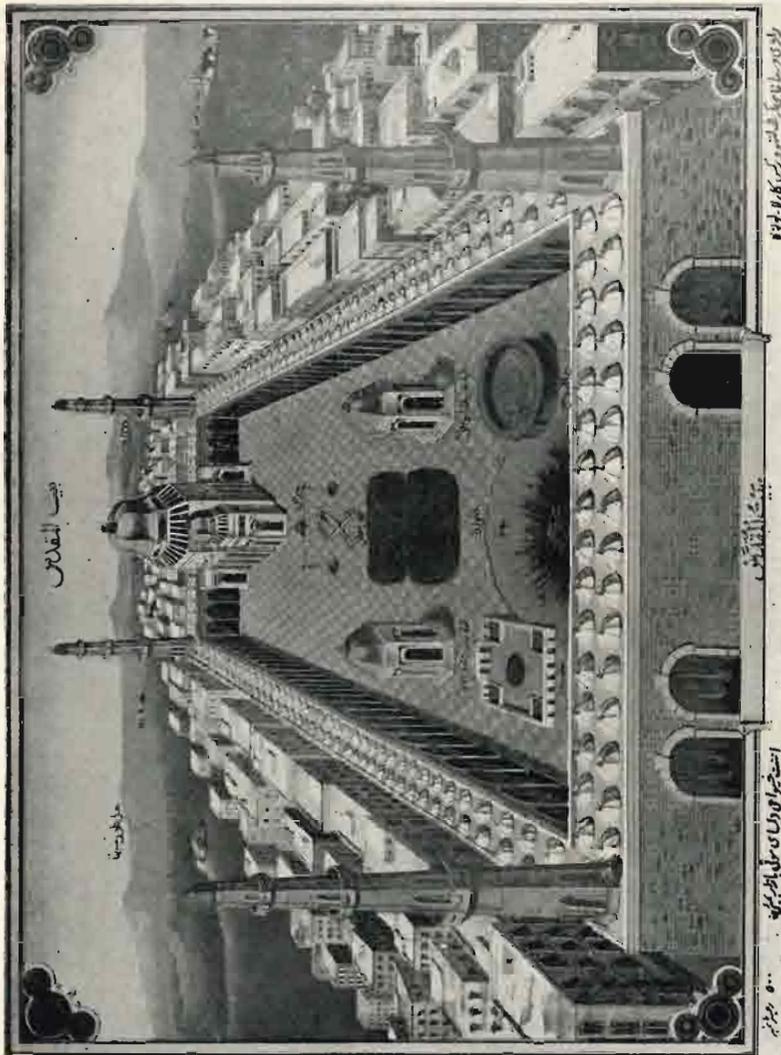
Located at the crossroads of the ancient world, the Near East was a vast alchemical laboratory in which elements of Asiatic and European doctrines were brewed together to form incredible compounds. Average members of re-



—From Picart's *Religious Ceremonials*
— DERVISHES PERFORMING THEIR COSMIC DANCE



—From an Indian Print
 THE GREAT MOSQUE AT MECCA WITH THE CAABA
 IN THE CENTER



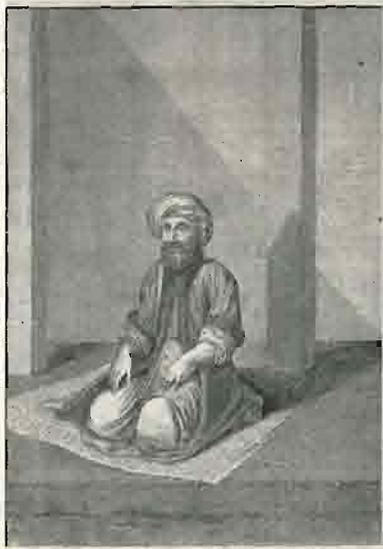
—From an Indian Print
 THE MOSQUE AT MEDINA WHERE MOHAMMED BEGAN HIS MINISTRY
 AND WHERE HE DIED



DERVICH ou Moine Turc qui tourne par devotion.



SAKA Charitable Derviche qui porte de l'eau par la ville et la distribue par charite.



CRU qui fait sa priere



DERVICH des Indes.

—From Picart's Religious Ceremonials

TYPICAL DERVISHES BELONGING TO EASTERN
MOSLEM COMMUNITIES

ligious organizations are totally unaware of the strange chemistry which creates faiths, crystallizes creeds, and formula-rizes dogmas. The story of religion is the account of numberless minglings of streams of human conviction, and all surviving creeds contain elements from numerous and widely scattered moral systems.

Eastern Christianity produced several colorful heretical groups in Russia and the Balkans. While these have been submerged since the Russian Revolution, it would be a mistake to assume that they have ceased to exist. Some stemmed from the so-called heresy of the Bogomiles, and others originated in the shamanism of the Siberian hinterland. Long association with Islamic concepts also resulted in an interchange of ideologies which modified the convictions of both Christian and Moslem. Thus the boundaries of orthodoxy are ill-defined, as is also evident from the music, art, and literature of these peoples.

In the Islamic complex of states and countries, the religion of Mohammed generated from itself several mystical sects. Such generations are inevitable when a religious code is imposed upon groups already advanced culturally and enriched by centuries of philosophical accomplishment. The Koran, like the Bible, supplied the requirements of the general population, but scholars, poets, and mystics could not be restrained by the letter of the revelation. Orthodoxy inevitably invites metaphysical speculation. The search for deeper meaning and the demand for transcendental content led to elaborate glosses and commentaries and countless improvisations upon the major theme. Religions also provide appropriate causes for reforms and produce sanctified leaders, whose reformations result in new sects. These, although dominated by the prevailing faith, find justification for existence by luminous explanations of obscure or controversial sections of the dominant faith. Sometimes these dependent sects incline to be more materialistic than the

parent religion, but more often they unfold and enrich spiritual overtones and incline to asceticism or strict observance.

The Moslem is a devout person who keeps the letter of his creed more consistently than the followers of most other religious schools. But even the merchant is a poet in his heart, and shares the Asiatic inclination to dramatize his spiritual convictions. Cabalism, astrology, talismanic magic, and alchemy flourish in the Near East, and European scholars deemed it a rare privilege to study with the Islamic masters. Paracelsus was initiated into the mysteries of healing by the doctors of Constantinople, and emancipated Christian intellectuals were perfectly willing to hazard their reputations and even to endanger their lives by dabbling in the magical arts of the Arabs, Moors, and Saracens.

Among the most interesting of the mystical groups of southwestern Asia are the Druses of Syria and the Lebanon, and the Dervishes and Sufis, who originated in the Arab region and have extended their influence throughout the Moslem world. Mystical sects in general are motivated by the desire for the personal experience of spiritual realities. With similar, if not identical, objectives, the disciplines practiced to attain the enlargement and extension of consciousness are approximately the same regardless of geographical distribution. Thus it is that the mystics are more inclined to be tolerant and to accept the fact of interreligious unity. It is rare to find an advanced mystic who is not aware that all faiths have the same objective and, broadly speaking, the same methods for the attainment of internal serenity.

It was my privilege many years ago to discuss this point with a venerated Moslem teacher. We were standing in the shadow of the central dome of the great mosque at Delhi. The venerable man explained simply and with utter sincerity that, while the orthodox were divided from other faiths by the limitations of their literal beliefs, those of

larger vision and deeper understanding accepted without reservation the spiritual integrity of all enlightened religions.

Mystical religious movements founded by sincere and enlightened persons and long sustained by devout and dedicated members sometimes fall into evil days. The tendency of all religions is to drift away from their foundations and to become involved in the materialistic ambitions of the masses. Few religions have endured for any great length of time without some measure of corruption. The faith depends for its vitality upon the faithful, and when the followers of a doctrine compromise its principles and these compromises are, in turn, further compromised, the end is confusion. Mysticism represents a level of conviction difficult to maintain and suitable only for those by nature sensitive and contemplative. So subtle are the values that they are easily obscured, and the degree of this obscurity is difficult to estimate. Research is further complicated by the syncretic structure of mystical convictions. Usually the underlying concepts are derived from so many sources that it is almost impossible to determine what constitutes the essential elements of the pattern.

In the case of the Druses, for example, several streams of highly specialized and extremely profound religious teachings have been imposed upon a people neither profoundly learned nor especially suitable to become so. Today the sect numbers approximately one hundred fifty thousand, and is scattered through the smaller communities of Syria and contiguous areas. Certainly no better equipped for the contemplation of abstractions than a nominal Christian community, the Druses follow a system involving elements of Platonism, Bactrian Buddhism, Syrian and Alexandrian Gnosticism, orthodox Judaism, Moslem metaphysics, Aristotelian philosophy, Sabianism, and Iranian fire worship. Obviously such ingredients are incomprehensible to the average Druse, who is satisfied to believe that his faith is predestined to unite the religions of the

world and to end forever those fanatical tendencies which have divided the devout, from time immemorial.

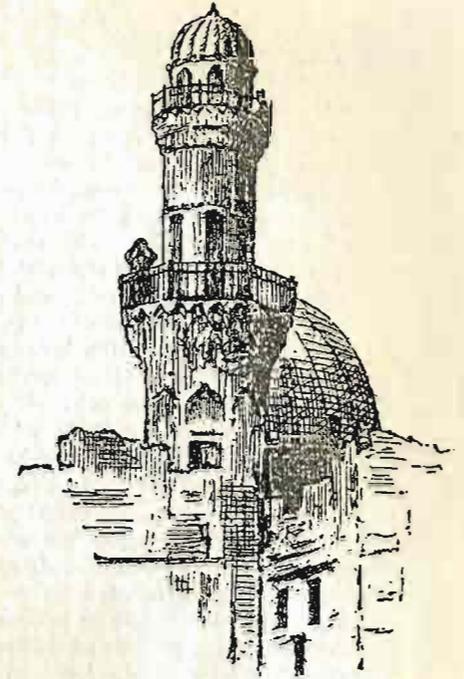
Even the simple and natural desire to reconcile men of good spirit contributed to the misfortunes which have plagued the Druses for centuries. Tolerance has never been popular, and the sects and creeds flourishing in the regions occupied by the Druse communities have slight sympathy for the votaries of this strange faith. The Christians resent the Moslem sympathies of the group, and the Moslems are suspicious of the Christian and Jewish content in the Druse doctrines. Altogether this minority cult is between the upper and lower grindstones and has survived precariously for centuries. Nor have the Druses become more popular as the result of proclaiming their special interest in the moral and ethical culture of China. They feel that the Chinese are Druses by conviction, if not by name.

To escape the persecution of powerful neighbors, the Druses have incorporated into their code an article of faith which permits them to conceal their membership in the Order and to proclaim themselves orthodox members of any faith dominant in the area where they live. Thus they live in a state of public conformity and private dissension. They further justify their attitude on the grounds that all other religions are corrupt forms of Drusedom. Fortunately, they are not inclined to proselyte and have no interest in making converts, and this disinterestedness has prevented their extinction. Although it is usual to consider them as an offshoot of Islamism, it is doubtful if that assumption is correct. The sect arose among the Moslems, but from the beginning exhibited characteristics suggesting Gnosticism. The Gnostics flourished in North Africa, where Drusedom was born, and it might be fairer to trace the sect to the revival of classical philosophy among the Mohammedans. Just as Mohammed himself was strongly influenced by Nestorian Christianity and Judaism, the founders of the Druse sect were evident-

ly acquainted with several philosophical systems. The Drusean attitude toward the complex problem of the man Jesus and the Christ principle is certainly based upon the teachings of the Alexandrian Gnostics.

It is difficult for us to appreciate the religious pressures which have long existed in the Near East. In this desolate region, several ancient and venerated traditions struggle for survival in a limited area populated by a mixture of intense and militant tribes and clans. The faithful are always secretive about their faith, and a man's religion is his private concern. Outwardly his orthodoxy is above reproach, but inwardly his sentiments ascend to a rarified atmosphere of speculation and conviction where it is not wise for strangers to penetrate. If questioned by infidels, the devout are glib of tongue. They may soar to incredible heights of ingenious prevarication. The listener, entranced by the wonder of it all, gains the delightful impression that for the first time priceless secrets of Eastern religion are being communicated to him—and to him alone. He resolves on the spot to hasten home and write a book. The best he can accomplish, however, is to add another chapter to *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. Incidentally, the suave and obliging merchant usually succeeds in selling the gullible a few ancient and authentic curiosities which were manufactured in the back room of his own establishment.

The Druses have an excellent reputation for thrift, hospitality, and courage. They will converse freely on almost any subject except the secrets of their religion. If pressed too far, they may have a convenient lapse of memory or experience unusual difficulties with language. Like most devout peoples, however, they have a keen sense for estimating human nature, and a few non-Druses who showed an honest desire for knowledge and appropriate capacities of temperament have been permitted to learn some parts of the Drusean doctrine. By living quietly in a community



of Druses and gradually gaining the respect of the sect, it is possible to overcome slowly the reticence of these people.

According to history, Drusedom was founded in the 11th century of the Christian Era by Ismail Ad-darazi, a Persian mystic. At that time Al-hakim bi'amrillahi was the Fatimid Caliph of Egypt. Under the pressure of a rising mystical conviction, this Caliph proclaimed himself to be an incarnation of God, and being apparently of unsound mind, he reigned erratically and despotically until his final disappearance in A. D. 1021. It seems probable that he was assassinated, but, as his fate was never clearly established, curious legends gained wide circulation. Actually, Al-hakim was little more than a name, and it cannot be assumed that he originated the doctrines associated with him. The Druses of the Lebanon have been falsely accused of deriving their religion from a mad Caliph, whose temperament was reminiscent of that of Nero. Actually, both Moslem and non-Moslem Druses

follow an elevated moral and ethical code which causes them to be considered more or less puritanical by neighboring unbelievers.

There are a number of Druses in the United States, but they usually pass as Syrian Christians and are not likely to discuss their faith unless the listener is informed and sympathetic. There is nothing in the manner or attitude of the educated Druse to suggest that his background is in anyway remarkable. In business he is honorable; in his private life, kindly and tolerant; and in public matters, exhibits a strong sense of civic responsibility. In discussing their religion with Syrian Druses who have become American citizens, it has been my experience that they regard many of their older beliefs as folklore, but are quickly responsive to references made to the esoteric doctrines of Oriental nations. One told me that he had heard from his mother about the existence of adepts and Secret Schools in remote Asia, but had not given the matter serious thought until he contacted mystical groups in America. Like the followers of most other faiths, the Druses are receptive to the idea of a secret doctrine concealed beneath the outer forms of religious systems. As one expressed it: "I was told these things when a child, but I did not understand."

Like most esoteric sects, the Drusean system of initiation includes visions, trances, and related psychic phenomena. The Masters of the sect are undoubtedly well-trained in natural magic and, like the priests of most ancient sects, are able to cause miraculous occurrences. Perhaps their disciplines were derived from the Ophites, who were skilled in secret arts. Certainly the higher members of the Drusean sect are so convinced of the validity of their esoteric sciences that they cannot be converted to any other faith. Their rites include fasting, rituals of purification, and obligations of secrecy. They also share in the concepts of many Fraternities, as these relate to mutual aid, to the protection of

members, and to the performance of charity.

The Druses have seven commandments or tenets, which they obey and practice:

1. God is one and indivisible.
2. Truth is supreme.
3. Religious tolerance is a virtue.
4. All men and women of good character are entitled to respect.
5. Complete obedience to the decrees of God.
6. Purity of mind, soul, and body.
7. Mutual help and support in time of need.

Both men and women are eligible for initiation on terms of complete equality. This in itself is unusual among Eastern sects. Masters of the Drusean faith are regarded as exceedingly venerable and are consulted on important matters. Their advice or opinion is usually followed without question. Children are well-treated in the Drusean community, and the family life is simple and dignified. In older times, education was largely in the keeping of advanced members of the group. Though not especially warlike, the Druses are ready to defend their culture and there have been periods of intense strife between them and the Moslem groups. Most of these difficulties, however, belong to the past, and today the communities are peaceful and industrious.

It is not easy to summarize the doctrine of the Druses. Most available information is derived from antagonistic sources, either Christian or Moslem. Even those who desired to be fair have either lacked direct contact with the sect or have been influenced to some degree by popular reports. The summary given by the Earl of Carnarvon in his *Recollections of the Druses of the Lebanon*, (London, 1860) is about the best available: "The imposing doctrine of faith in one God, in whom there are no parts, to whom no attributes can be assigned, before whom the tongue refuses to utter, the eye to see, the mind to under-

stand, whose very name is ineffable, which crowns the pyramid of Druse theology, might seem to remove Heaven too far from men and their affairs; and therefore the weaknesses of human nature have been well accommodated by the reflexion and incarnation of the Deity in successive ages. Nine times previously in India, Arabia, Persia, and Africa—so Hamzé taught—had the Supreme Intelligence deigned to reveal himself under the form and name of mortal men. In the person of Hakem, for the tenth and last time, God's will was republished, His forbearance manifested, and a final appeal made to the obduracy of the world. For twenty-six years 'the door,' in the figurative language of the Druse doctors, stood open to Christian or Mahomedan, Jew, or Gentile; but when that term of grace had expired, the work of conversion was closed, and the world was left uninvited and unenlightened for the future, till in the great consummation of mortal things, amid the gathering of armies and the tribulation of the faithful, when Mahomedanism shall fail and Mecca be no longer sacred, Hakem shall reappear to conquer the earth and to give supremacy to the Druse religion." [sic]

Missionaries who have attempted to penetrate into the secret rites of the Druses have occasionally been permitted to witness ceremonials manufactured for the entertainment of persistent unbelievers. This has led to the conclusion that Drusedom consists of two conflicting systems of doctrine—one for the laity, and another for the initiated. Actually, the esoteric content is merely an extension of the exoteric tradition, whereby, through interpretation, mysterious realities are first sensed and finally known. Another quotation from the Earl of Carnarvon, who "passed through the region," conveys the bewilderment of the Occidental: "Gradually—very gradually—he (the neophite) is permitted to draw aside the successive veils which shroud the great secret: he perceives the deep meaning of numbers, he under-

stands the dark sayings in which the sacred writings, that he has hitherto accepted in their literal sense, convey in doubtful phrase a double and a different meaning to the ear and the mind. The Koran becomes an allegory; the life and actions even of his own Imman are but the shadows of distant truths; . . . Still, as he presses on, he perceives that he is unravelling the web that he had just woven—that he is learning only to unlearn; he makes, and he treads on the ruins of his former beliefs: slowly, painfully, dizzily, he mounts each successive degree of initiation, until the mystical seven, or the not less mystical nine, are accomplished, and—as if to mock the hope of all return—at each stride he hears the step on which he last trod crumble and crash into the measureless abyss that rolls below him."

Lord Carnarvon's description is dramatic, if not completely factual. The Western mind is not conditioned for cabalistic speculation. To the literal theologian the possibility of a secret faith which can bestow an inner illumination and transform the material substances of a belief through inspiration and revelation seems little more than a fantastic superstition. Even after a Druse teacher has emphasized the importance of the allegorical key to his faith, the outsider seldom applies this key to the fables which the Druse patiently unfolds. Would it be likely that the members of a mystical sect, the Masters of which have been enlightened by meditation, prayer, and lives of piety, could literally believe that the unsavory Caliph Al-hakim was actually the incarnation of God, or that the door of salvation stood open for only twenty-six years?

In all probability, the legends of the Druses must be approached with the same attitude with which one should examine the mythology of the Grecians. Only by acknowledging the existence of a profound language of symbolism can the conduct of the Olympian deities be reconciled with the lofty convictions of Pythagoras and Plato. The Greek phi-

losophers, scientists, mathematicians, and legislators would not have acknowledged the divine authority of an order of divinities whose characteristics were less heavenly than the manners of the decadent Athenian aristocracy. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* acknowledges that the sacred books of the Druse religion "contain moral teachings of a high order on the whole."

