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**MANLY PALMER HALL**

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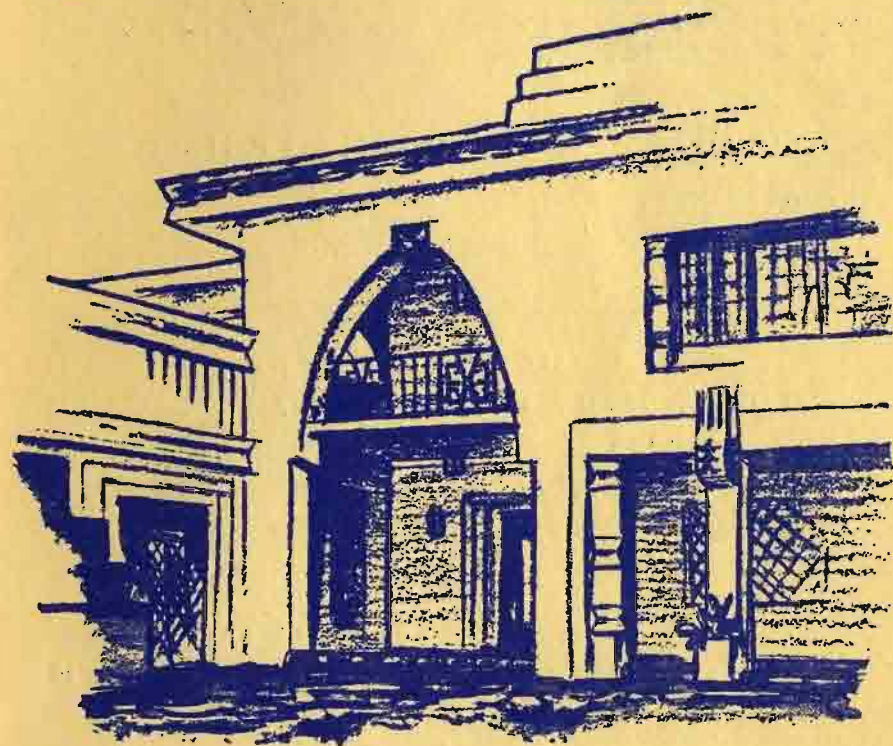
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THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.  
3341 GRIFFITH PARK BOULEVARD — LOS ANGELES 27, CALIFORNIA

# HORIZON



JOURNAL OF THE  
PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

WINTER 1953



Published quarterly by HORIZON PUBLISHING Co., 3341 Griffith Park Blvd., Los Angeles 27, Calif.  
 \$1. a Copy, \$3. a Year. Two Subscriptions, Your Own and a Gift Subscription, \$5.  
 Foreign Subscription \$4. a year. Two Subscriptions \$7.  
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ISSUED  
QUARTERLY  
VOLUME 13 No. 3

Journal of  
The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

HORIZON  
LINES



BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

AN EDITORIAL

The Passing of Universal Genius

THE name of Benjamin Jowett has long been associated with his translation, with commentaries, of the complete works of Plato. Dr. Jowett, scholar and theologian, was for some years master of Balliol College, Oxford. He has been likened to another Socrates, and the students who came under his influence were so deeply impressed by both his character and his capacity that they remained his friends throughout life, and sought his counsel and assistance on a variety of subjects. Jowett was frequently referred to as "the great tutor," and so broad was the foundation of his thinking that he came to be regarded as a universal genius. He gained distinction, not only for the intensity of his scholarship, but also his leadership in university reform. In addition to his primary interest, this learned man wrote extensively on theological matters, and for 27 years preached annually in Westminster Abbey.

It was rumored that with the passing of Dr. Jowett in 1893 there departed from this mortal sphere the last man who could ever know everything. He gradually came to be the personification of that abstract state of complete educational adequacy. In the years that followed, came the incredible extension of arts and sciences, and what was assumed to be the absolute need for specialization. Of course,



Dr. Jowett was not omniscient, but he possessed the happy power of putting many kinds of information together to form practical and useful patterns. He was not only an educator, but a broad general counselor, and it seemed to those who came under his influence that he had the skill to apply learning to every department of living. He possessed those metaphysical inclinations which have since become closely associated with the scholastic overtones of Oxford and Cambridge. These great schools have been criticized by modern intellectuals for their addiction to a kind of higher mysticism. Perchance an examination of the life and work of Dr. Jowett would reveal the utility of idealism as a necessary ingredient of scholastic attainment.

The spirit of youth, expressing in its own inimitable manner respect for the wisdom of years, composed a small doggerel verse in honor of the master of Balliol College. The words have descended as follows:

My name is Benjamin Jowett.  
I am master of Balliol College.  
Whatever is knowledge, I know it,  
And what I don't know isn't knowledge.

Much can be said in defense of intensive specialization in view of the remarkable progress in the sciences. At the same time, we must realize the danger of advancing knowledge and skill at the expense of the human mind with its inevitable limitations. We can never so perfect our institutions that we can afford to sacrifice the human being and his immediate requirements. Until we can prove that man can survive the curriculum, it would be the better part of wisdom to estimate real and immediate needs. We should not advocate that the individual know less, but he certainly should understand better that which he already knows. Education cannot be complete unless it matures conduct and strengthens the foundation of society. We take it for granted that an advancement in a particular field must be attained at the expense of other fields. We do not expect the lawyer to understand medicine, nor the artist to comprehend politics. We have become patient with inevitable limitations, and take it for granted that the human being is unable, by natural endowments, to attain a balanced knowledge. May we not suggest, therefore, that what we call specialization is a line of least resistance, justified by economic pressure and social sanction. In this case, however, the solution creates new problems, which, in turn, must be faced by the same policy of least resistance. In the end, we achieve a dilemma too obvious to require explanation.

The policy of substituting statistics for experience is typical of the trend. We are assured that statistics cannot lie, and that broad surveys result in the accumulation of vital and useful facts. The procedure,

unfortunately, leads further away from the humanity-factor, and substitutes broad generalities for intimate comprehension. When we say that 20,000 persons react in a certain way, we develop an expectancy toward everyone whom we know. Yet, not one of these acquaintances fulfills the classical expectation. The charts and graphs may contribute to their own fulfillment while they reveal an existing condition. The classification of human beings gradually destroys, at least in the popular mind, those very elements which distinguish and, in a measure, glorify mankind. Cold columns of figures do not reflect the warmth and secret motions by which the total nature of the individual must be interpreted. We will never outgrow the need for ready sympathy and an immediate personal participation in the experiences which together constitute living. The tendency of knowledge to become remote, impersonal, and what we broadly term scientific may advance particulars, but at the expense of those generals which are even more essential. There is no substitute in Nature for a gentle and constructive understanding, and without this equation knowledge can become a terrifying and dangerous force. The modern way of life is becoming ever less intimate and intuitive. We no longer mingle with our neighbors or take a quick and simple interest in the affairs of our communities. We vote unknown persons into public office, depending again upon the finding of experts for vital information. Much of this drift away from gentle and sincere conduct is the result of the overconcept of impersonal learning.

Dr. Jowett was a teacher at a time when instructors were not inclined to regard themselves as mere disseminators of other men's thoughts. Although he was probably faithful to his texts, he was also able to vitalize ideas with his own peculiar quality of genius. He taught his students to apply what they learned directly to themselves and the planning of their careers. He allowed no grand generalities to float around unattached in the subtle intellectual atmosphere. It was not enough just to remember, in the hope that sometime, somewhere, the knowledge might be needed. If the pupil could do nothing with what he already knew, it was unlikely that he would find further abstractions more serviceable. Knowledge satisfied an appetite. Those who were hungry would seek food because they needed it, and not because it was thrust upon them by the curriculum. To feed a man who was not hungry or had already taken all he could digest led to mental dyspepsia rather than erudition. To encourage the student, it was therefore essential that he should understand *why* he desired an education.

This little *why* requires considerable thought. It cannot be answered by such phrases as: "My family wants me to go to college,"



"My father was an Oxford man," or: "One cannot get anywhere without a college diploma." The correct answer should be: "I must know, because I desire to live better and to be of greater use in this world." In some way the concept of living better seems to have been submerged, and because the motivations are inadequate the product is insufficient. The broad assumption that education bestows an inevitable impulse toward social integration is not sustained by experience. Unless the school educates incentives as well as faculties, it cannot protect society against the theorist and the opportunist. We cannot afford indefinitely to graduate bright people. We must graduate also good people. The educator may feel that brightness is bestowed by the school, and goodness by the home and the church, but this is only an attitude of evasion. The primary end of learning is to discover and experience the good, to whatever degree it can be given to us to know the good. In terms of the security of civilization, brilliance without goodness is sterile.

What advantages are provided to the student of biology, physiology, law or medicine by which he can unfold, educate, and direct his natural instincts to be a constructive person? Does he come to love the beautiful with the same devotion he bestows upon the exactitudes of mathematics? Is he growing up as a person or is he desperately striving to memorize a mass of diversified information in the hope that he can pass his final examination? Even assuming that his motives are noble and that he is dedicated to the proper use of knowledge, has he been given the means of fulfilling his own nobility?

A young doctor of my acquaintance graduated with honors from a prominent college of medicine. His instructors predicted a brilliant future, which was more than justified by the record of his internship and the grace with which he passed the State Board examinations. He happened to be one of those young men who, unfortunately, decided to enter general practice. This was considered little less than a misdemeanor by his associates, who tried to persuade him to specialize. They pointed out that a general practitioner was really only an intern in the larger field of medicine where specialists ruled supreme. Still determined to be somebody's family physician, he moved into a small community, and slowly built a satisfactory practice. Discussing it with me, he said: "I thought I was well-informed, because those who claimed to be better informed told me so. Actually, my first group of patients, numbering over a hundred, brought me problems for which I had no background and little, if any, experience. Most of these people needed understanding, wise direction, and friendly advice on practical problems. All I could do was bestow what small common

sense I naturally possess. I have learned more practical wisdom from my patients than from my teachers."

This is not an isolated case, and the situation is not improving as rapidly as it should. It may be that a basic concept is at fault. Man himself is not a specialized creature. He is composed of numerous conflicting elements bound together in a kind of generality. Even his moods are inconsistent, and his pressures are modified or intensified by countless factors difficult to classify. He cannot be organized by rote or rule, although these are of assistance in some cases. There is no universal panacea, and the success of a medication depends, in large measure, upon the correctness of the diagnosis. The correctness, in turn, depends upon the basic intelligence of the physician. His sciences strengthen and organize his mind, but they are not his mind nor are they substitutes for his own basic thinking. Paracelsus summarized this condition nearly five centuries ago, when he insisted that the end of medical science was not to prove the theory, but to improve the patient.

Apparently, the points that I have suggested are known and recognized by some leaders in the educational world. Information has come to me that the citadel of exact knowledge, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has just included in its curriculum a course on the humanities. This was certainly a courageous move and a very necessary one. It may help to bridge that interval which has so long separated intellectuals as a group from humanity which depends upon them for leadership and guidance. To gain the reputation for universal genius, one must be in a position of having useful answers to vital questions. Dr. Jowett used to gather select groups of his pupils in his home, and there he was no longer just a teacher. He shared with them both his certainties and his uncertainties. He read his manuscripts to undergraduates, and invited their criticisms and suggestions. Obscure points led to long discussions, and in these Jowett revealed the enthusiasm and vitality of a schoolboy. Ever eager to learn, he gained a wonderful sphere of influence. His pupils knew that they could approach him man to man, and that he would not look down his nose at their immaturity. They also learned that his recommendations were sound and came from a deep contemplation in religion and philosophy. He made Plato live for them, not as a monument of ancient learning, but as a real person who had his troubles, made his mistakes, had the courage to acknowledge them, and the wisdom to correct them. The whole field of education took on a new color. It became truly an ever-present help in time of trouble. It may have been that much of this overtone was simply Dr. Jowett. Another man with the same knowledge, but lacking a peculiar sympathy



for truth and the truth seeker, would not have accomplished nearly so much. Those who attended the doctor's symposia were not only informed and aided, but also inspired. They saw in Dr. Jowett a man worth emulating, a person who had undoubtedly discovered a deeper dimension in the transference of ideas. Through the years these older pupils, settled in various professions, made regular pilgrimages to the doctor's sanctuary and told how the knowledge they had gained from him had enriched their lives.