The Druses consider both the Christian Gospels and the Koran to be inspired writings, but only the Druse Scriptures are accepted as correct guides to spiritual conduct. All other religions by allegorical interpretation are made to support the Drusean revelation. Here is a broad application of the Neoplatonic concept that all religions and philosophies are identical when unlocked by the proper key. Mystics, regardless of their affiliations, pass through the same experiences when they apply the principles of internal growth. Although the Druses do not require ascetic practices, their beliefs lead inevitably toward detachment from materialistic interests and pursuits. The Drusean mystic shares the attitudes of unworldliness which distinguish the more advanced Dervishes and Sufis.

The sect believes in reincarnation, and holds that each embodiment is nobler than the previous one. The process of rebirth continues until the mystical resurrection. The physical body, with its lower mental and emotional attributes, is the enemy of man's spiritual purpose. There are elements of anthropomorphism similar to those in the Mazdian cult, where powers of light and darkness struggle for domination over the human destiny. Security against evil is attained by obedience to the Drusean code, which was given by God through his embodiments for the preservation of his creatures. The neophyte must unlearn the false doctrines of the world in order to receive into his heart the secret of the mystery of life. This process of unlearning becomes increasingly severe as the disciple advances through the grades of the sect. He is struggling against

illusion, and in so doing must overcome his own mind and accept without reservation the impression of the divine purpose.

Lord Carnarvon's description of the neophyte treading on the ruins of his former beliefs would be the natural reaction of the uninitiated. True humility is complete submission to the divine will. To overcome the world, the neophyte must overcome the worldliness in himself. Not only the shadow (materialism) but also the works of the shadow must be conquered. To the Druse, the works of the shadow include even the human attitude toward God, religion, and philosophy. He has been accused of choosing a path which leads, in the end, to a monstrous unbelief. The simplest explanation of his faith is to compare it with Buddhism and the Buddhist concept of Nirvana. To the Christian, the Nirvana is simply total extinction of self, an idea frightening and repulsive to those who expect to rest indefinitely in the bosom of Abraham. To the Buddhist, the Christian concepts of heaven and hell are equally unacceptable.

The Druse resurrection is the reidentification of the spirit in man with the universal spirit which is all-pervading. This is not extinction but universalization. The one does not become nothing; it becomes all. Certainly it is impossible for mortal man to know as inward fact an unlimited condition of consciousness. The Druse system gradually enlarges and impersonalizes the spiritual convictions of the individual until the ideal of universalization becomes not only attractive but also completely satisfying. To awake from the illusion of diversity to the realization of unity is the fulfillment of man's supreme destiny. Just as the word *yoga* means union, the Druse prefers to be called a unifier. He strengthens his resolutions by the constant discovery and experience of unity. He sees the religions of the world gradually awaking to the awareness of unity. He contemplates the coming together of nations and the gathering of knowledge



MOSLEM CONCEPT OF ADAM AND EVE WITH THE TREE OF LIFE

by emphasis upon common denominators. With the aid of allegory and interpretation, he is able to perceive those eternal verities enthroned behind the shadowy and illusional divisions which have so long prevented men from laboring together in common causes.

From the earliest time, God has sent his teachers and his prophets to reveal his will and to purify doctrines corrupted by human ignorance. Mankind has not the strength or courage to practice or preserve the divine wisdom, and the revelations brought by the anointed messengers were perverted through selfishness and ignorance. To prevent doctrinal errors from frustrating the spiritual aspirations of humanity, reformers came to purify earlier revelations and to restore the essential principles of religion. In the Druse system, one hundred and sixty-four great teachers are enumerated, and because of their mighty efforts there has never been a time when the world has been without spiritual guidance. There is the implication that all the teachers brought one essential doctrine, although they appeared in different places and their revelations received various names.

In addition to these messengers, the Deity itself became peculiarly and particularly embodied in ten Messiahs, who correspond with the Avatars of Vishnu in the Hindu system. The prophet Hamsa was the precursor of the tenth Avatar of the Druses. Like John the Baptist, he announced the coming of Al-hakim. More mystically speaking, Hamsa represented Jesus, and Al-hakim the Christ. Obviously, the mystical tradition is not actually concerned with personalities at all, and the effort to associate universal principles with historical personages has resulted in serious misunderstandings. Hamsa, in a way, personifies the Druse adept, who, having advanced to the highest state of personal sanctity, has become a vessel capable of receiving into itself the divine incarnation.

In the Druse communities, places of initiation are set aside for the perform-

ance of the rites and ceremonies. These chambers are underground and, with the exception of certain celebrated sanctuaries, have only the simplest of furnishings. The prayer rug can be symbolical of the chamber of initiation. The room merely represents a state of aloofness from material concerns. It is not essentially a place but a condition of consciousness. The initiation rituals follow closely the rites of Greece and Egypt. The candidate is tested by trials of physical strength and endurance, moral temptations, and is further examined for his aptitude in the learning and disciplines of the sect. Very few are able to pass all the tests successfully, but those whose ability and character are worthy of consideration may wait a year and try again. The severity of the physical ordeals account for many failures, but there are indications that these tests are not so severe now as in earlier times. Those who pass the examination successfully are accepted into the inner sanctuary of the Order, and are given signs of recognition and further instruction in the esoteric sciences.

Although seldom mentioned in the accounts of this sect, there is evidence that the Druses acknowledge the existence of an association of adepts and Masters, who form a superior council. These illumined teachers, like the fabled Mahatmas of India, are extremely elusive, but may appear when the need arises. They are known by their wonderful powers and remarkable sanctity, but their comings and goings are inexplicable. Some of the more venerable Druse doctors are believed to have contact with these immortal-mortals, who alone are perfect in the doctrine. In the areas where the Druses flourish, legends and reports about these adepts are quietly circulated. They are seldom, if ever, mentioned to strangers.

It is quite possible that American Druses and more enlightened members of the Near Eastern communities could be induced to prepare a reasonably correct account of the sect and its doctrine. Groups of this kind are concerned over

the encroachment of modern materialism, and recognize the desirability of providing qualified persons with reliable information. The project languishes, however, because the sect is one of many minority groups about which there is no general concern. When we realize that the Near East has supplied the religious incentives to three great continents and that nearly half the civilized world is influenced by doctrines originating in the area of the Lebanon, there should be more interest in uncovering the foundations of now-dominant faiths.

The effects of Drusedom upon Europe were considerable during the medieval period, and the modern world is still dominated religiously, politically, and culturally by medievalism. The Crusaders, especially the Knights Templars, the Knights of Malta, and the Teutonic Knights, contacted the Druses and imbibed many of their doctrines. The direct result was the Renaissance, and among the consequences was the Reformation. Mystical interpretations of Christianity increased rapidly and broadened the foundations of the faith. It is believed that a number of the European Knights were actually initiated into the Syrian Mysteries and the Secret Orders of Islam. Through them the great heresy reached Europe, supplying the impulse which ultimately overthrew spiritual, intellectual, and physical feudalism. It is therefore a mistake to assume that size is always the measure of power and that numerical strength is more important than the integrity of a doctrine.

In western Asia, there are a number of mystical sects which have evolved from and within the faith of Islam. Among these, the Dervish Orders are the best known and the most likely to be contacted by travelers and tourists. Within the Dervish Fraternity, there are twelve principal Orders, each governed by a chief to whom is given complete allegiance. The members are initiated by rites which appear to the uninformed to be barbaric and fantastic. The spiritual Fraternities of the Dervishes are highly respected throughout

the Moslem world. The attitude toward them is not so different from the esteem in which wandering bands of friars were held in the Christendom of the Middle Ages. The Dervishes are regarded as persons possessing supernormal powers, and are consulted in matters requiring extraordinary discernment.

Two general types of holy men are to be found in the mystical Fraternities of Islam. The first is the scholarly and consecrated Dervish, whose life is devoted to the study of the secret spiritual forces of the universe. The second is the religious beggar, who for one reason or another has renounced worldliness and lives by the generosity of the faithful. It is believed, however, that exalted souls may conceal their identities under most pitiful appearances; therefore it is unwise to neglect the requirements of even the most lowly of the religious mendicants.

The Orders of Dervishes can be distinguished by the color and form of their garments and the number of folds in their turbans. The peculiar powers of the Dervishes have been attested by many Europeans, and the fakirs are famous for their skill in conjuration. Some of the Dervish sects are in more or less close association with Eastern Freemasonry and the Druses of Syria. The esoteric rites and practices of many Near Eastern sects belong to a common stream of tradition, a fact that is recognized by the better-informed members, even though the less enlightened cling to fanatical attitudes of isolation.

The outer or visible body of Dervishes consists of organizations or groups of disciples who study the mysteries of life from ancient and venerable teachers. Behind the visible structure of Dervish mysticism, however, is a secret superphysical institution composed of illumined Masters, who only upon rare occasions contact disciples of the lower grades. This inner body of God-instructed men possesses the fullness of divine knowledge, and membership comes as the reward for outstanding achievement in the lower grades of the Broth-

erhood. L. M. J. Garnett writes of the Dervishes thus: "According to the mystical canon, there are always on earth a certain number of holy men who are admitted to intimate communion with the Deity." J. P. Brown refers to these spiritual ones as the "Master Souls." They are still in the physical body and wander about the earth, but are only recognizable by the elect. The Dervishes taught that any person whom he meets, even the poorest beggar, may be one of these Master Souls.

At the head of the hierarchy composing the inner or mystical Dervish Order is a most august soul, who is called the "Axis" or "Pole" of the universe. His identity is unknown even to the highest members of the Order, and he often wanders the earth in the garb of a novice. He is a Master of the power of magic, can make himself invisible at will, and traverse vast distances with the speed of thought. The only possible chance to see this exalted one and be certain of his identity is to visit Mecca. The favorite seat of the "Axis" is on the roof of the Caaba, where he is visible on certain holy occasions, but if any attempt be made to reach him he immediately disappears.

On either side of the "Axis" are two great souls subordinate only to himself, and below these, four others who are called the "Intermediate Ones." Subordinate to this quartet are the five "Lights" and the seven "Very Good." The body of the Order is made up of the forty "Absent Ones" sometimes referred to as the "Martyrs." When the time comes for the "Axis" to leave his physical body and ascend into the sphere of light, then the "Faithful One" on his right is advanced to the dignity of "Axis," and all the other members of the Order correspondingly advance one degree to fill the vacancies created. This great body of spiritual mystics, collectively the "Lords of Souls" and "Directors," is an invisible government controlling all the temporal institutions of Islam, and far surpassing in power all earthly monarchies.

With an outer organization of many thousands of Dervishes of varying degrees of holiness and an inner body composed of God-men so highly advanced and so superior to ordinary humanity that they seem more mythical than real, it is evident that the Dervishes form a very powerful Order in the Islamic world. Each Dervish, it is said, is founded in the faith through having passed successfully a thousand and one days and nights of temptation. Renouncing everything pertaining to the flesh, these men have devoted their lives to the perfection of consciousness.



One of the most interesting sects of the Dervishes is the Order of Mevlevi, more commonly known as the dancing or whirling Dervishes, and popularly supposed to have been founded by the great Persian Sufi poet and philosopher, Jelal-ud-Din. The ability of the whirling Dervish to spin with incredible velocity on toe and heel with a sort of dancing motion for a considerable time and then to suddenly stop and lean over and pick up a pin is decidedly uncanny. No amount of motion apparently can make him dizzy. From what can be gleaned in the fragmentary extracts from the doctrines which have come into the hands of the profane, the purpose of the whirling is to attune the rhythm of the body to the circular motion of the celestial spheres.

Like many religious Orders in various parts of the world, the Dervishes have strange practices intended to produce the ecstatic condition. In some cases they even resort to the use of hashish to bring about a temporary clairvoyance, but this practice can hardly be considered representative of the true ideals of Dervishism.

The Mevlevi wear tall but not pointed caps and their garments are tight about the waist, but flare out below like an extremely full skirt to the ankle. During the whirling dances, these skirts stand straight from the body in a large circle, making the Dervish resemble a spinning top. The various groups of Dervishes wear different styles of caps, all of which are more or less significant. One type of headgear is vase-shaped and symbolizes the urn of spiritual light in which God kept the soul of Mohammed before the birth of the prophet.

There is another interesting point brought out, at least theoretically, in Dervish philosophy. Obeying the ancient custom of the Brotherhood, the various members of the Order always travel in certain directions of the compass and at certain angles. Consequently, if one desires to meet a certain Dervish saint, it is first necessary to learn the angle upon which he travels. If the seeker will then place himself at some point along the line of this angle and await the Dervish, the latter will ultimately appear.

The Dervishes possess a secret doctrine concerning human regeneration which has many points of similarity with the mysticism of the Brahmans. Dervish philosophy may be summarized as the Oriental doctrine of realization. By renouncing human consciousness and rising above all limitations of the sense perceptions and the intellect, the Dervish attains to a level of transcendent understanding in which he feels himself absorbed into the nature of the Universal Being. The Dervish neophyte advances along "paths." These paths, or degrees, are four in number, and each is governed by a personification of a

divine attribute. In the first degree, the novice seeks absorption in the sheik, or Master, of the path. In the second degree, the disciple aspires to identification with the illustrious sage who founded the discipline, or path. In the third degree, the initiate attempts to accomplish annihilation in the Prophet Mohammed; and in the fourth degree, the adept seeks complete universalization in Deity.

The existence of an esoteric doctrine in Islam is sustained by the account circulated among Moslem mystics. In his introduction to the *Mesnevi* of Jelal-ud-Din, James W. Redhouse writes; "One day, it is said, the Prophet (Muhammad) recited to 'Ali' in private the secrets and mysteries of the 'Brethren of Sincerity' (who appear to be the 'Freemasons' of the Muslim dervish world), enjoining on him not to divulge them to any of the uninitiated, so that they should not be betrayed; also, to yield obedience to the rule of implicit submission."

Jelal-ud-Din, the great Dervish adept, was born on the 29th of September, A. D. 1207. When only five years old, this remarkable man became strangely and profoundly agitated by a series of extraordinary occurrences. "The cause of these perturbations was that spiritual forms and shapes of the absent (invisible world) would arise before his sight, that is, angelic messengers, righteous genii, and saintly men—the concealed ones of the bowers of the True One (spiritual spouses of God), used to appear to him in bodily shape, exactly as the cherubim and seraphim used to show themselves to the holy apostle of God, Muhammad, in the earlier days, before his call to the prophetic office; as Gabriel appeared to Mary, and as the four angels were seen by Abraham and Lot; as well as others to other prophets." (Also see Redhouse.)

John P. Brown, whose text, *The Dervishes*, is still the principal source work on the subject, derives the word *dervish* from two Persian syllables, the first meaning a *door*, and the second, *to beg*.

It is questionable, however, if the term actually means *to beg from door to door*. More likely it signifies those who ask alms at the door of truth. Originally, the Islamic mystics were small groups of disciples accepting the spiritual leadership of some enlightened saint or distinguished teacher, to whom they gave complete allegiance. Mystics have never been conformists, and have always depended upon direct extrasensory experience for inspiration and guidance. Like the philosophical schools which flourished in the golden age of Greek learning, the size and distinction of a sect depended largely upon the fame and accomplishments of the leader. A few outstanding teachers, like Pythagoras and Plato, left behind them such strongly integrated associations that these survived and became enduring organizations. Leadership passed to elder disciples who, in turn, selected their successors, thus establishing a lasting pattern of descent.

This is in essence the story of the Dervish Orders, and, because their mysticism was associated with the traditions, rites, and ceremonies of the Moslems, they belong with this religion. Actually, however, their mysticism transcends all sectarian limitation, and their illuminations confer upon them a universal citizenship. Although the Dervishes are regarded as the principal monastic Order of the Islamic world, they differ from Christian monastic groups in one particular: They give no allegiance to the orthodox faith and receive no benefits therefrom. They survive entirely by their own efforts and enjoy the privilege of administering their affairs as they see fit. The Dervishes receive considerable public support, and it is considered injudicious to deny them any reasonable requests. Although critics insist that these Orders survive upon the gullibility of the ignorant, this is not strictly true. We may as well say that all religions depend for their existence upon the generosity of the faithful. The Dervish influence is so widespread that in some areas every Mussulman is

to some degree associated with one of the several Orders. There are instances in which tradesmen and merchants constitute Dervish guilds.

Many authors refer to the similarity between the Dervishes and European Freemasons. The issue is controversial, but certainly some of the Dervishes are inclined to fraternize with Freemasonry. Probably the analogies are due to parallels of doctrine and ritual. As European Freemasonry was strongly influenced by Near Eastern sects and its roots are deep in the symbolism of old Orders which flourished in Syria and Arabia, there are vestiges of Oriental mysticism in Western Masonry. Today, however, the Dervish remains essentially a mystical philosopher, and as such will have conflict with the prevailing tendency to ignore the esoteric content of Masonic symbolism.

On a few occasions the Dervishes have been involved in the political ambitions of Islamic leaders. Such pressures have affected adversely most religious groups, but should not be regarded as representative of the real convictions of the sect. After all, the Dervish Orders have become so diffused throughout the life of the Islamic people that the conduct of individual members or even groups does



not indicate the temper of the more enlightened mystic. Fanaticism is present in all religious communities and has brought discredit upon many worthy and commendable organizations. By his own creed and doctrine, the Dervish is a man of peace, dedicated to charitable works and the attainment of internal tranquillity. All to the contrary results from abuse or misunderstanding of principles.

Wherever men feel that they have received divine insight, the prophetic spirit produces various forms of divination. Some Dervishes have become famous for reading human destiny in sand, by the stars, or by gazing upon magical objects. There is wide belief in omens and portents, and, while some of these soothsayers are of doubtful integrity, the majority is obviously sincere, if not entirely proficient. Certain Dervishes have made remarkable prophecies which have been fully justified by subsequent facts. The Dervish Orders are especially interesting because they form an impressive unit within the world concept of mysticism. They supply further evidence of the existence of an esoteric tradition concerning the possibility of the human being advancing his internal life by meditative disciplines.

The teachings of the Sufis appear to have originated with the Prophet Mohammed himself. He was not only a brilliant moralist, religious leader, and statesman, but was also, by temperament, a mystic and ascetic. Throughout his life he set an example of detachment from worldly honors and material possessions. The responsibilities of his high calling impelled him to set an example of moderate conduct, piety, and self-sacrifice. His numerous duties also demanded a well-organized life in which concern for his faith and his people took precedent over his personal interests. We know that he was given to visions, practiced vigils, and was distinguished for humility and gentle resignation to the will of God. Like most religious founders, he was quite differ-

ent in character from those who later extended the temporal dominion of his faith.

After the death of the prophet, Islam passed through a difficult and disputatious period. Almost immediately, the regions which had received the doctrine were involved in civil wars and came under the influence of ambitious despots and tyrants. The success of Islam produced new aristocracies which became obsessed by wealth, luxury, and power. The lines of orthodoxy were so clearly drawn as to leave the more thoughtful and sincere without any religious instructions suitable to their needs. As the faith increased in temporal wealth and honor, it catered to the selfishness and arrogance of privileged classes and departed dramatically from the simple example and code of the prophet. There is an almost exact parallel between the rise of Moslem and Christian mysticism. Many of the austere practices of both faiths resulted from a revulsion against the corruption in the social system of the times. The Orders of Flagellants which developed in Italy and spread over the greater part of Europe during the medieval period revealed the operations of the collective conscience of society.

The Sufis belonged originally to that system of religious mysticism which is called Quietism. The Quietist seeks escape from the exigencies of living by retiring into himself, detaching his mind and emotions from all worldly entanglements and directing the forces of his consciousness toward a participation in the divine love and understanding. Many Quietist groups have excellent reputations for good works and have made practical contributions to the advancement of society. They are in the world but not of it, and usually choose noncompetitive trades and professions and decline to co-operate with destructive policies. Their attitudes frequently are misunderstood by their neighbors and are contrary to the approved policies of their time. The members, therefore, must endure afflictions and humiliations

and demonstrate their integrity by accepting patiently and kindly the indignities that are heaped upon them. The world has not yet learned that it takes a truly strong person to practice patience and humility. Quietists may form themselves into groups or sects, or they may remain members of prevailing religious Orders. In most cases, they can derive authority from the lives of great prophets and saints, whose examples are admired but not practiced by the orthodox.

The Sufis originally sought to find the spiritual consolation which they believed to be the essence of the Moslem doctrine. They were distinguished merely by the steadfastness with which they held to the spirit of the revelation. They declined to become involved in the luxuriousness of their contemporaries, and were ridiculed for their failure to share in the prosperous but unethical policies of their neighbors. Quietism, however, leads almost inevitably to religious experiences beyond mere piety and patience. The mind compensates the Quietist by opening to him an internal life that impels toward mysticism. Although in the beginning the search is primarily for peace, tranquillity itself brings inevitable refinement of the psychic organism.

Those who have shared in mystical exaltations naturally desire to instruct others. The circumstances which lead the mystic to the enlargement of his inner vision soon become the disciplines of his followers. Quietism is often associated with repentance. Those least sinful are most burdened by their vices. The hearty sinner seldom repents. Mystical revelations usually burden the soul with the memories of earlier guilt. The years which preceded the awakening become a heavy burden on the conscience until, like good St. Augustine, the convert feels himself required to spend his remaining years expiating the delinquencies of his youth. It requires more illumination than even most mystics attain to rise above the guilt mechanisms of the mind. Even the recognition of the eternal love and understanding of

God is not strong enough to prevent the repentant sinner from striving desperately for a salvation which seems almost inaccessible even to the penitent.

To the Sufis, their mystical convictions are timeless and ageless and entirely outside the limitations of history. They do not regard themselves as descending from a particular prophet or teacher, but rather as the preservers and unfolders of eternal truth. Several streams of mystical convictions mingled in the descent of Sufistic metaphysics. The sect was strongly influenced by Christian hermits, who retired from the busy cosmopolitan communities to cultivate their spiritual convictions in remote places. Mohammed himself contacted such recluses, and received from them a favorable impression of the original teachings of Jesus. This impression became an integral part of Moslem mysticism. The Sufis were also affected by an influx of Buddhism from Central Asia. The serenity and internal richness of the Buddhist life-way appealed strongly to these separatists and was in dramatic contrast to the arrogance and worldliness of the caliphate.

A third and no-less significant source of inspiration was Alexandrian Neoplatonism, which was introduced along with other elements of classical thinking when the Moslem world became immersed in Greek philosophy. It might not be amiss to suggest that Sufism is in many respects Islamic Neoplatonism. From the Alexandrian mystics, the Sufis inherited the consciousness of religious unity, and the advancement of human consciousness, by degrees or stages, from complete materialism to absolute idealism. It is believed that the Sufis contributed a powerful spiritual incentive to the Dervish Orders, greatly refining and beautifying these sects.

Gradually, the Sufis developed a kind of symbolical language with which they clothed their principal tenets. They bestowed new and subtle meanings known only to themselves upon common and familiar terms in order that they might share their spiritual experiences with



THE ANGEL GABRIEL APPEARING TO MOHAMMED

others of similar convictions. Like the Troubadours, they composed songs and poems apparently amorous and even sensual, and conveyed the impression to the uninitiated that they were devoted to the gratification of the passions and appetites. Their literature seems to be pervaded with a curious mixture of carnal love and fatalism.

The *Quatrains of Omar Khayyam* seem to suggest that the celebrated tent-maker was a disillusioned man who found his greater comfort in "a jug of wine, a book of verse, and thou." The "vocabulary of love and wine," as it has been called, was adopted for the same protective reasons that produced the fantastic terminology of the alchemists. The Sufis were drifting further and further from the orthodoxy of Islam, or it might be better to say that Islam was drifting away from the simple and devout example of its founder. The position of the Sufis was hazarded by the enlargement of their own vision. No longer bound by the strict, even fanatical, orthodoxy of the Moslem world, the Sufis found it expedient to appear to be dedicated to nothing more significant than pleasure slightly shadowed by the realization of inevitable dissolution.

Some derived the word *Sufi* from a root meaning *wool*; others think it to be identical with *sophia*, or wisdom. Like the minstrels and trouveres, the

fair and pure "beloved" was no mortal woman but truth itself, which these mystics longed after with all the ardor of love-sick swains. Like the dark maiden of Solomon's song, who was indeed the Black Virgin of Ephesus, and Beatrice, the beloved of Dante, the unattainable mistress of the Sufis was divine wisdom—the Virgin of the World. The Sufis' cup of wine was the chalice of ecstasy, the wine of life, the very power of God which intoxicated the soul, depriving the mind of reason and delivering the enraptured saint from the burden of worldliness. The fatalism of the Sufis was a statement of complete emancipation from materialism and all its consequences. Life ends in silence; ambitions end in darkness; possessions rot away; and that which remains is reality, that inevitable fact of union with a divine reality which is beyond knowing or definition.

Those who accepted literally the concept of mystical nihilism considered the doctrines as the ultimate form of philosophical pessimism. To borrow a term from the desert, it was all thunder without rain. The empty cup was broken at the well. Man came forth as a flower and was cut down, and poets chanted sadly the futility of existence. Even today, the *Rubaiyat* creates a nostalgic mood catering to the human instinct to lament over everything in general and nothing in particular. We are

most happy when a little sad, and we are most comfortable when we comfort ourselves. To the orthodox, the Sufi is gentle, but a little mad. He rejects heaven and hell and the earthly region which lies between. He lives in space nourished by his love and wine.

Sufism divides the initiated teachers of mankind into three groups or classes, and accepts them as the illumined guardians and guides of human destiny. These heaven-sent ones are Masters, prophets, and saints. All aspiring mortals verge toward inclusion in one of these groups, and as they advance along the stations of the Sufistic Mysteries, they receive appropriate internal inspiration which they manifest through works of godliness. The Masters are those who are called the warlike teachers. They are the army of the enlightened, which must struggle against the forces of darkness. They fight the good fight, overcoming evil with the sharp, bright sword of truth. It is their destiny to become the spiritual governors and leaders of the race, and from them is chosen the governing body of the future. The saints are the consolers, the peacemakers, the gentle ones who bring the message of love. They strive only by the example of humility. They are the servants of Allah, and they travel as the heart dictates. They bring the medicine which heals the sickness of souls, and they sing the song of the Beloved. They are the eternal priesthood, and the love of God flows through them as living waters changed by a miracle into wine.

Between the Master and the saint stands the prophet, the keeper of the middle road. In him the extremes find common ground. He is the teacher; he reveals the doctrine; he is the messenger of the divine will. Through him the purposes of God are revealed. The prophet is the enlightened educator, and he teaches through both wisdom and experience. The prophets point the way to the perfection of arts and sciences. They protect the program for universal enlightenment, and in the end

they form the Eternal University, the College of the Works. They reveal that all knowledge is truth in part, and that the ways of learning end in the internal understanding which is the apperception of the fullness of the divine mind. The three Orders, are, therefore, the warriors, the priests, and the teachers of righteousness, and each human being according to the instincts of his own soul finds one of these paths opening within himself, and selects that which is the fulfillment of his own innermost resolution.

The modern trend in Sufi mysticism is away from all formalization of devotional practices. There is a part of rest after labor. There is no place in their doctrine for a conflict of creeds or clash of opinions. They never argue about their beliefs or try to convert or influence those of other religious convictions. They seek rather to reveal Sufism as a quality of devotion which may be practiced by all who love God and seek to serve their fellowmen. They have no special message for the intellectual except to relax and experience the love of God. They feel that this experience of the omnipresence of the divine is the solution to the dissensions of mankind. Nothing can be proved by disputation; nothing can be solved by conversion. Truth can neither be defended nor assailed. Those who experience the presence of God require no other demonstration of the wonder of life. Sufism opens the door for those who are weary and heavy laden, and, therefore, holds a peculiar fascination for that minority of troubled mortals which has found no consolation in material accomplishments.

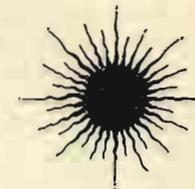
The sect practices in a modified form those Eastern disciplines which strengthen the contemplative life. The Sufis do not recommend a solitary existence, but rather the practice of internal peace without neglect of natural responsibilities. They have formed monastic houses and places of retreat, but these are symbolical and are reserved for those who are inclined by their own internal requirements to seek solitude. Recently,

some Sufistic groups have gained considerable distinction for their studies in comparative religion and for their industrious efforts to unite Near Eastern sects in the communion of spiritual brotherhood. They are not aggressive and are dominated by a sincere belief that those who have reached the degree of understanding which requires a larger internal life will be drawn naturally to the disciplines of the Sufis under one name or another. The sect is, therefore, a quality of sincere aspiration rather than a cult or an Order.

Perhaps this brief outline of Near Eastern mysticism will assist the student of comparative religion to realize how mysticism has developed in the areas under consideration. It will require only a slight accommodation by the mind to recognize that mystical convictions are the inevitable result of the pressure of a materialistic social concept upon sensitive human beings. Whenever and wherever the gentle and kindly inclina-

tions of men are frustrated by their way of life, mystical sects appear. It is incorrect to regard these Orders as simply escape mechanisms. More correctly, materialism is the refuge for those who have failed to become satisfactory persons.

There is locked within each of us the inevitable instinct to become good. When society fails to provide us with means of expressing our love of beauty and our simple desire for a friendly and natural existence, we create communities fashioned closer to the desires of our hearts. The ultimate form of man's relationship with his universe must be, to a degree at least, mystical. While we may rationalize our associations with things visible and material, we must always approach with simple devotion those universal mysteries which are beyond our intellectual powers. The association between man and the divine must be experienced, and true knowing is a miracle of faith in the heart.



Clement I, Bishop of Rome, in a letter addressed to the Church of Corinth, which was in a state of dissension, is said to have originated the familiar saying: "We are in the same boat."

When Diderot was visiting Russia, he mentioned to Catherine the Great that the surfs seemed unclean and untidy. "Why," replied the empress, "should they take care of bodies which do not even belong to them?"

One day while Charles II of England was at dinner, he asked the name of a cut of beef which particularly pleased him. Being told that it was a loin, the king said: "For its merit I will knight it, and then it will be sir-loin." And so it was ever after.



In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Many persons seem to be injured by the metaphysical organizations with which they become affiliated or by various systems of teachings which they have studied. Will you briefly discuss these problems?

ANSWER: This inquiry is more than justified, and I know it to be a fact that a great many sincere truth seekers have become involved in beliefs and doctrines which have proved damaging. Naturally, under a way of life which protects the rights of each individual to follow any sect which attracts his attention or with which he wishes to associate himself, any criticism will be interpreted as unkindness or prejudice. At the same time, even the most liberal political theory must provide means for preventing citizens from injuring themselves or each other. Perhaps if we cling closely to principles and refrain from unnecessary references to particular groups, we can convey certain necessary information without giving offense.

The average human being passes his life span in an environment which emphasizes practical concerns. It is not necessary to dramatize the problems of vocation, social adjustment, or the correction of unfortunate traits of person-

ality. We have long recovered from once-prevalent superstitions in the fields of medicine, law, and economics. Also, for the most part, orthodox religious groups are emphasizing the importance of character development, and there are fewer references to theological abstractions. We no longer believe that our misfortunes are due to malevolent spirits or that our neighbors are practicing Satanism. Except in a few remote communities, demonology and witchcraft survive only as lore, and the sprites and goblins of the past are remembered only at Halloween festivals.

It may be prosaic to live without fantasy, but for the majority of mortals it is wiser and safer to cling to the obvious. If we permit imagination to run away with common sense, we are in danger of reverting to that state of individual and collective terror which we associate with the Dark Ages. It is especially important that religion which deals principally with abstract qualities and values should not emphasize the

miraculous or the supernatural. Whenever it does so a considerable number of its followers are unable to cope with these imponderables and drift into disastrous fields of speculation.

Let us take a simple example which is a compound of thousands of actual cases. Jane Doe was born into a family which was unstable economically and emotionally. Her early childhood was overshadowed by parental conflict, and she had difficulty adjusting to her brothers and sisters. Developing hypersensitivity, she brooded over her uncongenial environment, and by the time she reached school age her personality was seriously damaged. Later she had an unfortunate marriage, which failed largely because of her own temperament. This further intensified her neuroses and frustrations, and she settled down to live out a melancholy span which she was convinced was her earthly lot. Her disposition interfered with her success in business and resulted in the failure of a second marriage. Negative thinking took its toll upon her physical health, and she developed a variety of symptoms which were nothing more than pressures from within herself.

By the time Jane reached her fiftieth year, she was an unhappy and unpleasant woman, of no comfort to others and of slight value to herself. She lived principally in the past, and her conversations were devoted to the justification of her attitudes and the frequent recounting of her trials and tribulations. She described herself as misunderstood, undervalued, and mistreated. She stewed in her own regrets, seeking desperately for sympathy and commiseration. She had few friends, no normal social life, and as a result was economically insecure. Such surroundings as she could afford were depressing and below the standard to which she felt herself entitled. In substance, she was a good woman in the worst meaning of the word.

Jane was inclined to be religious. She was one of those who found refuge in

the old belief that to live miserably was to die with a better hope. She reacted with extreme intensity to her religious beliefs because these were the only outlets for her badly inhibited emotions. Always alone, she soothed her loneliness by intensifying her religious interests and gained some reputation for being devout. Without realizing it herself, she attended certain churches because she was secretly in love with the clergymen.

In the course of her meanderings, Jane contacted metaphysics. What she needed was a philosophy of life which would reveal to her the importance of reorganizing her own attitudes. But, unfortunately, the cult with which she associated herself was not dedicated to such prosaic purposes. It was composed of well-intentioned mortals under the glamour of something indescribably wonderful and utterly incomprehensible. The members were wandering about in a daze and Jane joined the procession. She was immediately appreciated because she fitted perfectly into the prevailing confusion. She was well-pleased also, because, for her, misery had found company. The people she met were like herself victims of innumerable tragedies and injustices. It was old home week for Jane.

Jane was enthralled by the altogether wonderful reports given by the entranced followers of a sublime revelation. One kindly old gentleman read auras at sight, and immediately recognized the extraordinary brilliance of Jane's psychic vehicles. Another specialized in remembering past incarnations, and explained to Jane that in a previous life she had been Catherine de' Medici. As Jane had been nothing in this life, this was a soul-satisfying revelation. A third member of the sect, who was especially "close" to the "source" of inspiration, was on the threshold of cosmic consciousness and was therefore privileged to describe the wonders of the celestial world. A beaming dowager confided to Jane that she could leave her body at will, and spent most of her

time floating around in the seventh vibration. But there is always a serpent in paradise, and it appeared as a confidential spinster, who whispered in Jane's ear that extremely evil and malicious "forces" were threatening the survival of this illuminated group. These perverse "forces" operated by whispering into the ears of the faithful certain unreasonable doubts and misgivings about the doctrine. Anyone lured away from the sect was a traitor to truth and would be punished by the most direful and horrible misfortunes.

The only way to protect oneself from malicious influences was to give complete obedience and a reasonable percentage of worldly goods to the sublime cause. To doubt, to disobey, even to question were basic indications of heresy, and there were appropriate punishments for such lapses. The account was such that Jane had cold shivers, and these she interpreted to the presence of invisible malicious entities. With proper humility and as much devotion as she could muster, Jane joined the inner circle, where she heard further wonders openly discussed and was given the secret of the only real shortcut to universal enlightenment. She was perfectly willing to believe when she was told that she had the peculiar requirements for immediate illumination. In fact, she was one of very, very few destined to lead mankind into the Promised Land.

For awhile Jane was as happy as a school girl at her first formal dance. It was a new world, a very small world, a very exclusive world, and she was in it. She had earned this wonderful privilege by long years of misery, by which she had been tested, tried in the balance, weighed and not found wanting. She forgot entirely that her troubles were her own fault, and floated about in the notion that she had been saved from spiritual persecution just in the nick of time. She practiced the exercises diligently, gazing fixedly at the end of her own nose, and reaffirming her identity with the Absolute. She was

rewarded beyond her fondest expectations. She felt strange creepings in the small of her back, which no doubt heralded the ascent of the kundalini. She began to hear voices, promising that revelations of enormous import were imminent. She produced sheaves of meaningless automatic poetry, saw spots before her eyes, which were evidently astral visitors, and lived day and night with the feeling that some decarnate entity was breathing down the back of her neck.

Gradually, however, the old neuroses began to creep back. A strange, subtle sense of foreboding arose within her. Her sleep was disturbed, not by blessed spectacles, but by taunting voices and strange demoniacal laughter. She explained the condition, and was promptly warned that the evil "forces" were trying to prevent her from accomplishing her exalted destiny. Before long, she was swamped by the frustrations, inhibitions, complexes, and neuroses which had been locked within herself. Negative psychical development for which she was totally unprepared destroyed the protective mechanism, and she was in a situation which she could not control and with which her associates, actually as ignorant as herself, were powerless to cope. When the situation was completely out of hand, she was thrown out of the sect and anathematized by her former friends. It is not hard to realize that Jane had been seriously injured by a group of ignorant but well-meaning persons as deluded as herself. She was close to both a physical and mental breakdown, and at this stage of the difficulty only the most resolute determination to cast aside the whole experience as a fantastic delusion could remedy the situation. It is doubtful if sufficient character strength remained to sustain such a resolution.

Trying to reason with Jane was a more or less thankless task. First of all, she *wanted* to believe that she was a superior person. For the greater part of her life she had carefully avoided an honest examination of herself. She

resented even the intimation that esoteric subjects were utterly beyond her comprehension and that she was totally unprepared for religious disciplines reserved for those who had already attained a high degree of internal security. To admit her delusions were the direct result of catering to the pressures of her frustrated ambitions to be somebody without becoming somebody, required more moral courage than Jane could muster.

The pseudopsychic phenomena, most of which were the products of her own imagination fed by her conceited associates, had become so real to Jane that she was unable to free herself from the conviction that she had experienced a legitimate extension of consciousness. To renounce these wonderful happenings was to betray the testimony of her own senses. She never realized how the sensory perceptions can be distorted or deceived by emotional pressures. Knowing nothing of psychology and being completely untutored in the higher aspects of esoteric philosophy, she had no essential knowledge of basic facts to call upon in her emergency. The group she had joined was composed of others like herself, no better equipped and no more inclined to rationalize their own condition.

By the time Jane had been cast out of the sheepfold of the elect, she was on the verge of serious illness. She had neglected normal health precautions for years, under the roseate delusion that her approaching illumination would mend all the ills of mind and body. Her basic characteristics had already set up psychosomatic patterns which were bound to manifest ultimately as physical disorders. She developed palpitations, chills, dizzy spells, lapses of memory, and digestive discomforts. She had reached the age when chronic ailments were likely to appear and where the health required wise and regular supervision. Here again Jane was in trouble. She had a new explanation for all her symptoms. The persecution complex which she had nourished from child-

hood took an aggravated form and she was convinced that she was the victim of malicious entities or persons resolved to work her destruction. It was impossible for Jane to have a stomach-ache without "knowing" that evil thoughts were being sent in her direction. Even her dental ills were a proof that dark forces delighted in tormenting a helpless and innocent victim.