The busy modern schoolmaster may sigh regretfully that he no longer lives in the comparative quietude of mid-Victorian England. The student bodies are too large, and there is no time for intimate associations. Perhaps an outstanding student will receive some special consideration, for the born teacher cannot be prevented from fulfilling his destiny. Yet, for the most part, he is unequipped and dispositionally untrained to cope with the gentle universals which enrich life. There is no good reason, however, why the same attention which has been so devoutly and successfully applied to other problems cannot solve this one if the incentives are present. In this case, certainly, the incentives are real, and the need is apparent in all departments of our complex society. There is no call for a complete upheaval in education, for if the subjects taught are true there is no reason to upset them. No one is questioning that higher education is making available such truths as are known, such facts as are available, and such opinions as seem the most reasonable. The trouble seems to be that education instructs the mind, but has found no convenient manner by which to inform the emotions of their part in the common destiny.

For one person who is basically motivated by his thoughts, there are a hundred who are moved principally by their emotions. It is far more common to find the intellect justifying the emotions than the emotions sustaining the intellect. We may think, and do nothing; but when we feel, we do everything. In the emergency which inevitably follows, we then use the mind to extricate ourselves from the consequences of our emotions. It is a delicate situation, but there are few who have not experienced it at one time or another. There is much to indicate that the emotional life of the human being is far older and deeper than his mental existence. If the sciences must contribute to the integration of the mind, the arts and the related humanities must train and organize the emotional instincts. The situation is even more vital than might first appear. Man has considerable mental exercise, and has grown accustomed to reason his way out of his dilemmas. Unfortunately, reason does not convert the emotions, and these conditioned against their will are of the same opinion still. Left without conditioning suitable to their needs, the emotions become progressively

more demoralized. Their pressures result in a compound bewilderment, and this, in turn, contributes to excesses of all kinds. To meet this emergency, education must proceed along a balanced program of emotional and mental guidance. At the moment, such a comprehensive plan is more necessary to the average citizen than intense specializations for the mind alone. Programs for social adjustment for small children have been inaugurated. The public-school system in this country does afford opportunities for young people to experience the need for teamwork, co-operation, tolerance, and sportsmanship. But these opportunities should not be without proper supervision, and the experience gained should be clearly and adequately explained. There is much of the old attitude that thinking comes from the school, and living comes from the world. We should remember, however, that during their most formative years children are subjected to from 12 to 16 years of education. Most important of all, this span includes one of the most difficult periods in the human life—adolescence. This psychobiological transformation from childhood to maturity always brings with it emotional pressures. The curriculum, however, goes quietly on its way, when it should be leading and directing the adolescent through the maze of confusion for which he has neither experience nor mental maturity as a sufficient guide.

It is not safe for modern man to enter upon his own career without a balanced background of schooling. He can only continue to use that which he has learned, and it is 10 years at least before personal experience can accumulate in sufficient quantity to exert a compensating influence. Lacking breadth of foundation, the graduate becomes not only a specialist by selection, but unfortunately, a specialist by necessity. He can use only the faculties and powers which have been developed, and the testimonies of the underprivileged parts of his consciousness only contribute confusion. He must fight this out, and, all too often, others suffer during this battle. It can lead to an early broken home, economic difficulty, social nonadjustment, and, most of all, to a monumental self-pity. Doing the best he can with what he knows, he is always in trouble.

The degree to which the arts can be penalized in an industrial civilization was brought to my attention recently when a little man came up to me and said: "I have always been interested in philosophy, but, of course, I am only a musician." We have come to regard the arts as luxuries, and the musician as a person content to remain poor. We are told again and again that there is no adequate appreciation or reward for creative contributions of beauty and artistry. This is simply because the emotional natures of human beings are not educated. The old stimulation of the Church and its rites are gone for many, and



there is little to take its place. An architect said to me recently: "I am building a public school. Of course, it is no art and all utility. Four square walls with all the latest equipment inside. The ventilation is perfect; the light has passed a dozen experts; and the gymnasium fittings will be the envy of the State. But there is no money to make the building beautiful. It is an architectural disgrace, but no one is interested."

Thousands of our young people for many years to come must spend a considerable portion of their lives in this hallowed crackerbox. Earthquakes will not move it, and it can stand against storm and stress. Subtly, these young people are becoming accustomed to blank walls and sovereign utility. This will never bring a gentle mood or fond remembrance. We can say that this is not meaningful to children, but the truth is all human beings absorb beauty, whether it be of form or of conduct. If man ever becomes an embodiment of utility unadorned, we may look for the worst. It is not wise, therefore, to present him with too many object lessons which incline in this direction.

Accepting the need for specialization, we should recognize that, Platonically speaking, it must exist within generalization. The individual should proceed from a broad understanding of life and its problems to such specialization as his own temperament indicates. He must first have perspective, or his intensities will result in unbalance. Education as we know it does not prevent, nor has it made possible the correction of, the basic evils of society. Thus, it must be in some way imperfect. We do not imply that schooling can make a bad boy into a good man, but more can be done than has been attempted. There are proven incidents in which an enlightened group of teachers have changed the entire morale of their student bodies. Their methods should be carefully examined and immediately applied in other localities.