By the very uniqueness of her own estimation of herself, Jane could not have rheumatism, liver disorders, or kidney complications. Others might be just sick, but she must endure, as she had always endured, the misdeeds of hateful and persistent enemies. Each new ailment merely demonstrated the degree to which a helpless woman could be unjustly afflicted. She went to a few doctors, but was completely dissatisfied, of course, by their findings. They had not the wit or gumption to recognize that Jane was the center of a vicious whirlpool of psychic malpractice. She regarded the doctors with genuine pity when they suggested a rest, a sea voyage, or a change of diet. After dismissing the entire medical fraternity with a gesture of impatience, Jane began her search for more sympathetic practitioners.

Several psychic healers *really* understood her case. Unfortunately, however, they could not agree as to the exact cause or the proper treatment. They all "worked on the case," and for awhile there was a definite improvement. Jane was again the center of attention, and secretly rejoiced as the practitioners explained that her condition was absolutely unique. After a few treatments, however, there was the inevitable relapse. The mind recovered from the glamour of the remedies, and settled back into its own negative and perverse habits. By the time Jane had visited all available healers, she was convinced that nothing about her state was trivial. Each new failure was a further discouragement and settled her deeper in her own unhappy pattern. The diagnoses she had heard would have

frightened a normal person out of his wits, and Jane's fears were appropriately intensified.

In the meantime, this sorely troubled lady had lost most of her contacts with the simple and useful pursuits of life. She spent years bound up in her own worries and anxieties, useless to herself and worthless to her world. There was no real accomplishment of any kind to justify existence. Jane might have been a busy, constructive, and reasonably happy person had she recognized the importance of simple social adjustment. Had she remembered that a natural optimism would overcome most of the negative patterns of living, she might have fulfilled her natural instincts instead of permitting them to become frustrated and inhibited. There can be only one answer for Jane: She must wake up and put her own house in order.

All religious organizations, either orthodox or metaphysical, whose teachings stimulate fears and anxieties or include heavy emphasis upon evil agencies operating in the invisible worlds or through physical malpractitioners are dangerous to those mentally and emotionally unstable. Yet, few, if any, such organizations emphasize the need for proper personality adjustment. Those with neurotic tendencies are nearly always supplied with new material from which to concoct worries, doubts, and uncertainties. Many sects require that their members follow rules or routines which are both unnatural and unhealthy. Unreasonable restrictions have a tendency to encourage and sustain unreasonable attitudes. Nearly always there is also division, friction, and discord within the groups themselves. The members sit around gossiping and slandering each other. They are suspicious of every wind that blows, and not infrequently develop small inquisitorial courts which try, sentence, and condemn upon evidence so absurd that it would not dare to lift its head in a court of law.

If the leader of the sect is glamorous or venerable in appearance, he will be

the center of jealousies, envies, and maudlin adoration. This in itself is injurious to all concerned, for, like as not, the great person may believe the flattery of his followers and become psychopathic himself. When this happens, the god and all his little godlings fall upon evil times.

An unstable disciple, finding himself involved in the activities of most unspiritual factions which are biting and scratching on a high plane of principle, is liable to become more unbalanced as the result of the prevailing tension. Most religious sects are finally destroyed by their own bickering and their complete failure to practice what they preach.

The delusion of grandeur is not much more comfortable than the persecution complex. It starts glamorously, but ends badly. Take, for example, the case of John Doe. He had started life as the only son in an indulgent family. Before he went to college he was completely spoiled. While getting mediocre grades he drove an expensive car, joined the best fraternities, and was known on the campus as a hail fellow and a liberal spender. He would not have been so popular, however, had it not been for his eagerness to pay the bills of the set in which he moved. He inherited sufficient money so that he was not driven by necessity to become proficient in business or trade. He worked moderately, but was not in any way a remarkable success. Through lack of genuine ability, he gradually dissipated his inheritance, and left without the security of independent means, drifted along, never able to attain the condition of superiority which the satisfaction of his ego required.

His home hung together, but was no outstanding success, which was in a degree responsible for his wife bringing home mystical and metaphysical books. She was seeking a personality security which she had not found in marriage. John read moderately in these books also, with the skeptical air of a university man who had graduated without

honors. He was not deeply impressed until he got on somebody's mailing list. Then, one day it happened. A very impressive letter, ornamented with strange and cryptic designs, announced that he—John Doe—had been selected by the "Almighty Council of the Almighty" to receive the secrets and universal abundance of cosmic opulence and a dominating personality. Only one in a million deserved this supreme opportunity to emerge into the higher brackets of universal aristocracy. All he had to do was to send for the free booklet.



It got him! The booklet was an open door to Aladdin's treasure house, the vaults of Croesus, and the wisdom of the ages. There were vague references to powers locked in the human soul, which if cultivated under the direction of this most illuminated Order would lead inevitably to the fulfillment of one's heart's desire. It was only necessary to fill the enclosed form and remit ten dollars. In a short time, John Doe was burning the midnight oil, striving desperately with slight mental resources to understand the inscrutable and to master the mysteries of the cabala and the exercises of the Brahmans. To prove that he was peculiarly ready for this advanced course, John kept the dictionary handy, because until that moment he had never heard of the cabala and was uncertain as to which region of the world was inhabited by the Brahmans.

Naturally, the secret of cosmic supply was not instantly available. In the first grade, only the foundation was given. It cost another ten dollars to get the second grade, which, in turn, pre-

pared the way for the third grade—another ten dollars. The third grade intimated the benefits of the fourth grade, which were so remarkable that a larger fee was only commensurate with the privileges. The fourth grade promoted the fifth; the fifth advertised the sixth, which, in turn, recommended the seventh. By the time (and it required several years) John had reached the nineteenth, and final, elevation, he had become a man of parchments, diplomas, certificates, and insignias. He rejoiced in the title "First Assistant Almighty." For awhile, all these dignities were of vast satisfaction to his ego, and he convinced himself that he was truly a superior being. But it gradually dawned on him that with all his remarkable advancements he was still without a dominant personality or the keys to the treasure house. Disillusionment set in, and at last he discussed his difficulties with a friend. This acquaintance explained that the same thing had happened to him, but that John's trouble was he had joined the wrong group. He should have associated himself with the "Exalted Order of the Exalted." They *really* had the key. So John tried all over again, with precisely the same results. He was sincere in a stupid kind of way, for he honestly believed that he could overcome the mediocrity of himself by climbing up a ritualistic ladder, the upper end of which rested firmly in a vacuum.

In the end, John was damaged by disillusionment. He not only rejected the organizations which had deceived him with false pretensions, but also deprived his life of the genuine inspiration of fine and beautiful teachings. The fraudulent groups had exploited venerable names and the reputations of legitimate organizations of past ages. With the inevitable gesture of the cynic, John rejected the good and the bad together and took refuge in a state of materialistic unbelief which contributed nothing to his character. Lacking discrimination, he could not weigh the facts intelligently or realize that his own

gullibility had led him to accept pretensions which could not have deceived those genuinely thoughtful.

In some cases, the problem is one of the blind trying to lead the blind. All dangerous doctrines are not deliberate efforts to exploit or deceive. The founders of cults may themselves be the victims of personality unbalance wrongly diagnosed. We can manufacture a hypothetical example of a very common disorder. The Fraternity of the Cosmic Vigilantes proudly announced that it was the first line of defense against all errors, human and divine. The cult was immaculately conceived by Miss Penelope Prim in a moment of psychic confusion. Miss Prim, later "Sister" Prim, still later "Mother" Prim, and finally "Avatar" Prim, was a kindly, conscientious lady motivated by only the most precious objectives. She had studied with several very "advanced" souls, and from a hodgepodge of ill-digested notions had fashioned a cult so wonderful that it amazed even herself. Obviously, it was her duty to share her findings with those less fortunate, and she accepted the burden with appropriate resolution. Girding on the full armor of righteousness, she set forth with the ardor of an evangelist and the confidence of a newly appointed missionary.

Miss Prim described her spiritual growth as a wonderful unfoldment within herself. Each day there was a new experience or discovery, and she floated along in a state of perpetual bemusement. She was so likeable as a person that she soon accumulated a number of faithful followers who were convinced that "Sister" Prim had been blessed beyond the lot of ordinary mortals. They brought her their problems and received kindly, if impractical, advice. The more they depended upon "Sister" Prim, the more frequently they sought her counsel in those daily matters which they should have solved for themselves. Actually and factually, Miss Prim had never coped successfully with any major decisions of her own. She made the same

mistakes and suffered the same perplexities as all other mortals. But from the confused convictions within herself, she recommended and suggested, warned and admonished, guided and directed, and generally supervised the conduct of her devoted flock.

Had anyone been statistically-minded, he might have made an impartial survey of the consequences. But devotees are not given to such realism, and numberless symptoms of approaching complications were ignored. Had Miss Prim been an experienced counselor or even had she lived a broader and fuller life, her advice might have been tempered with practical considerations. Even when her disciples attempted to follow her instructions and came to grief, she was not blamed. The world simply was not sufficiently enlightened to respond correctly, and the faithful must cling to their principles regardless of results. Even doctrines that cannot be proved by works may attract large followings, and Miss Prim's Cosmic Vigilantes flourished numerically in the face of numerous individual and collective disappointments. It is only proper that the pious should suffer for their piety, and those who pointed out the inconsistencies in the program were just plain "unspiritual."

Finally "Mother" Prim, in spite of expectations to the contrary, departed from this mortal sphere, and by virtue of this inevitable transition became "Avatar" Prim. Her words and findings, her preachments and platitudes, etc., etc., gained the proportions of Scriptural pronouncements, and the "Primitives," as they were referred to by the profane, settled down to keep the letter of her gospel. Nothing must be changed, no jot or tittle added or subtracted. To suggest improvement was heresy. To question the infallibility of the "gospel according to Prim" was the real sin against the Holy Ghost. The dedication of the group to the teachings of its founder was admirable, but the teachings themselves in no way merited that devotion.

It is remarkable how persons otherwise apparently intelligent can ignore the results of foolish practices. It was impossible for the "Primitives" to follow the instructions of their founder and still survive. To meet the emergencies caused by their own doctrine, the devotees were forced to ignore most of the articles of the creed. They vowed perpetual allegiance to Miss Prim, but continued to conduct themselves as though she had never existed. Each new member of the group, however, had to live through the sorry situation for himself. Like those who had gone before, he practiced the policies until he could no longer endure the results and then became a theoretical "Primitive."

Fortunately for Miss Prim, but not so fortunately for her devotees, she departed from this world without ever realizing that she was damaging human lives. Probably, long before the close of her career, she was totally incapable of accepting the facts. Disillusioned followers drifted away without registering complaints, and, with her, out of sight was out of mind. Her concern was with the faithful and not the faithless. Many were so confused that they did not know whom to blame for their troubles. Certainly she narrowed the living and restricted the growth of the members of her group. We live in this world to grow by experience, and when we are not able to interpret that experience honestly we lose most of its benefit. Between each disciple and the realities of life stood the Primian "revelation." By the time facts had been filtered through this, they were meaningless to all concerned.

It may be mentioned that Miss Prim complicated the mental reflexes of her inner circle by frequent quotations from the Scriptures. The general respect in which the Bible is traditionally held made it appear decidedly improper to question her "revelation" supported by Holy Writ. The fact that Miss Prim only quoted the Scriptures when they justified her own opinions passed unnoticed. Nor did the faithful remember

that the Good Book has already been responsible through misinterpretation for a variety of calamities, including the Inquisition. Even assuming that the Cosmic Vigilantes never caused any serious trouble and always stood for the better things of life, the situation was not healthful. We all need the wisdom and courage to face reality and conquer the weaknesses of our own character. When these essential purposes are obscured by platitudes or affirmations, we waste time and opportunity.

Many religious groups have teachings which compromise, in one way or another, the laws of God as these are revealed through the works of Nature. They inspire their followers to ignore the evident and the obvious and trust their hope of glory to vague and uncertain notions. The devout create for themselves a concept of the universe which violates the testimony of their senses and is inconsistent with things well-known and commonly accepted. In the imaginary world of their own making, the devout struggle valiantly against imaginary obstacles, seek desperately to accomplish nonexistent ends, and suffer disappointments and afflictions which have no more substance than the figment of a dream.

To my mind, delusions, no matter how graciously or kindly they may seem, are dangerous to the average person. They intensify neurotic tendencies, cater to frustrations, strengthen complexes, and contribute to those inhibitions which have already interfered with normal functions. The devout pay for a little passing comfort and sentimental satisfaction by impoverishments of character which must sometime be faced.

It is surprising how many religious groups cater in one way or another to the prejudices of their followers. In the name of high religious convictions, men have perpetuated their cruelest instincts and their most dishonorable intentions through the centuries. Ephemeral cults depend upon their emphasis on uniqueness for their survival. They must be different and they must be bet-

ter. This very tendency alone encourages intolerance and justifies a superiority complex. Little sects, seeking to compete with larger groups, devote much of their time to condemning the convictions of their neighbors and complacently contemplating their own peculiar infallibility. Each new cult is more inspired than the previous one, and pretensions pyramid and extend themselves into shapes of monstrous proportions. All over this country there are hundreds of cults, the members of which are basking in the certainty that they have been chosen to save mankind. We should not wonder why the skeptic, looking at this situation objectively, is inclined to become cynical.

Those who desire to investigate the deeper aspects of mysticism and religious philosophy must approach the subject with some basic qualifications. Religion is not only a quality of devotion; it is an art and a science. The natural beginning for the average layman is the history of religion. Immediately there will be objections on the grounds that a historian is only a recorder of physical events. Yet, history is also an instrument for the development of discrimination. From the study of the past, we learn the probabilities of today and, to a degree at least, the possibilities of the future. From the history of religion, we discover the strength and weakness of certain beliefs and the consequences of doctrines, as these operate upon and through human society. After the historical survey comes the study of comparative religion. From this we learn the principal spiritual concepts of humanity and discover that ideas now held as new and remarkable are, for the most part, as old as time. Long before we have completed a survey of comparative religion, we are better informed than ninety per cent of the world's religious leaders. We are also a little more equipped to detect misinterpretations and deliberate distortions. We are not so easily fooled, and the harder we are to deceive, the more likely we are to survive in the confusion of cults.

Ignorance is no greater help in religion than in any other department of living, but many religious people are proud of their own limitations, interpreting them as devotion to their favorite sect.

The student with an adequate reference frame can weigh the claims and pretensions of groups and sects against facts generally known by informed persons. This simple process will protect sincere truth seekers from the majority of the spurious organizations. Impressed by the claims of various groups, an English scholar came to this country shortly before World War II in order that he might examine certain documents and credentials and carry on research in the libraries of these cults. It was my sad duty to inform him that he would find no reference material more important than a cook book and an antique encyclopedia. The learned man did not believe me, but soon returned completely disillusioned. Organizations claiming to be the best-informed in their field were unable to give reasonable or satisfactory answers to the most elementary questions.

Subterfuge preserves itself, or at least attempts to do so, by means of exaggerated pretensions. The well-informed cannot be deceived by false claims, but those ignorant of the facts or without certain scholarly inclinations are overwhelmed by glamorous personalities and glamorized doctrines. When disillusionment finally comes, the honest but gullible follower usually severs his connections with one cult only to make another alliance equally undesirable. Once the mind has been conditioned to this program, the sufferer becomes a chronic joiner. He leans so heavily upon organizations for his spiritual security that he loses whatever natural resourcefulness he may have brought with him into this life.

Mary Jane is a case in point. She had been in and out of metaphysical movements for nearly twenty-five years. She first became involved in metaphysical falling-sickness after the death of her husband, who left her a comfort-

able income. She had been in the esoteric classes of every sloe-eyed Asiatic who had infested the region. She had survived more than a dozen itinerant dieticians, and for more than a decade was an avid subscriber to correspondent courses on every subject from tea-leaf reading to the cabala. She had "retired" from the world to so many remote sanctuaries that her farewell appearances rivaled those of Madame Patti. After reading *Lost Horizon*, she resolved to spend her last days in Tibet, but abandoned the venture when her favorite physician pointed out that her "sensitive constitution" wouldn't survive the altitude. Fortunately, Mary Jane had no psychic sensitivities. She tried desperately to see auras, but got no further than an uncertain smudge. She lost caste in several groups when she could not remember even one past incarnation; in fact, had difficulty remembering the present one. She had no better luck with psychic readers, and even the Tarot cards failed to unfold the future accurately. There could be only one answer: She was carrying a burden of bad karma and low vibrations. But she was dauntless, and continued to join anything joinable. Her sincerity, however, seems finally to have been rewarded, and for some time she has been associated with a practical project for the rehabilitation of delinquent girls.

In my office one afternoon, Mary Jane, a stout little white-haired woman, with a kindly and gentle face and a sense of humor that had survived fifteen rishis, summarized her experiences in a few well-chosen words: "It was my own fault. I wasted the best years of my life trying to become spiritual. I guess I needed the experience, but it has been costly in time and money. At last I am content, for I have forgotten myself in the simple but practical work of helping to rehabilitate unfortunate young women." She then described a number of instances in which these girls had found useful employment, established good homes, and, best of all, were devoting part of their time to the cause

that had benefited them. "If I had only started this work twenty years sooner," she concluded, "think of how much more I could have done."



Even assuming that we survive our associations with meaningless cults, there is always the problem of wasted energy. Until discrimination gives us the ability to select wisely, we should remember that time is life. Each of us has a limited allotment of years and cannot afford to squander precious hours and days and years. Beyond the promulgation of uncertain doctrines, what does the average cult or sect contribute to the advancement of human society? Even though the followers drift along for a time in a state of ego-satisfaction, what do they leave behind them by which they merit the gratitude or appreciation of their fellow men? The members of these groups are inclined to cater to their spiritual ambitions, often neglecting the very responsibilities which life has bestowed. Each cult is dedicated to some program of cosmic benevolence, but the program seldom comes to anything and departs, in its turn, to that limbo which is reserved for defunct organizations.

In the last thirty years I have seen literally hundreds of sects rise, flourish for a time, and disappear. Each has left behind some human wreckage, and the field is strewn with the derelicts of dangerous doctrines. Unfortunately, the troubles survive the extinction of their causes and plague unborn tomorrow with the vagaries of dead yesterday. The average person cannot pass through countless demoralizing experiences with-

out suffering ill-effects. Leaders have a responsibility much larger than that of promulgating their notions and opinions. They do not realize, for the most part, that ideas which appear in themselves to be beautiful, noble, and uplifting can be dangerous if they are substantially untrue or impractical. It takes much more than enthusiasm to save the world. There are many religious teachings theoretically sublime which the average human being cannot apply without involving himself and others in a common disaster.

Of course, a great deal is due to misunderstanding. It may be true that we should "seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness." If we interpret this, however, to mean that we should renounce our natural obligations, we pervert the spirit of the statement. The leader of one group explained his convictions thus: "It is self-evident that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving. Therefore, it is also self-evident that God wants all his children to be happy, prosperous, and healthy, and to enjoy all the good things of life." It is not easy to deny such a conviction without seeming to belittle the Almighty. Even folks with a vestige of common sense would be inclined to agree that the pronouncement represented a high quality of faith and enlightenment. Yet, the self-evident is not self-evident, inasmuch as a deity thus endowed with omnipotent attributes was himself, or itself, completely equipped to fashion a world according to his heart's desire. It would hardly be necessary to create a cult in order to make certain that the inevitable was adequately manifested. Something was wrong in the concept, but it sounded like a divine revelation.