What, then, can we conceive the well-educated person to represent? In what respect does he differ from the present acceptance of advanced attainment? First of all, an educated man should be a kindly and understanding human being. If knowledge has not brought him these qualities, he has failed, and/or the system which produced him has failed. No amount of brilliance can compensate for lack of internal grace. No one can be so wise that it is no longer necessary to be a simple human being. His influence for good in his community results from the double impact of his ability and his example. If we must sacrifice something, a good example is of greater profit to all than an exceptional ability. It is nice to hope that we will find them both, and there is no reason why we should be disappointed.

In ancient times, when the Mystery systems were responsible for the educational program, teachers were also priests. They were dedicated to the service to all who needed help or instruction, and were regarded as benevolent foster-parents. Their pupils were like their children, and the instructor was held in paternal respect. Like good parents in society, they were to their students universal geniuses to be sought on all matters demanding enlightenment and understanding. Education itself is even today the foster-parent or the Alma Mater. It is not some distant and aloof intellectualism, but a guide and friend and intimate counselor. It loves and respects, and sometimes because it loves and respects it must chastise. Unless the student loves and respects, the



real sympathy between student and teacher is lost. Love brings with it a maturity of emotion toward learning. The mind makes masters, but the heart makes servants, and the learned must always be servants of those who need knowledge. Such gentleness should not only distinguish the teacher but the teaching, and it is especially necessary where the subject matter itself is distant, impersonal, strange, and even a little cruel.

It is hard to say where universal genius leads, but we can suggest where it begins. It must certainly originate in a balanced consciousness which recognizes the need for the development of all of the human being, not simply one faculty which can be successfully exploited on the level of competitive economics. We must begin to think of what our nation needs and our world requires in order to survive. This is a most immediate and practical concern for all thoughtful and progressive citizens. When we estimate the human potential, we realize that man is endowed with many faculties and many perceptions which must unite their testimonies in order that normalcy of viewpoint is possible. If these several parts are not adequately strengthened, conclusions must be unsound. When we examine a case at law, we question all witnesses and gather any information that may seem to have



a bearing. Only after both sides have presented their stories do we seek a verdict; otherwise, miscarriage of justice would be the rule rather than the exception.

We live with all of ourselves, and this life should be rich in constructive contrasts; when it is not, the danger of mental illness is increased. More emphasis, therefore, should be placed upon broad reference-frames, especially such as contribute to the capacity to apply knowledge to its useful ends. We are not a better people simply because we know more. Knowledge must be put to work building character and life. Part of the human experience is the constant discovery of our own growing requirements. When a new dimension is necessary to make life productive, we must achieve that dimension with speed and diligence. Dr. Jowett may have been the last man to know everything, but he was not the last man who needs to know more than he does. The goal at the moment is not omniscience, but a level of good judgment, strengthened by the many resources of the personality. When thought, emotion, and action are united in proper balance, the person can face life with an inner security. Can it be denied that the proper end of learning is that man may attain security? I do not mean economic security primarily, but that kind of inward strength which gives courage to live well, to serve unselfishly, and to grow graciously.

#### *Relaxations of the Great*

When Cardinal Mazarin was prime minister of France, he developed a unique method of relaxing nervous tension. Retiring to the privacy of his own room, he arranged chairs of various sizes, and, after careful estimation, made running jumps over each of them. One day, as he was busily engaged in his favorite sport, he failed to notice the entrance of a youthful courtier, who stood open-mouthed at the spectacle. Fortunately, the young man was quick of wit, and, gaining his composure, remarked quietly: "I will wager Your Eminence two pieces of gold that I can beat that jump." A few minutes later, he was testing his leaping powers with the prime minister. The courtier was also a diplomat. He was careful not to win, and promptly lost his wager. The cardinal was so pleased that he soon after bestowed a bishop's mitre on the courtier.

#### *News from Afar*

While Thomas Jefferson was absent from his home, the house burned down. A servant out of breath arrived to inform him of the disaster. After the first impact, Jefferson inquired: "But were none of my books saved?" "No, master," replied the servant, "but," with a big smile of satisfaction, "we saved your fiddle."



## The Great Buddha of Kamakura

THERE are three great Buddhist images in Japan. The largest of these is in a temple at Nara. The figure is over 50 feet high and is cast of black bronze. Many years ago the head of this huge image was destroyed by a fire that razed its protective temple. The head was replaced, however, and the average visitor is unaware of the substitution. It is a fine statue, but in some way it does not have the wonderful peace and simple dignity which we like to associate with Buddhism. There is a large Buddhist figure at Kobe, which was built in comparatively recent time by a devout Japanese merchant. This figure is 45 feet high, and very nicely sculptured. It again, however, did not quite convey to my Occidental perceptions the contemplative mood.

Certainly the most famous of the heroic images, which are in large measure embodiments of Japanese Buddhist conviction, is the Great Buddha at Kamakura. It is the second largest in the Empire, being slightly over 49 feet high. It is regarded by artists and experts as the most aesthetically satisfying conception of the great Indian system of philosophy, personified in its descent of teachers, to be found anywhere in the world. At least, I have seen no statue anywhere in the Eastern land that equals in symmetry or impressiveness the marvelous figure that sits in eternal contemplation amidst the trees of the sacred park of the Kotoku-in monastery. This park has been set aside from the world in the name of the Compassionate One. The great bronze plates of which the colossal image is composed were cast about A. D. 1250. These plates were joined with such infinite care that even after all these centuries but few of the seams have opened sufficiently to be visible. Although it was slightly shaken and its foundation cracked by the earthquake of September 1923, it was not injured, a circumstance which contributed considerably to its prestige.

It will be noted that contrary to popular policy we have not referred to this image as a likeness of the Buddha. This is because it presents

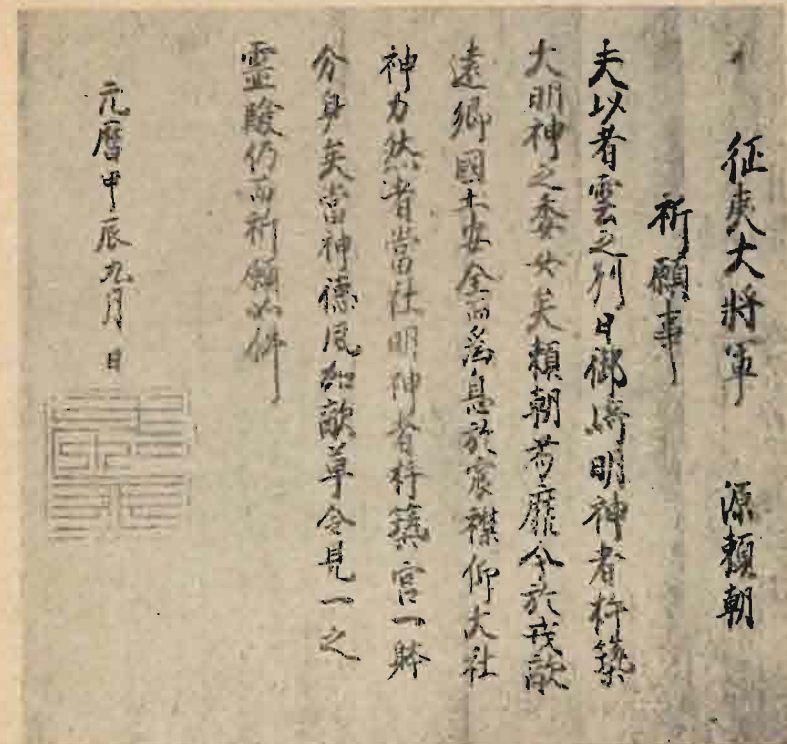


the great teacher under the Japanese form of Amida, the Buddha of Boundless Light. There can be no doubt, however, that the figure shows most of the attributes of the Indian teacher, Gautama. Very often these historical teachers and the symbolical Bodhisattvas are mingled in the creation of a religious work of art.

The circumference of the Daibutsu of Kamakura is a little over 97 feet. The thumb is 3 feet in length, and each eye is approximately 4 feet long. The figure measures 35 feet from knee to knee, as it sits cross-legged on its pedestal. It is also said that the eyes of this Buddha are of pure gold, but the lids droop, so that the observer cannot verify this for himself. The great jeweled knob of the forehead contains over 30 pounds of pure silver. There are about 800 little coils on the head forming the headdress, or close-fitting cap. There is a legend that these little coils represent snails that crawled upon the shaven head of the meditating Buddha to protect him from sunstroke while he remained entranced. The whole image captures the impression of a saint deep in contemplation of the Infinite, to whom all things have ceased to exist except the divine realization of unity with the eternal.

We must introduce at this point Yoritomo Minamoto, the celebrated Japanese general who flourished in the 12th century. This brilliant organizer combined the attributes most admired by the military class of his time. If he was relentless in the pursuit of his ambitions, these were largely dedicated to the security of his nation. In his *Memorial* addressed to the throne, Yoritomo advised the restitution of the estates and holdings of those who had previously opposed his program. He pointed out that he had once had the good fortune to escape capital punishment because of the generosity of others, and he wished to be equally clement in the treatment of offenders against himself. With one or two exceptions, his career was marked by sincerity and respect for justice and honor.

Yoritomo, as a military dictator, established a system which dominated the political life of Japan from the 12th century to the reformation of the entire government after Commodore Perry had opened the country to economic intercourse with the West. The government set up by Yoritomo was originally called the Bakufu, literally meaning *camp office*, and conveying the impression that the affairs of the Japanese Empire were under military control. He moved his center of government to the town of Kamakura, in order that there might be a more complete separation of the functions of civil administration and the spiritual domain of the Mikado at Kyoto. From that time on, the Mikado retained a kind of aloof divinity. All political functions were referred to him, more for his blessing than his opinion. He was respected, honored, and even venerated, but had little to say in the actual



—From the Library of The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

#### SHINTO PRAYER IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF YORITOMO

This exceedingly rare scroll, with the seal of the illustrious Prime Minister, was written about the year A. D. 1180. This date corresponds closely with Yoritomo's resolution to create the Great Buddha of Kamakura.

government of Japan. After Yoritomo, the Japanese nation gained an important psychological growth. Originally, a reference to Japan implied merely the court at Kyoto. The rest of the country had little social or political significance.

Yoritomo, as chief of the powerful Minamoto family, gained distinction as a patron of religion and art. He left numerous monuments to both the Buddhist and the Shinto sects. He is accredited with having inspired the erection of the Daibutsu at Kamakura. The figure was not completed until after his death, but his name has long been associated with the work. Like a good Japanese general, he was modest in his own requirements. While he left many beautiful and impressive structures, his own tomb is an insignificant monument now almost entirely covered with creeping plants. The political effect of





—Photograph by Manly P. Hall

#### SIDE VIEW OF THE DAIBUTSU

This picture, taken soon after the great earthquake of 1953, shows damage to the pedestal. One of the ventilating doors is visible at the back just below the shoulder, and the usual birds are gathered about the head.

Yoritomo is measured in the establishment of his great military system of government, which gradually developed into what is now known as the shogunate. The word *shogunate* suggests a system under the leadership of a dictator or military prime minister. When the unification of Japan became necessary in the middle of the 19th century, the last of the Tokogawa Shoguns voluntarily returned his powers to the emperor, thus ending the system.

In the Library of The Philosophical Research Society, we are fortunate enough to have an original document in the autograph of Yoritomo. It is a scroll consisting of two Shinto prayers composed by the general and signed with his great seal. These prayers were written about the year A. D. 1180. One panel of the scroll is reproduced herewith.