For thousands of years religions and philosophies have been struggling on the horns of this dilemma. If God, being limitless in resources, permits war, crime, sickness, sorrow, and death, we are forced, like Buddha, to one of two conclusions: Either Deity cannot prevent these things, or else does not

prevent these things for reasons best known to himself. Many flourishing sects insist that if the members will follow their peculiar instructions, they can break the expectancy pattern with the ages and permit Divinity to manifest its perfect work. But the results are seldom more than a passing enthusiasm, which obscures reality for a time, but does not reverse the machinery of the cosmic plan. If it be true that it was God's natural purpose that all his creation should dwell together in paradisiacal fraternity, something has gone seriously wrong. Nor is this difficulty reserved to man alone, for, as Butler so wisely noted: "Even bugs have smaller bugs that bite them, and these, in turn, still smaller bugs, *ad infinitum*."

The universal reformation of mankind calls for something more effective than a well-ordered platitude. Human beings must build, using the faculties and powers with which they are endowed to improve themselves and perfect their society. Faith must be supported by skill and consecration. It must be revealed through workable formulas and plans which will gradually and surely advance the cause of civilization. The average metaphysician may have the faith and the sincerity and the devotion, but he lacks the skill. There is only one way in which skill can be perfected, and that is through experience. Even experience, however, is a general term covering a multitude of implications. There are some whose experiences are so intensely personal that they can have slight significance to others. No one person's experience is sufficient to give him a cross section of the human need. Naturally, those of the wider, deeper, and larger experience are more likely to make the greater contribution, but this also is true only when experience has not distorted or disordered the mind or resulted in barriers of prejudice or conceit. The experiences of the embittered, the frustrated, and the neurotic are so colored by melancholy as to have slight social significance.

The chronic cultist is seldom an experienced man or woman. He is the product of a small pattern that has crowded him so closely as to destroy perspective. He receives teachings from others little better off than himself. He accumulates a quantity of abstract lore that is not applicable to any of the pressing problems of the hour. He becomes drenched in traditions which he cannot use, and accumulates interpretations which lead to discussion rather than action. It has always seemed to me that every religious group should include training in arts and crafts, sciences and/or philosophies which relate to contemporary life. Only by exact instruction in the use of the knowledge of the race can the student become equipped to apply spiritual convictions to their proper purposes. Educational systems have failed because they have bestowed skill without spiritual overtones. Mystical movements fail because they bestow spiritual overtones without skill. Perhaps they should get together and solve some of the world's confusion by pooling their resources.

Liberal churches have found that their congregations increase in size and interest when sermons are less theological and more sociological. The world is in too critical a condition to be able to afford the extravagance of endless theorizing. It may be exciting to know what you did in your past lives, but it is more useful to find out what you can do in this life. The practice of religion is far more difficult than the theory of religion. We can huddle together in exclusive circles discussing the attributes of God in comparative comfort, but when we go out and try sincerely to advance the spiritual content of humanity we require an abundance of fortitude, a quiet but determined courage, and a vast amount of practical wisdom. When the devout go forth as lambs among wolves, the wolves are quite convinced that they have been blessed by divine providence.

Dangerous doctrines are those which fill the heart and soul with high resolu-

tions, but leave the devout disciple completely unequipped to use what he has learned to protect himself or others. It is easy to pass over this situation lightly on the assumption that all the world is waiting impatiently for the message we intend to bring. We can believe this until we face the facts. One of the pressing needs of the moment is that the larger, more sincere, and more powerful idealistic sects should themselves unite. This does not mean that they must so mingle their doctrines as to lose all identity, but they should learn to work together and to enlist the assistance of progressives in every field of endeavor. This would be a practical accomplishment, and for those who are convinced of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men such an achievement should not be impossible. But even though the members are overflowing with godliness, this first test of utility invariably ends in a riot. The conclusion reached by the impartial observer is that these groups are far more concerned with the preservation of their individual beliefs than they are in the advancement of the security of their fellow men. Even to suggest fraternization is to lose caste, or at least to be regarded with profound suspicion.

Practical issues nearly always end in a stalemate. The devout believer is forced to decide whether he should give complete allegiance to the doctrines of his sect or compromise these doctrines in an effort to find common ground with the members of other groups. Usually this decision is beyond his resources. Fraternization implies acceptance of spiritual convictions that differ from his own; if not actual acceptance, at least there must be a distinctly charitable attitude. Religions have never been able to unite on the plane of doctrine, but it might be possible for them to submerge their private differences if they could be convinced of their responsibility to the public good. Unfortunately, even the public good is subject to interpretation, and to clarify objectives to the degree that these dominate and

are commonly acceptable requires not only a devout spirit, but also a considerable measure of trained statesmanship. Here, again, skill is necessary.

If religious people in general could realize the importance of interpreting their convictions through proven practical abilities, they would advance the culture of their world and justify their own level of conviction. A good example of the possibilities are the medical missionaries. These have been the most successful of all groups in advancing the boundaries of their faith. Thousands of remote communities have developed a sincere affection for those who have labored patiently and unselfishly to bring hygiene and sanitation to underprivileged areas. The medical missionary can have his equivalent in all idealistic sects and groups. He has trained

himself in a simple but direct means of combining noble beliefs with useful arts and sciences. His religion has given him a work to do and he is living his religion through the conscientious fulfillment of his professional opportunities. There is need for metaphysical ideals in the public schools, in business, and even in the trades, but they must be brought by skilled workers and not merely by talkers. Very few will suffer from metaphysical indigestion and other religious disorders if they will immediately sense the need of developing specialized abilities through which they can practice their convictions. A doctrine is dangerous when it does not intensify the resolution to share in the world's work, and to teach through example rather than merely to impose doctrines upon those naturally disinclined to such conversion.



Voltaire once saw a particularly miserable and decrepit cart horse, its bones protruding and its body covered with scars of the lash. The philosopher paused for a moment and observed to a friend: "Its ancestors must also have eaten of the forbidden fruit."

Horace Walpole said: "The world is a comedy to those that think; a tragedy to those who feel."

The Duke of Wellington was asked which he regarded as the best of the French marshalls under Napoleon. The Iron Duke replied: "I do not know, but I do know that I always found Messena where I least desired that he should be."

Archbishop Whately found himself in the midst of a disagreeable argument as to why hanging causes death. One learned gentleman exclaimed that the respiration was cut off. "Nonsense!" interrupted Whately, "It is because the rope is not long enough to let the unfortunate man's feet touch the ground."



The Three Great Codes

THE civil codes of the world are derived from an accumulation of ancient rules and precepts justified and sustained by human experience. It is impossible to discover the origin of the concept of regulations which men have imposed upon each other to protect the survival of their social institutions. For practical purposes, we may assume that the principal sources of codified morality were the sacred books of early nations. For this reason, legal institutions are regarded as founded in divine authority. Deity emerges as the universal legislator. He is the judge of the quick and the dead, and presides over a jury of subordinate beings or intelligences and a civil arm which administers justice by rewarding the virtuous and punishing the wicked.

Every great spiritual teacher bestowed upon his followers a pattern for conduct. Those who accepted the faith abided in its laws, kept its covenants, and gained merit through obedience to its statutes. Theological codes differed from civil codes by extending the concept of law to include the most secret motivation and personal conviction of the individual. Crime was under the jurisdiction of civil courts, and sin was under the jurisdiction of theological courts. At certain times in history, these were independent bodies, and such religious tribunals as the Holy Office or Court of the Inquisition functioned without dependence upon the rules governing civil administration. In most countries today,

however, there are constitutional protections by which the citizen can no longer be accused, tried, or convicted for personal convictions unless his religious beliefs violate the civil rights of others. In other words, men are now tried for crime or misdemeanor and not for sin, except in those instances where sin and crime are identical in their social significance.

It is probable that the concept of crime originated in the concept of sin, which is the older of the two. A crime against society was substantially a sin against God, who was the Father of society and the celestial patron of human projects. Some have suggested that the Great Codes were created by human conscience, and that laws are merely the ordering of internal convictions about the substance of right and wrong. In most cases, however, the purpose of law is to achieve justice, which today implies equity. We consider that just which is fair, reasonable, and practical. We hope that justice will preserve right, but we resolve that it shall protect *rights*. That which is just may not always represent the fullness of our moral or ethical vision. Nor can man-made law be imposed completely upon a God-made universe. Compromise is inevitable, so we enforce certain regulations, not because they are in every way sufficient, but because they protect the greater good of the greater number.

Human laws are in a constant process of change. The motions of society re-

quire a perpetual procedure of enlargement and amendment, and the jurist must depend upon interpretation to accomplish equity. The spirit of the law is always just, according to the prevailing concept of justice, but the letter of the law may violate the very principles which the law was designed to protect. In man the seat of law is in the mind, and the seat of justice is in the heart. Yet, both the heart and the mind can be corrupted by internal pressures and external emergencies. Justice, like truth, is only a word until the unfoldment of the spiritual overtones of the human being bestows the strength, the wisdom, and the love to judge righteous judgment. The civil code, therefore, is ineffective without spiritual overtones and an adequate standard of personal and collective ethics. We have learned to our sorrow that laws do not create ethics, but ethics creates, sustains, and even renovates the structure of the civil code.

The principle of law among ancient nations was the code of survival. The human being found that he could not live without some pattern of rules mutually accepted and, if necessary, enforced by the community. Early laws regulated the distribution of the food, the allotment of the land, and the rights of the persons. They governed the systems of exchange and barter, protected industry, and punished acts of violence, fraud, and theft. Such rules were sanctioned by the group because they were obviously necessary. It was this sanctioning which resulted in the conviction of the people coming to be regarded as the will of God. The divine will was in this case revealed through the human need, and obedience to the social code was interpreted as obedience to the will of heaven.

The greatest source of early civil codes was that group of priestly institutions known as the State Religion, or the Mysteries. It was generally acknowledged that the practical end of wisdom was understanding of the Universal Plan, and the highest form of virtue was to

live in accordance with that plan. The search for truth included the quest for the Eternal Code. Education was instruction in conduct. The individual was taught in order that he might live a better life. Virtue was the personal application of the code, and justice was its civic application through a body of lawmakers and lawenforcers. Because humanity in its simplest and most primitive state was most instinctively aware of its own essential requirements, the earlier legal structure revealed the natural ethics of the species. For this reason, it is seldom necessary to alter these regulations. It is only needful to enlarge and extend them to cover circumstances outside the experience of previous ages.

The laws of the tribe or clan were usually administered by the Elders, whose distinguishing attributes were experience, age, and venerable appearance. In some countries, the costume of a judge still includes robes and a long white wig. By these symbols, he is made to personify the Elder, and it is assumed that his appearance will be justified by his erudition. What the Elder was to the tribe, tradition is to the world. We may define tradition as the testimony of the collective experience of the past. Through experience, we learn the rules which have been applied successfully in previous times. In law, tradition is called *precedent*, and this still hangs heavily in the legal atmosphere. In modern usage, precedence applies to previous decisions on a legal subject rather than to the direct experience of human beings. Learned findings influence the modern jurist in the same way that the advice of the patriarch affected the disputants who came before him to clarify their rights and privileges.

Early in the development or unfoldment of his legal consciousness, man discovered that he was not especially skillful in deciding confused issues. He learned that his own convictions and experiences were not always applicable to the lives and requirements of others. He realized in his own heart that he was not wise enough or strong enough to



—From King's *History of Egypt*

UPPER SECTION OF THE STELE OF SUSA

Hammurabi standing is represented as reverencing the solar god, who is enthroned with his feet resting upon mountains.

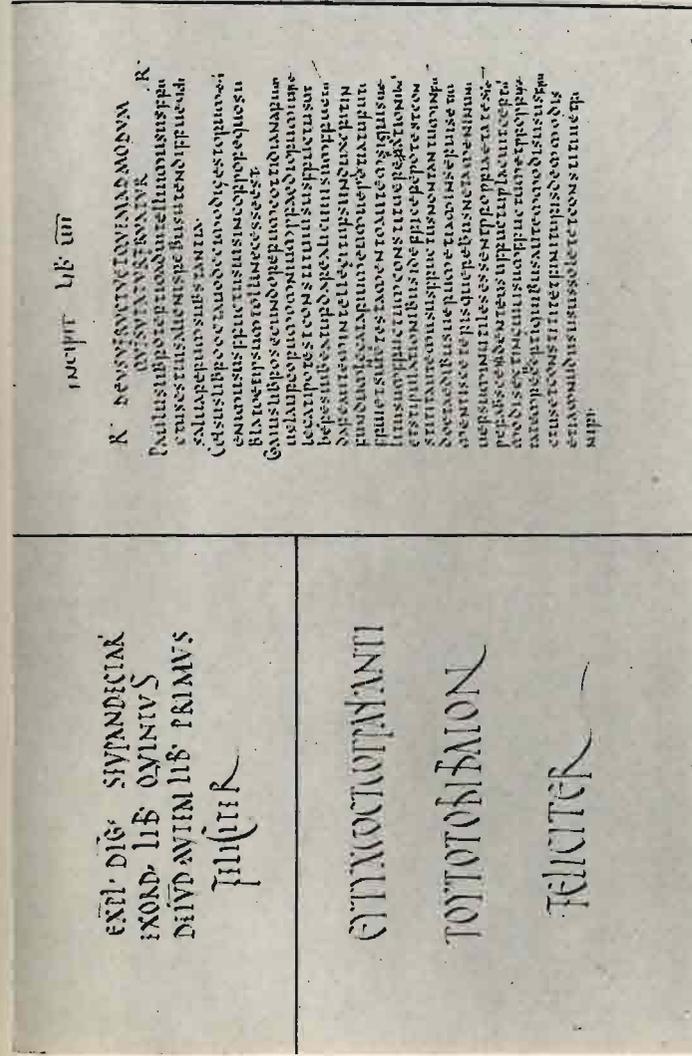
Beneath are sections of the Great Code of laws.



—From King's *History of Egypt*

SCULPTURED PORTRAIT OF HAMMURABI,
KING OF BABYLON.

Original in the British Museum



—From *Universal Palaeography*
THE LAURENTIAN LIBRARY MANUSCRIPT OF THE PANDECTS
OF JUSTINIAN

This 7th-century codex was written in Constantinople, and is the most valuable of all documents of the Roman law. There is a possibility that it is actually in the autograph of Justinian. Three sections of the writing are combined on the plate.



—From *The Library of Original Sources*
 THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN PRESIDING OVER THE GREAT COUNCIL FOR
 THE CODIFICATION OF ROMAN LAW

make infallible decisions or to pass judgment upon the motives and secret impulses of his fellow men. Dominated by the almost universal belief that God alone was all-knowing, the tribe sought means of invoking the divine power where human knowledge was inadequate. As a result, oracles, divinations, and tests and ordeals, calculated to invoke the decision of providence, were included in legal procedure. Obviously, such a technique could result in a terrible miscarriage of justice, but the impulse or instinct involved was essentially honorable.

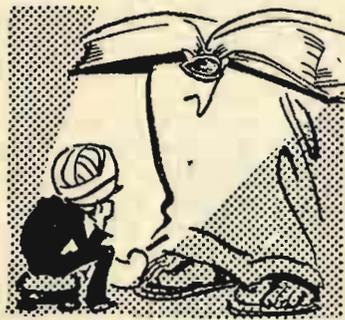
It was the failure of providence to reveal itself that was responsible for the transformation of the concept of law from abstract justice to concrete equity. The best that man could do was to protect his system from evident crime. He could not understand or weigh the motives, so he restricted his concepts to the obvious consequences of these motives. Laws were made to clarify the consequences of conduct, and it was left to the philosopher and the theologian to understand and explain, if they could, the imponderables which motivate conduct.

The enforcement of law has always been accomplished by subjecting offenders to penalties and punishments. Primitive mankind was held within the social pattern largely by fear. When superstitions ceased to exercise a sufficient restraining force, various punishments were devised to check antisocial tendencies. Little effort was made to adjust the penalty to the crime. In some nations, there were only two penalties: for minor offense, flogging; and for major offense, capital punishment. Early in the experience of law, men came to recognize that punishment did not prevent crime. Even the most ingenious forms of torture were not sufficient to discourage the malefactor. We may say that the convicting and sentencing of criminals has a tendency to limit the spread of crime, but neither prevents nor cures criminal tendencies. Re-education, with the many implica-

tions of the term, is generally accepted as the only practical solution, but even this concept has not been integrated into a successful program.

Ancient peoples were usually rather tolerant of the religious convictions of their neighbors, and, as cultural horizons broadened, members of different faiths and creeds mingled in the market places and met along the caravan routes. As these exchanges were necessary to the vitality of trade, it was expedient for merchants to refrain from offending those with whom they did business. Thus it happened that concepts of laws founded in religious doctrines were widely distributed, and it was expedient to respect these alien codes. Prominent legislators traveled to other countries which were, at the time, enjoying the rewards of social vision. The study of law and the methods for its enforcement were gradually integrated into a systematic procedure. Conquerors establishing themselves in foreign regions found it inadvisable to disrupt local systems. Wherever possible, therefore, they administered their own convictions through available channels, modifying but not overthrowing the native codes.

Those having the widest and most diversified dominions naturally required a broader legal concept. It was never truly profitable to exterminate conquered peoples. In order to be profitable, colonies and annexed domains must be contented and industrious and kept on a high standard of production. Those who conquer nations are often culturally conquered by the peoples and customs of the newly acquired areas. This was certainly the case during the rise of the Roman Empire. The inevitable drift was away from religious codes and toward neutral legislation, which could be applied to those of different convictions without offense. Usually, the religious systems were in broad agreement as to what constituted crime, and it was advisable to overlook or ignore such offenses as constituted sin. A compromise was found in permitting the local religion to control the spiritual code; where-



as, the governing empire reserved to itself the administering of civil law. In some instances, the State restricted the privileges of the religious group, forbidding capital punishment without the sanction of the criminal court. The drift continued until, finally, religious tribunals lost all authority over physical life and property, and were able only to impose penance upon those believers who elected to submit thereto.

Corruption within the body of lawmakers and their enforcement agencies has always existed. The judge found himself to have a peculiar and unique authority. He was able to unite and divide, add and subtract. His authority was inferior only to the king or emperor himself. If his responsibilities were heavy, his opportunities were great. Much depended upon personal character and legal insight. Few human beings can resist the temptation to exploit their privileges. When the governing power misused the privileges of sovereignty, the courts of law, no longer subject to the restraints of propriety, became instruments of vengeance and personal selfishness. When these abuses became intolerable, reforms were necessary, and these usually created new laws to restrain the abuse of law. Thus, the code was extended to apply to the corruptions of itself, and elaborate procedures were introduced, which have so increased in number as to become a burden to the spirit of justice.

Periods of war and conquest and even natural disasters are always followed by a general demoralization. To

bring order out of this chaos, strong leadership is required. The Great Codes, which have come to be regarded as legal scriptures, were formulated to meet these large emergencies, or for the administering of large areas of diversified populations suddenly bound together within the structure of empire. Some of these codes, like that of Genghis Khan and Napoleon, have been accredited to military geniuses, but actually they were produced by trained jurists under the patronage of the temporal authority. Military codes are often more strict and efficient than civil codes, but not necessarily more equitable. Usually systems of laws are also internally dated. They are prepared for an existing condition, and with the passing of time and the inevitable alterations in the human estate these codes become obsolete. An obsolete law is not merely an ancient curiosity; it is a definite menace which can be invoked to frustrate justice itself. Yet, we have a tendency to cling to laws which serve our advantage even if they have no foundation in equity. The history of law, therefore, like most other histories, is an account of a pressing need for reformation and the means by which the reforms have been accomplished. Codes are built upon each other, and sometimes the structure becomes so top-heavy that it collapses from the burden of its own weight. It is not only necessary to make new laws, but also to remove from the statute books those which no longer serve a useful purpose. The great jurist is ever-mindful of the need for simplifying the administering of justice. Too many laws lead to lawlessness, and we must yet recognize that a sufficient code is that which clarifies principles, but does not obscure them beneath a mass of particulars.