The great green bronze figure sitting under the trees at Kamakura symbolizes an old and wonderful faith that has brought spiritual consolation, cultural improvement, and physical progress to millions of human beings. This most sacred shrine has a beautiful and impressive approach, and at the entrance gate is a tablet which every right-minded



—Photograph by Manly P. Hall

#### THE HEAD OF THE GREAT BUDDHA OF KAMAKURA

person should read. The inscription may be translated as follows: "Stranger, whoever thou art and whatsoever be thy creed, when thou enterest this sanctuary thou treadest upon ground hallowed by the veneration of ages. This is the Temple of Buddha and the gateway of the eternal, and should therefore be entered with reverence."

From a purely technical standpoint, the Daibutsu is an extraordinary achievement. At the time of its erection it must have taxed the resourcefulness of skilled artisans. The casting of the plates, their assembly, and the superb artistry of the complete conception are outstanding. There are also physical problems to be considered, one being the effect of expansion and contraction due to atmospheric changes. To meet this requirement, doors were placed high in the back of the image, and the interior is skillfully ventilated. The project was comparable to the erection of the Statue of Liberty, but was done centuries earlier with far less adequate facilities.

Visiting the Daibutsu is a memorable occurrence. Usually the head and shoulders are covered with birds, and these flutter about forming a halo of bright plumage. Persons from many lands and countless beliefs come to this shrine. The image has been so often reproduced



in export art that it is familiar to most Occidentals. The camera enthusiast has numerous opportunities to photograph the image and surrounding foliage. By degrees, however, the impressiveness of the shrine affects the attitude of tourists. I have seen many who had no interest in Buddhism remove their hats and stand reverently admiring the statue. Children are quiet, and the bustle of the outside world is relaxed in this sanctified place. Perhaps it is the size of the figure, but more likely it is the strange calmness of the beautiful face. A prominent clergyman on sabbatical leave stood beside me near the base of the pedestal. He was silent for several minutes, and then with a smile said: "For the first time I understand why our missions in Japan are not doing better." He admitted that he did not know how his belief could compensate for the strange inscrutable serenity that seemed to radiate from the image. This could scarcely be an association of ideas. Few who gazed into the huge face had any conception of Buddhist philosophy. It seemed, however, that they inwardly glimpsed something of that peace which the whole world is seeking.

The gateway of the eternal is, in Buddhism, man's first glimpse of those values which lie beyond our physical interests and attachments. The experience of peace is the fact of peace, and it haunts those who first receive its impact. In large measure, this is the way in which Buddhism grew to be one of the world's largest and most satisfying religions. The Buddhist priests never gained their influence through war or conquest or enforced submission. When they entered a new community, always by invitation, they went quietly about their normal way. First they built their little shrine and usually a library to house the scriptures they brought with them. Then they went into the countryside as servants of all in need. They treated the sick, solved the problems natural to provincial living, and then returned to their monastic house. By degrees they won respect and confidence, not by their words, which often could not be understood, but by their actions which spoke a universal language of charity and benevolence. The faces of these monks had the same quiet peace as the great image at Kamakura. In time, thousands, even millions, haunted by this possibility of internal tranquillity come to the gateway and asked help and guidance. Many of the old shrines are now deserted or lost in jungles, but at Kamakura the light of ages is guarded and cherished as a symbol of the Middle Path that leads to the inner experience of truth.