It is an old saying that laws are made for lawbreakers and not for honest citizens. The lawbreaker is an ingenious character, and, through counsel, is forever seeking loopholes in the law. Frequently he finds one, and, gaining courage, continues his offenses. Anciently, it was honorable and proper for

the citizen to take vengeance in his own hands and to punish as he saw fit those who had used him badly. In a simple society where facts were easily ascertained, this procedure had certain merits, but led to those abuses which resulted in the State reserving to itself the right to discover the facts in both civil and criminal law. A crime against an individual came to be regarded as a crime against the people, and the jury system permitted the people to estimate the degree of that offense and to recommend certain penalties under law.

The obvious difficulty is that only a society, itself essentially wise and virtuous, could create and maintain a sufficient legal code; and in such a society, there would be slight need for such a code. To the present time, progress in law has depended upon the ability and intrinsic integrity of a few brilliant minds, who have attained to such station and authority as enabled them to accomplish the needed reforms. Human conduct is circumscribed by a pattern of values which requires constant thoughtfulness. Ignorance is still the enemy of regulated society. Ignorance gives aid and comfort to selfishness, which is the principal cause of crime. As long as no satisfactory way is found to reward unselfishness, the inducements to advance one's own position are stronger than the average person can resist. A system of punishments without a system of rewards is in some way deprived of its larger values. We can no more take honorable action for granted than we can accept dishonorable action as inevitable. In this particular, sin and crime are closely involved. The rewards for virtue are reserved for heaven, but the punishments for crime are bestowed in this mortal sphere. This may be sufficient for those of strong faith, but this group is not the main cause of present concern over delinquency.

Just as philosophy is organized common sense, so law is organized integrity. Unfortunately, many philosophies are deficient in common sense, and many legal codes have lost sight of the uni-

versal integrity which they were fashioned to uphold. Religion is institutionalized faith, even as science is disciplined skill. These systems are only the intensification of natural instincts, refined and educated that they may be useful to the advancement of the race. Actually, law requires knowledge far beyond the formal boundaries of the subject. The great jurist must be a philosopher, a mystic, and, to a degree, a scientist. The limitation which penetration imposes upon breadth has resulted in specializations which are ineffective because they are incomplete. Law isolated from other motions of human consciousness can never fulfill its own high destiny. This is proved by the inability of legal codes to fashion structures or to strengthen convictions which will prevent crime.

The growth of legal systems has resulted from the enlargement of the concept of interpretation. In earlier times, it was discovered that the letter of the law, if applied without consideration of ethical overtones, could result in a serious miscarriage of justice. Where the due process of law failed to provide redress, there was recourse to appeal. Originally, this appeal was directed to the sovereign, who was vested with the authority to decide as he saw fit, nor could his decisions be reversed. Later, the chancellor became vested with the privilege of reviewing and reversing the findings of the courts. Thus, common and statute law were given a third dimension—the law of equity. This was only the ensouling of the legal code that it might fulfill the spirit of justice. The power of the court to recognize real merit and value is sanctioned, and the great jurist is expected, if not technically required, to invoke law in equity where it is apparent that legal devices are being employed to obstruct or pervert the machinery of justice.

The more advanced communities of the ancient world developed systems and policies for administering their internal affairs. Wherever human beings are brought into close association with each

other or are permanently settled in a common region, they form a society. Such a society must subject the individuals of which it is composed to rules and regulations for the common good. The Great Codes were, to a degree at least, founded in the laws regulating old and well-established communities. Such codes as those of the original Aryas as revealed through the Vedas and *The Institutes of Manu* were such accumulations of community systems. When these passed into the common holding and were interpreted by ethical philosophers, like Plato and Confucius, the recommendations of these enlightened men strengthened the overtones of equity. To the great teachers, law was to be regarded as an embodiment of truth and not merely an instrument of justice.

One of the most remarkable systems of law which have survived from antiquity is the Code of Hammurabi, the sixth king of the Amoritic, or West Semitic, dynasty of Babylonia. This king, who reigned from 2067 to 2025 B. C., was an opulent monarch with distinctly Oriental tastes, whose military genius had enabled him to unite Sumer, Akkad, Tigris, and Euphrates into one vast domain. This military achievement required a suitable administration, and with a benevolence not usually associated with even kindly tyrants, Hammurabi accepted the responsibilities of kingship and resolved that his peoples should enjoy an enlightened government. While the Code of Hammurabi has not survived in its Sumerian form and is imperfect in its Semitic version, the larger part of the Code was made available by the discovery of the stele at Susa. Here more than two hundred of the three hundred articles of this legal system are legible, although some sixty of the laws have been hopelessly defaced. Other inscriptions have been found which supplement this stele, so that it is possible to reconstruct or approximate Hammurabi's legal system.

To those who are addicted to the quaint superstition that the ancients

were without a conviction of equity, the Great Babylonian Code will prove a distinct shock. The student will immediately recognize in the translations of the old inscriptions many of those cherished convictions of society which later reappeared in the Magna Charta and the American Bill of Rights. In substance, the Code of Hammurabi is a simple and dignified statement of the responsibilities and privileges of social existence. Although the stele of Susa opens with an elaborate religious prologue honoring the gods for the revelation of law, it is evident that Hammurabi assembled his Code from the systems of the ancient communities which he had brought within his domain. He established a centralized Babylonian code to be applied to all his people, thus transferring authority to the center of government and preventing local systems from functioning in conflict with each other.

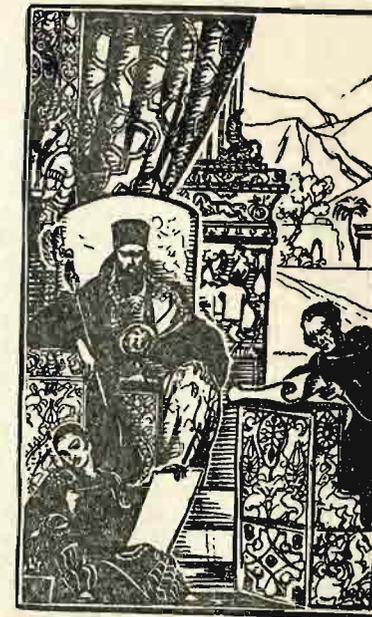
The Great Code distinguished three degrees of human estate. The first was the aristocracy, which enjoyed certain legal privileges, but conversely suffered heavier penalties for the misuse of power. It was assumed that those with larger opportunities and greater advantages should by nature and instinct be better citizens. It is interesting, therefore, that this part of the Code should emphasize the responsibilities above the privileges. The aristocracy was not actually above the law, but was assumed to be above breaking the law. Thus, lawlessness in this group was a particularly serious offense with heavier punishments and penalties. The second class consisted of the average citizen and included the gamut, from the professional man, through the merchant, to the agriculturist. To these, the body of the Code was especially directed. As slavery was then both honorable and sanctioned, the third class for which protective legislation had been devised consisted of slaves. By the Great Code, the slave also had inalienable rights and the privilege of petition. If he were wronged, he had redress; and by the law, no member of the community was

without the right to present his grievances to a proper body.

An elaborate structure was created by which the merits of a case could be examined, evidence heard, witnesses placed under oath, and documentary material reviewed and analyzed. Because of the power of the State Religion, perjury and false witness under oath were regarded as extremely unlikely. If such occurred, however, the penalty was severe. Most cases were presented to two or more judges, and retrial on new evidence was permitted. It was also proper for the judges to ask for further judicial assistance, if such were required.

The parties involved in a litigation were not permitted to engage counsel, but presented the case themselves, calling upon such witnesses as they chose and answering each other's accusations. Testimony was weighed in terms of the known integrity of the testifier and upon such substantial evidence as he was able to produce. When it was impossible for the judges to decide an involved case, it was permissible to have recourse to test by ordeal or to present the case to the king himself. The ruler had the right of decision, regardless of evidence, but usually acted as an arbitrator to achieve settlement on reasonable grounds or with the least injustice to the contending parties. If the situation required, even the slave could ask and receive the opportunity to present his difficulties to the king.

Most Eastern monarchs reserve a certain number of their public audiences for the settlement of disputations. On days set aside for this purpose, these rulers, even to this time, permit their subjects to place their grievances before the divan. The prince may be assisted by learned counselors, and these whisper in his ear suggestions and recommendations if the case be such that the ruler himself is uninformed of the details. In all, there is no reasonable doubt but that it is the sincere desire of the government to protect those who have, in one way or another, been the victims



of injustice. This policy of appeal to the ruler is founded in the old Babylonian law.

While it is not practical to examine every article of the Great Code, certain selected fragments will indicate the spirit of the system. For example, there was deep consideration for the rights of women and the legitimacy of children and their shares in the family goods. Divorce proceedings could be instituted by either the husband or wife, and included an equitable distribution of community property. The marriage customs of the time were that the husband purchased his wife for a sum mutually agreed upon by the two families, and she brought with her a dowry. She had the right to administer her dowry even after marriage and could will it to her children or use it as she pleased. If the dowry became community property and a divorce followed, the husband was required to return the dowry after subtracting the purchasing price of the wife. Unless there were unusual modifying circumstances, the children remained in the custody of the mother,

and it was required that the father provide for their support.

The laws governing adultery were severe, but with a curious complication. Infidelity was only legally recognized while the parties were in mutual support or living from the common community property. If a husband failed to support his wife, he could not charge her with adultery. Children were protected from abuse, neglect, and desertion. Orphans were available for adoption, but if adopted could not be disinherited on any grounds not applicable to children born into the family. An adopted child could not be deprived of its inheritance if the family later had a child of its own. Adopted children could not be reclaimed by their own parents after the adopting family had raised and educated them. If a craftsman adopted a child, the child could not be reclaimed by its natural parents if the craftsman had taught it his trade.

Minors had legal rights, and their estates and properties and also their persons were protected by the State when other means failed. To deprive a child of necessities if the parents themselves enjoyed luxuries could result in intervention by the court. Husbands and wives were not responsible for each other's debts contracted before marriage, and a woman's goods could not be attached for the debts of her husband. If a freeman married a slave or a slave woman married a freeman, the children were usually regarded as free and not expected to bear the social conflict of their parents. Slaves could own property, themselves hire slaves for their own use, buy their liberty by contract, and bestow their personal wealth upon their descendants, the master reserving a third part. A master of slaves could be brought before the court if it were shown that he failed in anyway to provide adequately for these slaves. The term *adequately* implied good and sufficient food, proper clothing, sanitary housing, all necessary medical care, and whatever liberties, privileges, and opportunities were available to that class

at that time. He might bestow upon a slave a marriage partner by purchase, but this was not compulsory and the slave had the right to select his own partner if he preferred. Very often he selected, and then the master purchased. Failure to keep slaves on a high level of self-respect and comfort was a disgrace.

When purchasing goods including slaves or properties, it was required that the purchaser investigate with all diligence to be certain that titles were clear and that he was not buying stolen or encumbered goods. If he neglected all reasonable means of verifying his purchase, it could be forfeited. If, however, he had documentary proof or reliable witness that he had acted in good faith, then the seller was held liable.

There were severe regulations upon all craftsmen and workers who were employed by others. Failure to fulfill contract was a serious offense, unless acts of providence made such fulfillment impossible. Misrepresentation was considered *prima facie* fraud and punished accordingly. To use inferior material in the building of a house or to neglect any common requirement to make that house permanent and lasting was held against the contractor, who might be required to completely rebuild the structure at his own expense. Neglect was reprimanded, oversight or indifference was not considered an excuse, and deliberate intent to cheat was inexcusable. To neglect property, to misuse things owned or administered were offenses against the community.

Penalties differed according to the magnitude of the guilt. Civil problems were usually settled by the imposing of fines or the confiscation of property. With the middle class, even criminal cases were settled by a payment of goods or money. The State did not believe in weakening its structure by the promiscuous execution of delinquents. For certain crimes which were outstanding, mutilation might be inflicted. For instance, if it could be proved that a surgeon had been careless in performing an operation, he might lose his hands.

Those guilty of murder, treason, deliberate arson, proven adultery, or a false witness whose testimony had resulted in a serious disaster were subject to the death penalty. So, also, were those implicated in the assassination of a public official, a plot upon the life of the ruler, or the profanation of the religion. For other offenses, arbitration and settlement of mutual satisfaction were recommended.

There were many other regulations relating to taxation and the supplying of men for the army according to their landholdings. If a man were called to the service of his country, he might select an administrator of his affairs. His wife was eligible for such an appointment, or if he regarded her as not sufficiently skilled or his business were unsuitable to a woman, he might select a male relative or the courts might appoint a trustee. This guardian must make a detailed accounting, and penalties for abuse of this responsibility were especially heavy if the owner of the estate were serving his country. With the consent of his first wife, a man might have a second legal wife; but in the household, the first wife held precedent, and her children received two-thirds of the estate. A woman had recourse if her husband squandered their means. If widowed, she might remarry, but there were restrictions upon her rights to do so, especially if it endangered the happiness of her children or their inheritance from their father. Minor children had restricted rights of citizenship from birth, and these were inalienable. Priests, priestesses, and members of holy orders could own property and distribute it or bestow it. The religious did not lose citizenship.

Goods could be exchanged, bought, sold, bartered, transferred, bestowed, or in any way disposed of so long as the title was clear and such transferences were themselves legal. The rule "the buyer beware" governed such transactions. There was no redress if the purchaser had previously examined the merchandise, but he had the right to refuse

or to return the goods if misrepresentation beyond his reasonable knowledge could be proved. There were regulations against the misuse of public utilities, laws of nuisance and defacement. A man could work his own land, employ others to work it for wages, take on share-croppers, or use slaves. The working hours and conditions of these people were regulated by equity, and a man was not supposed to cause those who worked for him to accomplish more than he himself could or would normally accomplish. All payments were by contract usually in the presence of witnesses, but in important and large transactions there were written agreements.

If a man in the service of his country were captured by the enemy and held for ransom, there were various ways of getting the money. If he were unable to supply the funds from his own estate or to do so would impoverish his family and endanger the future of his children, his wife or the guardian of his business could seek counsel in the temple of the State Religion. It is interesting that the religious institution was empowered to pay such ransom or under other conditions of extreme gravity to supply funds to meet the needs of private citizens. There is no indication that interest was charged on such loans. If they could not be repaid, they constituted a religious contribution to the security of the people.

In the Babylonian system, the aristocracy owned most of the land, and the State held certain rights over property even after it passed into the private possession of the agriculturist. The land was burdened with certain civil debts and was encumbered with responsibilities to the State even after the deed had passed into private hands. Most of the taxes, however, were paid by the aristocracy, which in this way supported itself. It may be noted in passing that the erudition of Hammurabi extended to supplying the country with roads, utilities, and an efficient postal system. The State also maintained necessary law-

enforcement agencies and regulated water rights, which were important in all Asiatic communities. Those citizens who lacked the means or education to regulate their affairs were supplied with a body of officials and experts with whom they could consult at any and all times. Education of the young was largely a family matter, and skill was gained through the apprenticeship system. It was expected but not required that children would be inclined to the pursuits of their parents, or if they showed special aptitudes would be apprenticed.

All classes, including the slaves, had broad privileges of self-improvement, and a person of unusual ability could advance himself without encountering artificial restraints. Many distinguished leaders emerged from the humbler classes, and honor and respect were bestowed for ability and merit. The temples constituted the institutions of higher education. While it was not usual for slaves to be admitted, even this could be arranged. It required little more than the recommendation of the priesthood to cause a master to free a slave, if his abilities merited special culturing. The temple, if necessary, would purchase the freedom of any person. A slave-owner freed his slaves at any time and frequently did so just before his death. Incidentally, George Washington did the same thing.

In coverage, the Code of Hammurabi was benign and far in advance of the community laws upon which it was founded. The Code was created to administer a large region made up of a diversified citizenry. It clarified the prevailing concepts of right and wrong. It did not overthrow existing conventions, but supplied the dimension of equity. It sought to clarify the spirit of men's dealings with each other and to bring this spirit into conformity with the ideals of the State Religion. It was the practical application of the will of the gods. Therefore, in itself it had the dignity of a divine decree. To keep the law was to keep the faith; who

broke one, broke the other. As a result, there are few records of extraordinary lawlessness after the Code was enforced. It not only clarified the position of the citizenry, but it also strengthened the unity of the State. It continued to hold the Babylonian culture together for nearly two thousand years, and caused Babylonia to emerge as the greatest power of western Asia. It further supplied the foundations of Greek and Roman law, and the basic principles of the Great Code remain after four thousand years as the most powerful forces in the regulation of private and public conduct.

By virtue of his Code, Hammurabi, the king, is entitled to a distinguished place among great civilized human beings. While it is improbable that he personally fashioned his great legal instrument, he certainly possessed the wisdom and foresight to encourage and sustain the project. There is much within the Code itself to indicate that it was fashioned by a soldier or by a group widely experienced in military tactics. It was simple, direct, and inclusive. It catered to no one and had one primary end: the strengthening of society. Naturally, it could not be extended into fields of activity then non-existent, but its principles, by reasonable extension, can clarify nearly any situation. The surviving text of the Code of Hammurabi is now available in English, but the reader must remember that even translators are creatures of prejudice likely to sacrifice the spirit of any document to the letter of its form. The largest change has been the human attitude toward slavery, which is no longer regarded favorably by civilized nations. It would be unfair, however, to consider that the spirit of slavery has entirely ceased, and many of the regulations originally intended for this group could be studied with profit by those desiring to improve underprivileged classes in modern communities.

The political implications of the Code are important. First and foremost the State emerged as the protector of the

people; a kind of partnership was set up. The people maintained the State in various ways at their own expense, but the State did not survive merely to be maintained. It was the function of the State to administer the rights and privileges of the people. Its major concerns were the improvement, the security, and happiness of the citizens. It required a certain standard of deportment from each citizen in order that the community should enjoy harmonious and co-operative benefits. The State was definitely for the people and not the people for the State. It was the right and the duty of the people to support the State for their own good, but not simply for the good of that group or class which constituted the governing body. Aristocracy was the then-controlling body, but aristocracy survives only when it is supremely useful to other classes. The moment the aristocrat interprets his privileges in terms of luxury, personal advantage, or tyranny, he betrays not only the citizenry, but also his own class and prepares the way for his own ruin.

Above and beyond the temporal authority of the Code are the divine edicts administering law and order. The human life-way was established in heaven. The king governed by divine right, unless he forfeited that right by misusing authority. While it is probable that abuses existed in the practice of Babylonian law, there is every indication that such abuses were the exception rather than the rule. Civilization was not sufficiently complex to obscure principles or to permit their misinterpretation without immediate and obvious consequences. Crimes were not numerous for lack of opportunity or obvious reward. Misrepresentation was difficult to maintain, and every man lived his life in the presence of potential witnesses for and against his every action. Most things were generally known, and the instinct to protect common rights had not been tempered with many ulterior motives.

The Code was especially useful as a

means of introducing foreigners into the nation or supplying an immediate system of laws to recently annexed territories. For all intent and purpose, Babylonian law was Babylonian civilization. Those who kept the laws were citizens of the State and members of the system. With so clearly defined a concept, acceptance or rejection was a simple matter, and those who refused to become part of the system departed to other regions. Naturally, the growth of Babylonian civilization required a constant enlargement of the Code, especially the system of equity, and other legislators gained distinction for their contribution. Thus, in time, the Code of Hammurabi was unfolded and extended, but its essential elements ruled the world of that time and have had a very wide aura of influence ever since.