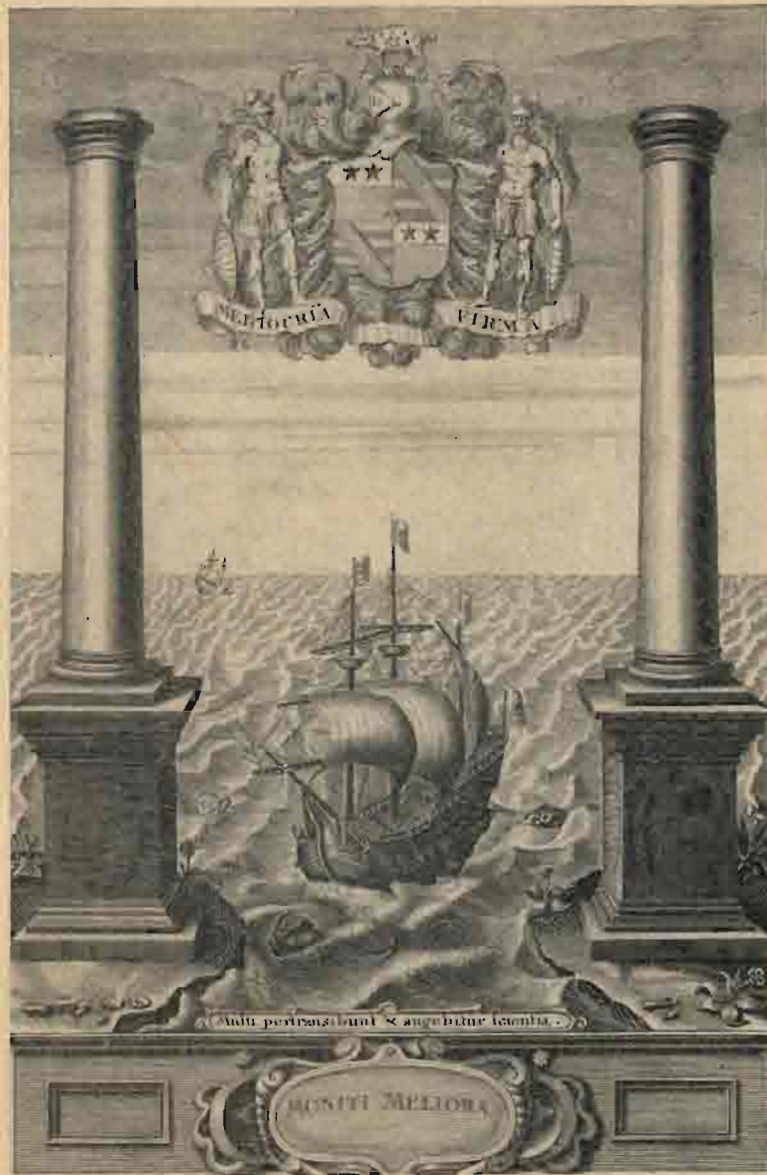


## Advancement of Learning of the 17th Century

IN the long perspective of history, the 17th century stands out as the most significant period in the development of man's intellectual-social consciousness. The roots of Humanism were in the earlier ground, but the flowering resulted from the impetus bestowed by a small group of powerful minds, who not only broke away from scholasticism, but laid the foundations for a new way of life. We should pause for a moment to consider the meaning of the word *humanism* as it is used in this outline. The term is now loosely associated with a recent expansion of idealistic political concepts which may be interpretations or extensions of the original idea, but have departed widely from the idealistic foundations of the older and more classical definition. The Humanists of post-Renaissance Europe were concerned principally with the liberation of the human mind from an oppressive pattern, and the advancement of the individual as a personal entity. The rights of man were envisioned as superior to the perpetuation of such institutions as restricted progress, either individual or collective.

The gradual decline of certain powerful groups, dominantly the Church and feudalism, resulted naturally from the broadening of the educational foundation in society. Improved transportation and communication and, perhaps most directly, the need for an adequate colonizing program in the recently discovered or rediscovered Western Hemisphere invited a general reformation in all departments of human affairs. The Protestant Reformation had so weakened ecclesiastical authority that it was no longer possible to prevent advancement in arts and sciences and a growing respect for life and liberty. The break between authoritarianism, both religious and secular, and the experimental approach to knowledge gradually widened until rebellion became excessive and, to a degree, irrational. The private citizen began to realize that he was the master of the institutions which he created and





FRONTISPIECE FROM THE 1765 EDITION OF THE  
WORKS OF FRANCIS BACON

The ship of the inductive method under full sail passing through the columns of Hercules into the great sea of the unknown. This was Lord Bacon's symbol of philosophic and scientific progress.

supported. He took a lively interest in his own well-being, and could no longer be restrained by persuasion or even violence. These Humanists began to express openly convictions and attitudes previously held secretly, and as a result discovered a readily-available source of necessary information. During the transition period a number of Secret Societies came into existence, largely for protection and as the most practical method of opposing the highly organized, if decadent, reactionary forces. These Brotherhoods and Fraternities soon found that it was no longer needful to conceal their activities, and most of them were gradually absorbed into the general motion of progress.

Always social changes come to be identified with certain outstanding personalities. It does not necessarily follow that these honored leaders either invented or created the systems with which their names became associated. More often, they simply proclaimed in well-chosen words the direction of public intention. They expressed the current discontent and the contemporary conviction of remedy. From such founding patrons descended a sequence of thinkers contributing in various ways to the unfoldment of the basic ideas. Dissemination became a diffusion of certain fundamental concepts, and as these permeated the State, the Church, and the university, they influenced the thoughts and policies of all European institutions.

We have chosen the 17th century because into it flowed the elements of a human crisis which arose in the closing years of the medieval period. The century itself became a kind of alchemical retort, in which the compound of Modernism was distilled. The old pattern lost its identity, although none of its essential values were destroyed. Obviously, the leaders of that time could not foresee all of the consequences which were to follow their contributions. Philosophically, they might have been aware that even the noblest of dreams could be perverted or corrupted. They acted according to the needs of the moment, and in the over-all picture they made an imperishable gift to the future. As Newton once observed, modern man could see farther than his forebears because he stood on the shoulders of giants. By *giants*, Newton identified the enlightened scholars, philosophers, and scientists who made possible the experience of mental maturity. The past was necessary, but valueless unless it bestowed incentive to further growth.

René Descartes in France and Francis Bacon in England became the acknowledged leaders of the transition between Humanism and Modernism. Each working from radically different convictions came to compatible conclusions, which were acceptable to many minds, and stated the conviction of progressiveness in several fields of endeavor. In Descartes an overtone of religious mysticism emphasized the spiritual





RENÉ DESCARTES - (1596-1650)

Descartes stands at the head of the French school of philosophy and shares with Bacon the honor of founding the system of modern science and modern philosophy. Descartes also has the distinction of evolving his own philosophy without recourse to authority. Consequently, his conclusions are built up from the simplest of premises, and grow in complexity as the structure of his philosophy takes form.

need for material unfoldment and development. Bacon, whose background qualified him to estimate the urgent demand for philosophical integration on the levels of science and statesmanship, threw his weight in the direction of immediate utilities. Thus, we find in Bacon an underlying current which demanded the shifting of authority from tradition to observation and experimentation. Man should no longer be satisfied to obey man; he must learn that his principal allegiance was to the immutable pattern of natural law. In a way, therefore, Bacon returned the management of the universe to God, or the creating

power; but in the very process of so doing, he elevated the natural sciences to so high a place that they, in turn, gradually assumed the prerogative of the older authoritarianism.

From a study of Bacon's works we learn that he was a devout man, who not only chose to abide by the doctrines of the Church of England, but also found personal solace in prayer and in the contemplation of the wonderful workings of God. He chose to discover God in Nature, and to him all natural philosophy must end in the acceptance of the fact of the divine will and the divine nature. It is remarkable, therefore, that his findings on the philosophical level and his contributions to the scientific method should have resulted in an almost immediate drift toward materialism. Such a drift gained very little momentum in the 17th century and only slightly more in the 18th century. Obviously, this span of two hundred years was still largely dominated by devout scholars whose philosophy and science were still submissive to their religious allegiances.