COIN OF JUSTINIAN

Justinian I, surnamed the Great, (483-535 A. D.) was the outstanding emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, and while his accomplishments were varied and his personal conduct open to debate, his name has been closely identified with the Corpus Juris Civilis, popularly referred to as the Justinian Code. To appreciate, at least in general, the importance of this Code, we must establish it in its proper place in the descent of legal instruments. Rome was very different from Babylonia in its psychology of life. Long before the time of Justinian, the Roman Empire had entered into a program of material expansion and had discarded the State Religion as a vital censor of private and public conduct. The Roman was either a nominal pagan or a nominal Christian, and, by the time of Justinian, nominal

Christianity was the dominating religious force. The Church, if we may apply such a term to the Christian community of that time, was requiring obedience rather than understanding and was compelling rather than inspiring the common mind. Having lost its foundation in a State Religion, the legal code became more concerned with the administration of civil affairs, and under this system equity was sacrificed to statute and common law.

Justinian inherited a chaos. Every department of the State was either corrupted or confused. War and strife had disoriented the public mind, and religious controversy was afflicting the ethical instincts of conscience. It may be said that Rome was not lawless, but law-ridden. It was so burdened by pyramiding legal traditions that the ablest jurist was unable to clarify even the letter of the existing statutes. The rapid enlargement of territorial area, the intensifying commerce and merchandising, and the flourishing of a world trade produced prosperity rather than security. In his effort to be practical, the Roman legislator sacrificed such overtones as seemed to him to be in conflict with his economic interests. He was devoted to the letter of the law, for which he was ever-willing to sacrifice both the spirit and the soul.

There is much discussion as to what Justinian actually accomplished. He did not create a code, nor did he actually work any wonders of legal alchemy. He was not essentially an inventor or a reformer. Perhaps he may best be described as a compiler or classifier. He attempted to fit together the fragments of previous legal systems, but these were so shaped that they did not present a particularly attractive design when they were assembled. About all that was possible was to arrange them in sequences, supplementing the deficiencies of one system with the abundancies of another, and bestowing upon the ages the privilege or burden of finding a better scheme. It would naturally follow that such a conglomeration would obscure

more justice than it clarified, but under the pressure thus created, lawyers and judges increased in number and were more frequently called upon to settle disputes. The simplest legal question required interminable research and elaborate presentation. This, in turn, demanded much more erudition on the part of the sincere judge if he hoped to accomplish satisfactory results. It also enlarged the sphere of appeals, for almost any decision violated as many statutes as it upheld.

The Justinian Code attracted favorable attention from many ecclesiastics, who saw in it a clear and perfect example of the wonderful and mysterious workings of the divine mind. As the emperor himself was a Christian, nominal if not actual, this circumstance endeared him to the Church and bestowed peculiar sanctity upon his undertakings.

Even after the emperor had reviewed the laws of the first Empire, the findings of the Senate and the Republic, and had pondered the edicts of the several preceding emperors, he was personally aware that he could not codify the Roman laws without violating countless cherished traditions and forfeiting his own position. Even if he had faced exile or assassination with besetting courage, nothing would have been accomplished. A genuine reform would have been rejected by all classes, so all he could do was impose the semblance of method upon the legal madness. He produced a ponderous work, which has annoyed as many as it has enlightened, and became the peculiar torment of those medieval scholars majoring in jurisprudence. The Justinian Corpus was to law what Galen and Avicenna were to medicine, a compound of useful information and worthless tradition.

To summarize Roman law, we may say that it was the Code of Hammurabi, from which had been subtracted most of the ethical overtones. The end was no longer primarily the discovery of justice or its application, but the estab-

lishment of legality to regulate human relationships. Obviously, the Roman had no mind to enforce ideals which he himself did not share. He was far more self-centered, ambitious, and selfish than the Babylonian jurist. He wanted what he wanted, and required that his laws justify his acquisitiveness. Where justice did not interfere with private profit, he was a just man; but when interference appeared, it was the law and not the man that was altered to meet the emergency. Roman law is nowhere more evident than in Roman conduct, which has long been held as an example of intemperance. Naturally, the courts could not function honestly when the State itself was corrupted. Men watch each other's conduct and derive their practical inspiration therefrom. Without example of honest leadership, there is not likely to be many ethical inhibitions among the people.

In most respects, Roman law was interpreted to justify existing policies and institutions. It was almost completely lacking in imagination. The inflexibility of its statutes was especially unfortunate because these statutes themselves were contradictory and lacked foundation in philosophy. Roman justice was little more than the imposing of Roman will. This was especially true in subjected provinces. When the legions invaded a region, they destroyed the local judiciary bodies, and only those who attained Roman citizenship could hope for consideration or redress by the due process of law. Under the Roman system of emperor worship, there could be no adequate pattern for the regulating of human affairs. The emperors were, for the most part, lawless or regarded their persons and their whims above all legal restraint. The friends of the emperor were always right, and his enemies were always wrong.

Roman law contributed many unfortunate and unreasonable instruments to the legal systems grounded therein. Much of the confusion of the Dark Ages was due to the miserable mis-

management and abuse of the legal code. The Church inherited the Roman law together with other institutions of the Empire. From the mingling of the immature legal consciousness of the patristics and the equally corrupt legislative abuses of the patricians resulted much of that hodgepodge of canon law that was an affliction to all concerned.

From the example of the Roman process, it is easy to see that laws cannot be superior in quality to the convictions of those who enforce them. Legal systems merely organize prevailing convictions. Where these are deficient in the spirit of equity, they follow rather than lead the workings of the popular mind. The Code of Hammurabi invited the advancement of human law toward identification with divine law. The Roman had no other interest than to force the policies of the Roman State upon his own people and upon subject nations. There was no concept of growth toward universal justice. The vision was limited and the structure itself was so deformed as to prevent the fair enforcement of such statutes as did exist.

Under Roman law, the rights of women, slaves, minors, and invaded territories were sharply reduced. Only two classes were recognized: the freeman and the slave. While, theoretically speaking, there were laws to prevent misuse and abuse of privileges, it was almost impossible to convict a prominent citizen unless he had offended one of a superior class. Possibly the saving grace was the general indifference to the Code. The majority, expecting no legal relief from its misfortunes, avoided litigation whenever possible. That man was truly happy who settled his differences by private means. The aristocracy had slight interest in the condition of the masses and was not likely to interfere unless it were profitable.

In marked exception to the temper of most of its legal attitudes was the Roman approach to religion. Generally speaking, Rome was tolerant of foreign faiths unless these threatened to inter-

fere with the political structure. To worshipers of all beliefs, Roman law recommended as follows: Worship whatever gods you please; pay your taxes regularly; supply your proper quota of men to the army; and keep out of politics. The early difficulties between the Christian and the Roman State were mostly political. The Church insisted that it was the natural successor to the Caesars, and further demanded that the patricians mend their ways, change their policies, reform their laws, and accept the new religion. Some of these demands were contrary to the requirements of existing law, and others conflicted strongly with the disposition of the aristocrats. Rome reacted by enforcing the laws against religious intolerance, and to hasten the due processes used the privileges of patricians to make their own laws against what they considered to be rabble-rousers.

In practice, Rome clearly revealed the tendency of materialistic nations to restrict the ethical interpretation of law. The lawlessness of power always affects legal procedure. The Roman was a curious mixture of superstition and common sense. He was still strongly influenced by magic and sorcery, but was likely to call upon the gods principally for the furtherance of his material ambitions. In time his very deities took on intensely physical dispositions. These Romans were not addicted to philosophy, and began the systematic process of indoctrinating their people with ambitions and aspirations suitable to merchants.

Roman law included important reformations in the educational system. The existing universities and colleges were forced into line with the prevailing temper, with the result that the spirit of freedom was frustrated at its source. The young were protected from such abstract ideals as might incline to revolution or rebellion against the system. As a result, Roman intellectualism never reached the heights of Babylonian, Egyptian, or Greek letters. In fact, the later Roman Empire destroyed the very founda-

tions which had made possible the building of the first Roman kingdom.

The trend was definitely in the direction of the submergence of the individual to his system. He existed to advance the destiny of the State and of that class which substantially represented the State. He lived and died to guard and defend the institutions which to him were Rome. Naturally, he bred dissension within his own group. Intellectuals gathered secretly, and through the machinery of the Mysteries perpetuated those rights and privileges which the State condemned. It was this submerged dissatisfaction that contributed to the early rise of Christianity in Rome. It is quite possible that the political ambitions of liberals resulted in the early Church emerging as an avowed adversary of the Roman political corruption. Much that has been blamed upon the Christians was really the discontent of the average Roman citizen voiced through an alien faith that emphasized the rights of the common man.

Unfortunately, the Justinian Code was a two-edged sword. Once it had passed from the pagan patrician to the keeping of the early churchmen, it was used by them to restrain those who dissented against the new order. The Church found ready at hand legal instruments to exterminate heretics, to close the schools of philosophy that survived in distant provinces, and to force the regulations of the Holy Roman Empire throughout the crumbling sphere of Latin influence. Here we have an example of a legal convenience. Laws which are without the dimension of equity are nearly always used to advance whichever faction is strong enough to control the legal machinery. It required nearly a thousand years to so completely reform the Roman legal system as to break its despotic power and restore a reasonable measure of legal justice. The rise of heretical groups throughout Europe, which culminated in the Reformation, was largely the result of a spirit of revolt against the perversions of the legal code.

The general condition of things even as late as the beginning of the 19th century is worthy of a moment's thought. Even at this comparatively recent time, Europe was without an adequate legal structure. Most countries were in a transition between the surviving remnants of the Justinian Code and the rising conviction of personal liberty with its effect upon the entire structure of jurisprudence. English laws were inadequate, French laws archaic, and the other countries broken, for the most part, into small principalities, or loosely formed combines and leagues were without any common code. During the 17th and 18th centuries, most European nations turned to France for cultural leadership. Yet, even this country, like its neighbors, was functioning principally under what might be called common law.



The Code Civil des Francais was first promulgated in its entirety on March 21, 1804, and was officially named the Code Napoleon on September 3, 1807. The degree to which Napoleon was personally involved in its production is uncertain. It is obvious, however, that the Napoleonic Wars made necessary some general concept of civil law which could meet the requirements of expanding domain. The Code Napoleon followed the French Revolution, and because of the circumstances leading to its final promulgation, it was strongly influenced by the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. By this Code which carried his name, Napoleon emerged as a benefactor of the people, bestowing upon

them rights and privileges which they had not enjoyed under any previous system.

The Code Napoleon was a remarkable mixture of empirical and democratic concepts. One of its most important contributions was its complete emphasis upon civil matters. It acknowledged addiction to no religious or theological institution, and favored no particular group within society. It clarified innumerable confusions of earlier systems and made it possible for the jurist to act with certainty in most cases. The Code further provided for adequate educational institutions for the training of the legal profession, and for the first time encouraged the contemplation of international law. In fact, the Code Napoleon laid the foundation for a world concept of legal procedure.

As the result of the importance of French culture and because French was the diplomatic language of Europe, the Code received immediate attention throughout the diplomatic world. It was translated into many languages, and gained further recognition because it was associated with the name of an outstanding military genius, who was respected, though feared, throughout Europe. The Code Napoleon has been described as catholic, rational, imperial, and universal. Even the conflict in the definition appealed to the prevailing temper.

Democracy was at that time a hobby of despots. The most reactionary prince enjoyed the reputation for political benevolence. He was cultivating the graces by divine right. He wished to be regarded as liberal, even if he had to enforce liberality by tyrannical means. The religious equation was also carefully weighed. France had emerged from the Reign of Reason and was no longer profaning its cathedrals and ridiculing its clergy. The Code was pronounced to be nonreligious without being sacrilegious. It pleased both the goldly and the ungodly, itself no small achievement. It protected entrenched authority, and at the same time championed freedom

of thought within reasonable bounds. It was democratic without being revolutionary, and inspired growth without violence. It enlarged the privileges and opportunities of all classes and gave greater freedom and broader rights to intellectual minorities.

Perhaps it was not so much that all these groups were given special attention as it was that the law was clearly stated and could not so easily be misinterpreted to favor the whims of aspiring politicians. In any event, it was promulgated throughout the areas which Napoleon dominated, and even after Waterloo was retained simply because there seemed no acceptable substitute. The influence of the Code Napoleon extended far beyond the French Empire and even reached Asia. It became the foundation of the Egyptian Code of Civil Law and, for a time, guided the destiny of Japan after the restoration of the monarchy. It was not until the German civil code of 1896 that the Code Napoleon had any serious competition in European legal thinking.

If the Justinian Code marked a serious reversal in legal progress, the Code Napoleon corrected many of the shortcomings and incorporated desirable elements of the Code of Hammurabi and other early legal instruments. The world had passed from the Dark Ages to the era of enlightenment. If law did not contribute to this progress, it could no longer prevent the democratic motions natural to the times. The Code of Hammurabi was democratic in spirit, and the Code Napoleon was democratic in letter. Equity was reaffirmed, and the common law was molded into statute law suitable for the needs of a growing, unfolding population. The law was now for the literate. It could be read by all men and applied by them to the solution of their problems. Institutions suitable to educate the citizenry were fashionable, and from these poured a stream of individuals rescued from a common state of ignorance and qualified to think and decide for themselves.

The Napoleonic Wars overthrew most of the surviving feudalism. During the confusion of the Napoleonic campaign, groups of liberals in various countries found their opportunity to emerge and take a prominent place in national affairs. After the final defeat of Napoleon, efforts were made to suppress these democratic movements, but liberties once enjoyed, if only for a short time, are difficult to destroy. In very few cases was tyranny able to restore its own privileges, and representative government with constitutional rights was the only way the dissensions could be arbitrated.

The example of France itself revealed the general trend. Even after the fall of Napoleon had resulted in the temporary restoration of the monarchy, the psychology of kingship had been mortally wounded. The democracy of France was inevitable, and the fall of Napoleon III officially terminated the power of the monarchists. Nothing remained of the old order but the Count of Paris and a small group of reactionaries, who have had little influence in the affairs of the country. The influence of French thought in art, literature, music, fashions, international diplomacy, and science carried with it many of the implications of the Code Napoleon, and nations not directly within the French sphere have been induced to modify their own laws through contact with the French system. Today there are elements of French law which are not acceptable to other nations, for progress continues. The principal variations are observable in the German, British, and American codes. Each has its own peculiar mark and distinction derived largely from the social motions which distinguish each of these nations.

American law in particular has expanded rapidly, due to the extraordinary development of the country. No other nation has passed through such a diversity of changes in so short a period of time. Today, for the most part, international law and international conformity of laws are the goal. The American jurist is a master of national

laws, but, through lack of extent of territorial domain, he is not yet overwell experienced in the complexities of international legal thinking. Intensifying contacts between sovereign States and the pressures of great private economic enterprises are gravitating toward a world legal system. World courts, such as The Hague, The League of Nations, and the United Nations Organization are preparing the way for a world reading of the law. This is no mere benevolent gesture; it is a vital necessity for the continuance of amicable relationship between civilized nations. The next code must be a World Code, and the accumulation of it will require a vast system of statutes derived from common law, codified and aspiring toward a fuller statement of law in equity.

There is no division of human learning in which the recognition of geometrical foundations is more important than that of civil codes. The ancients were successful because the simplicity of their cultures permitted the pattern of their laws to remain evident. Crime increased as the ambitions of mortals found larger theaters of opportunity. The confusion which resulted from the collapse of classical civilization continued to confuse and obstruct justice until after the Protestant Reformation. For centuries the control of peoples was vested in powerful families, hereditary monarchs, and an autocratic church. Under such conditions, the fulfillment of law as equity was impossible. Periods of peace and contentment resulted from the fortuitous emergence of a benevolent leader. If the prince was a man of vision, his State enjoyed a measure of equity. This was the exception rather than the rule, and, for the most part, the legal history of these periods was better left unwritten.

After the introduction of the great reform which began in England at the beginning of the 17th century and spread throughout the Continent, Secret Societies patterned from the religious institutions of antiquity united their resources to accomplish the reformation of

civil law. These reforming groups, which included the remnants of the Knights Templars, the Freemasons, the guilds and workmen's unions, the Rosicrucians, and the Illuminists, applied the principles of equity first to their own members, thus forming powerful foci of democracy. Through the era of revolution, these democratic minorities accomplished the broad promulgation of their principles, as in the case of the American colonies, for which these Secret Societies prepared the Declaration of Independence and the American Bill of Rights. From the time of the Code Napoleon to the present day, the progress of law toward social justice has advanced steadily with only occasional interruptions.

The future of man-made law now requires the co-ordination of those several groups which are the custodians of certain knowledge and experience. The perfection of law is only possible when its foundations are clarified. We may consider that the full statement of justice depends upon the complete cooperation of religion, philosophy, and science. It is the peculiar province of religion to clarify the spiritual aspect of law. This involves law from the heart, or law as conscience, or law expressing man's inner experience of the will of God. Here is law as faith, hope, and charity; the law as mercy, sanctioned by the revelations of the great sages and teachers. If we love one another, we keep the faith; and by this simple and beautiful emotion, reduce the complexity of all legal codes.

The philosophical aspect of law is based upon the extent of man's mental conception of those great processes by which world ethics is clarified. The philosopher is not only a reformer, but also an organizer. His faculties permit him to weigh and decide and to gradually reconcile conflicting doctrines and the inconsistencies of legal codes. The philosophy of law leads to the discovery of justice as a principle. This, in turn, makes possible the unfoldment of a legal system from the principle of justice.

The third part of law is in the keeping of science, which is a measurer of exactitudes. Science is a vast laboratory, in which the dreams and convictions of humankind are tried and tested in terms of utility. Science is also the weigher of tradition. It enables men to accept and discard on grounds of merit alone. It can overcome all legal prejudice, and in its keeping is the great instrument of law-enforcement. It is further entrusted with a vast program of world education, by which all men and all nations can be brought to that level of individual and collective enlightenment so that law in equity can be understood.

We can look forward to a Utopian Age in law in which the present machinery will be no longer necessary. Lawlessness and ignorance go together. When education equips the individual to live a constructive life, sustained by deep and true ideals, we will have a law-abiding world. We need law in courts of justice until the principle of law is enthroned in the human heart. According to the sacred tradition, man is a self-governing creature. When his own potentials have been released, he will abide with other men in a state of equity. Until he is self-governing, he must be subject to those codes which protect his social system.

The very term *civilization* means a state of mutual thoughtfulness and mutual protection of common rights and privileges. There is much to be accomplished in any nation which must constantly increase its legal structure in order to protect its people. It is difficult to enforce laws, but most of this difficulty is due to the lawlessness inside of men. With all our boasted progress, we have not yet been able to reach the root of crime. A vast, expanding economic system has not emphasized the principles of right use. We cannot hold the human will by legal boundaries; we must temper that will by faith and charity. We must teach men more of the happiness and security that result from simple, gentle, and co-opera-

tive procedures if we would have internal peace.

Just as each human being must put his own small world in order by reforming his own nature, so we must improve the human being if we would protect his institutions. Thus we have always two convictions about legal codes. The first is to make better laws, and the second is to make better men. Dishonesty and criminal tendencies are forms of sickness. They are contagious and infectious diseases which corrupt society from within itself. It may be temporarily necessary to think in terms of remedy, but it is ever more important to develop long-range plans to preserve health and to prevent the spread of disease. Crime is not only a heavy economic burden, but is also the source of numerous physical ailments. Criminal tendencies frequently lead to serious mental disease and have psychosomatic consequences almost impossible to estimate.

Crime prevention is already receiving some attention, but the true causes of delinquencies are generally ignored for the reason that they are rooted in a way of life which we do not desire to change. A social system infested with crime is itself at fault. We are anxious to stop crime, but reluctant to outgrow the excesses which cause and encourage crime. Delinquency is a by-product of a false social concept. It is strengthened by a competitive system of living and by the failure of higher ethical institutions to serve the needs for which they were created. We cannot produce an honest world unless the society into which men are born is essentially honest in its principles and its practices. Therefore, as we build better codes, let us also think of applying these codes to the weaknesses of society itself.

If, as citizens, we practice a high conviction of equity, we will need fewer lawyers. In sober fact, this will not put lawyers out of business; it will merely change their work from the endless accumulation of legal data to the more profitable labor of counseling the pre-

vention of litigation. Just as the doctor has the privilege of being a preventer of sickness, so the enlightened lawyer can instruct those who seek his advice in the keeping of the law. Where decisions are beyond private settlement, legal decisions can be simple and honorable. We can probably dispose of a vast network of confusing statutes, if we will begin to practice the golden rule and the Sermon on the Mount. It takes

the human mind a long time, however, to outgrow its own confusion and to realize that truth is very simple and suitable only to those who have become so wise that they have discovered again the simplicity of truth. So evolution will proceed. There will be better codes for men, but may universal wisdom hasten the day when there will be better men to live these codes, for it is the better men who will bring justice.



Agesilaus II, King of Sparta, being asked which was the better virtue, valor or justice, replied: "Unsupported by justice, valor is good for nothing; and if all men were just, there would be no need of valor."

The Earl of Beaconsfield's estimation of Lord Salisbury is a little gem: "He is a great master of gibes, and pouts, and sneers."

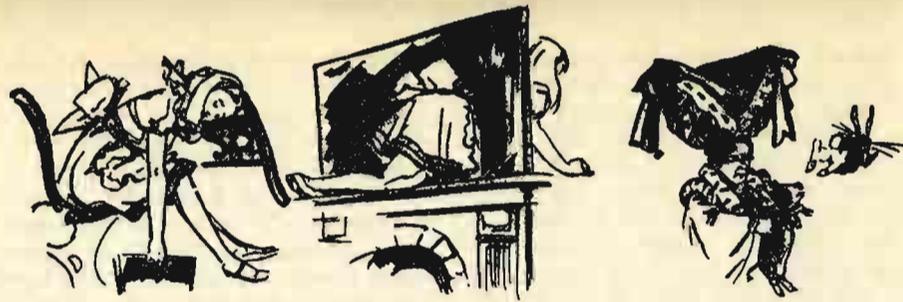
Philip of Macedon, learning that his friends and retainers were calling each other bad names, mused thus: "Oh, these Macedonians. They are such rude and uncultured people that they tell the truth."

Once when Peter the Great of Russia was visiting Paris, he noticed a certain French courtier appeared each day in a different and more elegant suit of clothes: "My," exclaimed the Czar, "that gentleman must be having a bad time with his tailor."

Alexander Pope, speaking of the victories of Prince Eugene, observed: "He takes cities like he takes snuff."

Pythagoras said: "As soon as laws are necessary for men, the men themselves are no longer fit for freedom."

Queen Elizabeth once asked Sir Walter Raleigh what a man thought of when he thought of nothing. The gallant knight pointedly replied: "Madam, he thinks of a woman's promises."



Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

The Bishop of Bingen

Children of all ages are familiar with Longfellow's charming poem, *The Children's Hour*. In one of the verses, the poet refers to the bishop of Bingen:

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

The bishop here referred to was Hatto I (c.850-913) or Hatto II, who lived about one hundred years later. The legends confuse these two men, bestowing upon the latter accounts probably invented around the character of the former. Hatto I, archbishop of Mainz, was the confidential counselor of the German king, Arnuf, and later regent of Germany and guardian of Lois the Child. His Grace, the archbishop, like most dominating personalities of the period, was accused of large personal ambitions and was remembered by the citizens of Mainz as a proud, despotic man, ever-ready to advance his own station at the expense of the poor. He devised a plan for collecting a toll tax from the ships that used the river Rhine, and this in no way enlarged his popularity with the farmers and tradesmen.

The archbishop was most ingenious in the raising of funds, and the people of his district suffered greatly from his whims and fancies. He became a personification of tyranny, and there are various accounts of his unhappy end. According to one tradition, he was struck by lightning, to the general satisfaction of the community. According to an alternate version, the devil threw Hatto, while he was still alive, into the crater of Mt. Etna. After his decease, he gained stature as an ogre, and has continued to enjoy this distinction in the folklore of Saxony.

The story which associates the Most Reverend Hatto with the Mouse-Tower is almost certainly the product of local imagination. It conveys, however, a distinct impression of the abhorrence in which his memory was held. The Mouse-Tower is still to be seen on a lonely island in the middle of the Rhine just below the city of Bingen. It is said that the archbishop built this stronghold between Bingen and Rudesheim in order to collect the toll from the passing ships. Here is an outstanding example of the disregard in which many men have been held as the result of schemes to exploit their fellow citizens.

Soon after Hatto had completed his gloomy customhouse, the harvests around Mainz failed, and the people were in dire distress. The fields were parched by drought and the crops which survived were beaten down by hail. The condition was aggravated because the archbishop had bought all the available stores of grain from the previous season, and had locked them in his numerous and impregnable granaries. The Reverend gentleman offered to sell the corn in his bins, but the price was so exorbitant that only the wealthiest could afford to buy. The poor and the hungry petitioned him, and even members of his own clergy begged the selfish man to have pity upon the poor. But so hateful was the quality of his selfishness that he seemed to rejoice in the misery which he caused.

One day, when the archbishop and his cronies were just sitting down to a sumptuous repast in the midst of this long and painful famine, a procession of desperate peasants approached the Episcopal palace pleading for food. Hatto declared himself to be weary of the annoyance, and devised a diabolical scheme to dispose of the beggars.

He promised them that they should have grain from his bins, and caused them to be taken to a barn outside the town so that each could take what he needed. When the grateful folks were all safely inside the storehouse, Hatto ordered the doors to be locked and the barn to be set on fire. As Hatto listened to the screams of the dying wretches, he turned to one of his associates saying; "Listen! how the mice are squeaking among the corn. This eternal begging is at an end at last. May the mice bite me if it is not true."

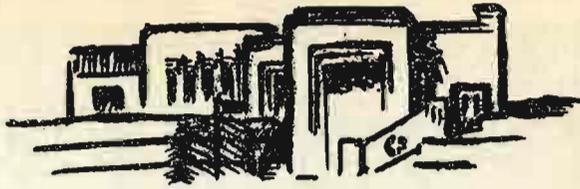
But the retribution of heaven was swift and terrible. Hundreds of thousands of mice poured out of the burning barn. They streamed into the archbishop's palace, devouring everything in their way. Servants killed hundreds of them, but more appeared, until Hatto, terrified by the divine judgment, fled

from the town and took refuge on the boat which was used to reach his river fortress. The mice swarmed into the Rhine and swam after him, until the river was gray with their bodies.

The archbishop believed that he would be safe in his island stronghold, but the rodents gnawed through the doors and even attacked the masonry. Nothing could stop them, until they reached the archbishop. Here, in what was afterwards called the Mouse-Tower, Hatto was devoured by the mice. He even pleaded with the evil one to save him, but the devil only came to take away the wicked man's soul to eternal punishment.

Folklore of this kind usually originates in some factual incident which grows through the years by the process of retelling. Likely enough, the famine caused mice to attack whatever stores of grain were available. That the selfish archbishop should lose his precious stores from the attacks of rodents would seem a proper retribution for his cruelty and avarice. When legends like this passed into the keeping of the Troubadours and other groups of social and political poets, they were enlarged and adapted to the secret purposes of these associations. The mice, of course, represented the underprivileged classes, who would some day turn against their aggressors and overwhelm them. The cruel archbishop personified the aristocracy which gained its wealth by taxation and even usury. Thus interpreted, the legend gained wide circulation and contributed to the public indignation which ended centuries later in the era of the revolutions.

The story of the Mouse-Tower is the faithful account of collective oppressions. It contains a warning to ambitious characters of other ages and times who foolishly believe that they can advance their own fortunes at the expense of their fellow men. Injustice brings inevitable retribution; oppression gives strength to the oppressed; and, in the end, the needs of humanity triumph over the cupidity of mortals.



Library Notes

By A. J. HOWIE

Platonic Love

*A casual interpretation upon reading
THE PHAEDRUS of Plato*

Platonic literature is usually considered high-brow. Platonists have been pictured as scholars and widely read philosophers. Perhaps this exclusiveness has been encouraged and preserved by a misguided sense of superiority in college philosophy departments. At any rate, the result has been that only catch phrases have become popular with laymen while a wealth of helpful ideas has been imprisoned in stilted, academic language.

Quotations from philosophic literature are often empty cant out of context with the body of their source. *Platonic love* is one of the phrases that has been bandied about with considerable detriment to the reputation of a lofty concept. It really bothers us to hear a relationship described as "platonic love" when the intonation expresses a knowing disbelief even though there is no open sneer.

Plato obviously understood and utilized the elements of human relationships to introduce and illustrate his principles. He discusses the various human relationships frankly though he never seems to condone promiscuous free love in any sense. Nor does he attach any importance to personal relationships limited to emotional reactions.

Apparently he observed in the emo-

tion of personal love an opportunity for the individual to experience a moment of an ecstasy, a divine madness, which then might be sought as an inward state that could be prolonged enough for the subject to glimpse the beauties and truths known to the gods. The dialogue of *The Phaedrus* leads up to Socrates' description of the ecstatic visions and the larger spiritual goal in nourishing the affections.

The morality of Socrates has been impugned by the literal. Each can interpret the written word only within the limitations of his own experiences. On occasions Socrates seems to condemn himself by his free conversation. But his actions and the ideas to which he devotes his conversations deny all the implications. He enters freely into every discussion, using the subject and words of the other speakers, but quickly directs the conversation into chaste and philosophic abstractions. Socrates states that he lives in the city so that he may learn from many people. I find it easy to accept Socrates as a high-minded lover of wisdom with no taint of many inferences that might be drawn from a literal interpretation of isolated fragment of the dialogues.



PLATO, FROM A DRAWING BY RAPHAEL

There have been moral foibles in all ages above which every lover of wisdom has striven to rise. Our purpose is to learn how they succeeded in order that we may follow the way they have gone.

Phaedrus is a young lecture-hound who frequents the gatherings of the intelligentsia of Athens. He knows everybody of importance. His handsome person and winsome ways make him quite welcome everywhere. He is more than ordinarily intelligent and his boyish enthusiasm about the various ideas he hears discussed tends to make him associate with older people.

Lysias is a leading orator in Athens. Even in a golden era of philosophy, prominent lecturers seem to find personal attractions to certain of their lis-

teners. Lysias has his weaker, sentimental side.

For all his show of intellect, Phaedrus is obviously naive and immature when his conversation is contrasted to the mature reasoning of Socrates. However, Socrates disavows personal responsibility for the things he says, claiming that he speaks in a frenzy of inspiration. The conversation of Socrates ranges from gentle banter and satire, dissertation on rhetoric, to a state of madness or ecstatic frenzy wherein he is moved to speak from inspiration—and it is in these sections where we may seek for the mystery of Socrates' instruction.

Lysias has written a rather foolish oration wherein he attempts to prove that amatory favors should be granted

impersonally rather than to lovers—because lovers are diseased with an insane madness, whereas those who are not lovers are sane. The style is polished and the words correct. Phaedrus has a copy and is bubbling over with enthusiasm to repeat it to Socrates. Socrates is skeptical but interested in listening.

The day is hot so they stroll out to the edge of town where they find a shady spot. It is in the neighborhood of some mythological occurrence and Phaedrus asks if Socrates believes the fabled narrative to be true.

"I consider the interpretation of myths as pleasant enough, but at the same time as the province of a curious and laborious man who is not entirely happy. When a disbeliever of the literal meaning of myths draws a probable sense based on rustic lore, he needs abundant leisure to reconstruct the entire meanings behind the fabulous creatures and events. For myself, I haven't the leisure for such an understanding because I am not yet able to know myself. I think it is ridiculous to speculate on things foreign to the knowledge of myself while I am yet ignorant of myself."

Socrates then settles into a comfortable *reclining position* to listen to Phaedrus read the speech of Lysias.

"You know me well enough to admit that I am not unworthy to be deprived of your favor even though I am not one of your lovers. Lovers quickly repent of the benefits they have bestowed once their desire ceases. But for one who does not love there is no change because everything is done voluntarily. Lovers are likely to reflect on any neglect of their affairs, while those who are not lovers attach no blame. Lovers themselves confess that their minds are rather diseased and that even though they know their folly, they cannot control it.

"If you would choose among lovers the best associate, your choice must be confined to the few; but if you desire to find the one most accommodated to

yourself, you may choose out of many. There are more hopes of finding one worthy of your friendship among many than a few. Lovers are apt to fret lest others should surpass them in things that might appeal to the beloved—and hence they seek to withdraw the beloved from social life. Those who are not lovers rejoice in the beloved's association with others. Most lovers desire the possession of the body. Those who from the commencement of their friendship have acted without regarding venereal delight will leave their actions as monuments of their conduct in the future. Lovers will praise your actions and sayings lest they offend you."

There is much more in this vein. Phaedrus is all keyed up and reads on with great feeling. When he is finished reading, he looks to Socrates for the expected praise.

Socrates is slow to respond. "Do you think I should praise this discourse because its composer has said what is sufficient or because he has so aptly used each word? It was eloquent. In fact, Lysias was so warmed up to his subject that he repeated things two or three times—as if he did not have enough ideas. It was a sort of schoolboy exercise in saying the same thing according to different modes."

Phaedrus counters defensively: "He has omitted nothing on the subject that could be said."

"I can't agree with you there. The ancients—Sapho, Anacreon, and others—have had something to say on the subject. In fact, I find my own breast full of something to say on the subject, and that not of an inferior nature. I realize that it is not from myself, for I am conscious of my own ignorance. It is that I am like a vessel filled from the fountain of others even when I forget from whom I received the information."

"You have boasted that you have something to add, so prove it."

"Wait till I *cover my head* that I may rapidly run through my discourse

and not be hindered by shame looking at you.

"Inspire me, O ye Muses!

"On every subject there is but one mode of beginning for those who would deliberate well. They must know what the thing is on which they are deliberating or else they will go altogether astray. Most men are ignorant of the essential character of each individual thing. Let not you and me fall into the error which we condemn in others.

"The question is, is love or the absence of love desirable in friendship? We ought, therefore, by mutual consent, to establish a definition of love that will explain its nature and its powers. Then we should consider whether it is the cause of advantage or detriment.

"Love is a certain desire. Even those who do not love still are desirous of beautiful things. That we may be able to distinguish a lover from one who is not, we should realize that there are two certain ideas in each of us endowed with a ruling and leading power. One is the innate desire for pleasure; the other is a desire for that which is best. Sometimes these subsist in amity, and sometimes in a state of opposition and discord. Sometimes the one conquers, and sometimes the other.

"When opinion is led by reason to that which is best it is called temperance. When desire rules and irrationally allures to pleasure, it is an excess which is named from the multitude of indulgences—gluttony, intoxication, and so on. When desire, rejecting reason and overpowering judgment tending to that which is right, is set in the direction of the pleasures of beauty and being strongly invigorated by its kindred desires for the beauty of the body, this desire is called love.

"A man who is enslaved by desire strives to render the object of his love as agreeable to himself as possible. The lover is never willing that the object of his love should possess any thing more excellent than himself—and that as far as possible the object of love should be inferior, more indigent, in all things less

so that he may exclude the other from social life. Thus he becomes acceptable to his lover, but pernicious to himself. It is thus that the object of love is held because of inferiority and the acceptance of promises and gifts that are given with strings.

"There may come growth in the course of time when the lover receives intellect and temperance as rulers into his life; he becomes entirely changed—a new person. He no longer is moved with the same fury. The one who formerly was pursued must then become the pursuer, demanding that earlier promises be kept. The beloved now realizes that the friendship of a lover is not extended from benevolence alone, but, like one who is hungry, is exerted only for the sake of being full. The former lover does not dare say he is not the same person any more, nor admit further intimacy lest he fall back into his old ways. So he runs away.

"My discourse has now arrived at its conclusion.

"But no, a certain demoniacal signal forbids me to leave this place until I have made an expiation as if I had offended a divine nature in some particular. My soul pricked me a while ago as I was speaking and my face was darkened for fear I was purchasing favor on earth by some offense at the high court of heaven. I have repeated a dire, dire discourse. The speech has been foolish, and in a certain respect impious.

"Love, the son of Venus, is a god, therefore divine and cannot be in any respect evil; yet in our discourse about him he has been spoken of as evil. In this I have offended against Love. It is necessary then that I purify myself by an ancient method of recantation—and this with my *head uncovered*, and not as before veiled through shame.

"False is the tale which asserts that though a lover should be present, one who is not a lover ought to be gratified because the former is mad and the other sane. If it were simply true that mania is evil, this would be beautifully

asserted. But the greatest good has been produced for us through madness when assigned as a divine gift. The oracles of Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona in moments of madness have procured many advantages for the Greeks; but when they have been in a prudent state, they have been the cause of very trifling benefits, or indeed none at all. The ancients did not consider mania as either base or disgraceful. Mania proceeding from divinity is more beautiful than prudence which proceeds from men. Indeed, in the cases of certain persons subject to the greatest diseases and labors through the indignation of the gods in consequence of guilt, the remedy for liberation is predicted when madness enters the heart of the proper person. By flying to prayer and worship of the gods, the sufferer may obtain by means of purifications and the advantages of initiation freedom from disasters by discovering a solution of his present evils.

"A third species of madness is a possession and mania descending from the Muses which rouses and agitates a tender, solitary soul with Bacchic fury, stirring it up to rapturous frenzy wherein according to odes and other species of poetry it instructs posterity. But he who approaches the poetic gates without the mania of the Muses, persuading himself that he can become a poet by art alone, will find his poetry imperfect.

"Hence we should not be afraid of mania. Nor should we be disturbed by arguments that we should select the sensible rather than the enraptured friend, because he who so asserts should further have to admit that love is not sent from the gods for the utility of lover and beloved.

"With us rests the proving that such a mania is sent by the gods for the purpose of producing the greatest felicity. To the unworthy it will seem incredible, but to the wise it will be an object of belief. It is necessary that we first understand the truth concerning the nature of the passions and operations of the divine and human soul.

"Each soul is immortal. It may be described as similar to the kindred power of a winged chariot and charioteer. All the horses and chariots of the gods are good; those of other natures are mixed. Our principal part governs the reins of its two-yoked car. One of the horses is good and beautiful, but the other is of a contrary nature. Thus it is that our course is difficult and hard.

"All that is soul presides over all that is without soul, and revolves about the whole of heaven appearing now in one form and again in another. While it is perfect and winged, its course is sublime and it governs the universe. But the soul that has lost its wings verges downward till it finds some solid resting place. There it receives an earthly body as its destined receptacle which appears to move itself through the power of the soul. The whole is called an animal composed from soul and body, with the added epithet of mortal. That which is immortal is perceived by no rational deduction since we neither see nor sufficiently understand the nature of the gods—and that matter we leave to be told as Heaven pleases. My task is to discover what is the cause that makes the feathers fall off the soul.

"There is a natural power in the wings of the soul to raise heavy substances into the upper regions where the gods reside. Of all parts connected with the body, the soul most participates in that which is divine. Of this nature are beauty, wisdom, virtue, and these are the qualities which nourish and increase the winged nature of the soul—that which is evil and base has a contrary effect.

"Jupiter, the mighty leader in the heavens, driving his winged chariot, begins the divine procession, adorning and disposing all things with providential care. The army of gods and lesser deities, distributed into eleven parts, follows his course. Vesta alone remains in the habitation of the gods.

(To be continued)

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