Psychologically considered, 17th-century man developed two important personal convictions. The first of these was, in substance, that the human being was capable of creating for himself a personal destiny and that he possessed faculties and powers, through the development of which he could attain dominion over the accidents and incidents of mortal living. The second conviction, available to those who chose to examine and estimate, was a textbook which we call the world. Here was set forth in the form of phenomena the evidence of natural method. By mastering this method and obeying the rules by which the universe itself was maintained, the human being could become essentially wise. He might go even further; he could ultimately, through intimate knowledge of natural law, advance arts and sciences and achieve a conscious and practical association with Nature for the attainment of all things possible to man. These most noble assumptions were entirely different from the prevailing concepts of medieval scholarship. Most of all, a philosophy of self-attainment was acceptable to the ego in man. It gave new dignity to the Homo sapiens. The individual could become truly "lord of all he surveyed," but the universe of opportunity was not accepted then, as now, as a universe of responsibility. It was not until the motion toward opportunity brought with it an increasing measure of personal freedom that the need for the mature contemplation of those objectives was revealed.

The immediate result of the 17th-century compound of mysticism and realism was an emotional exuberance. With a burning desire to know, the scholar seized upon the inductive method with the same avidity that the medieval had displayed toward the Aristotelian



method. Research, however, shifted from the level of thinking and abstract formularization of dogmas to the examination of natural forms, physical or institutional. It was as though men opened their eyes very widely for the first time and saw a universe around them, wonderful, fascinating, incredible. Immediately they perceived that others had preceded them in their new visual awareness, and they were able to justify the contributions of Copernicus, Galileo, Vesalius, Paracelsus, and Paré. Now the outer world was the answer for everything. It remained to be explored, and awaited conquest. As Columbus sailed his little ship through the Pillars of Hercules into the unknown ocean of the West, Lord Bacon equipped the little ship of his own mind and sailed it forth between the formidable columns of authority (Galen and Avicenna) into the vast sea of natural phenomena.

Nor was he alone, for the intellectual revolution was far-spread by the time he became the champion of a new cause. He gathered around him an increasing sphere of influence, which extended to the progressive thinkers in every part of Europe, so that it was truly said that he had the largest personal correspondence of any man of his day. His writings were immediately sought by others, and his principles applied to their problems. A good example of this is Comenius, who acknowledged his indebtedness to Bacon in the perfecting of the new concept for education through the system of the public school.

It is historically known that the discovery of America resulted in the migration of several groups of nonconformists to the New World in search of mental and spiritual liberty. This is only one phase of the situation, but indicates a growing tendency to demand personal rights in matters of allegiance, spiritual or temporal. There was also a marked increase in a formation of learned societies, created for the purpose of bringing intellectuals into an association which encouraged the exchange of useful knowledge. The Royal Society in England had been formed only a few years when it presented papers on East Indian botany and Near Eastern archaeology. Such a broad program would not have been possible without the co-operation of persons dedicated to an extremely-progressive attitude. Thus we may say that, in the 17th century, European man discovered not only the natural universe, but also world distribution of scientific and cultural attainments. For our purposes, however, we are concerned primarily with the importance of this century as a psychological experience. The soul of man—that inner life of hopes, yearnings, fears, ambitions, and aspirations—was powerfully stirred and stimulated, and once thus activated could no longer be repressed. But the modern world, like the human being, had to be born, pass through childhood, struggle through adolescence, and attain maturity. It will be profitable, therefore, to examine the



2170.—Harvey. (From a Portrait by Cornelius Jansen.)

“growing pains” of modern man; nor could such a survey be adequately treated in a brief paper. Under the heading of “growing pains” should be included most history for the last three hundred and fifty years.

Bacon's personal physician, Dr. Harvey, discovered the circulation of the blood, and this, in turn, required a complete re-estimation of the science of physiology. One by one, the infallible monuments of the past were challenged, and many of them fell. Those that survived gained new distinction and resulted in an awareness that wisdom was substantially timeless — a realization which would still be useful. Growth demands a series of adjustments, and these, in turn, depend upon the unfolding inner life and capacity of an individual or a collective. Growth is not merely the expansion of forms, for such expansion itself must result from the pressure of internal energies. Both Descartes and Bacon were well-aware that it was not the purpose of knowledge to extend merely the temporal domain of man; in fact, the only justification for temporal expansion was that it gave a larger theater of opportunity to the individual. Man matures from within himself, and the growth of his institutions is merely a symbolic reflection of his own attainments. Yet, by the very nature of man himself, it is possible for him to rest his entire hope of the future on his mental level of activity. Thus, he is capable of schemes and stratagems or of directing his attention so completely upon certain objectives that he becomes oblivious to his own larger requirements. The tendency was for Modernism to level off as mentalism. Because the mind had found extraordinary stimulation, it was permitted to wander as it would through the maze of phenomena in search of appropriate nutrition.



Gradually, the body, the heart, the soul, and the consciousness fell under the authority of the mind and became its servants. To save the mind, to perfect the mind, and to fashion from it an instrument of universal salvation seemed a perfectly reasonable approach to the unknown. Mentality has tremendous power in those spheres of activity subordinate to its own level, but is not adequate for the contemplation of those causes which lie within, behind, and beyond the testimonies of the sensory powers. Needless to say, the European mind had rested undeveloped for fifteen hundred years. It had been discarded or disregarded. Whenever it attempted to examine a problem or to investigate a circumstance, it was condemned for its audacity and anathematized for its impiety. Conformity was required; and this, in turn, did little to exercise the intellect. It is not strange, therefore, that having attained freedom it should move inevitably to excess. Whereas previously the spiritual life of man was everything, though undefined, a great change had come about. A physical universe approachable and susceptible of examination was suddenly available. Here was a wonder that factually exhausted both imagination and intellect. At the very doorstep was a new world, inviting every faculty to explore and examine. Furthermore, this natural world was factual, for experiments could be repeated, observations could be checked, and gradually testimonies could be amassed, organized, classified, and result in a transmittable heritage of knowledge. As the early years of a child's life are largely devoted to adjustment with the mortal plan of living, so early years of Modernism were dedicated to orientation in the newly discovered universe of physical things. The microscope and the telescope were wonderful improvements upon prayer and meditation as instruments of discovery. There was no time to realize that the knowledge necessary to the ultimate good of man could not come from the observatory or the laboratory. Man did not know the limitations imposed by Nature, nor did he realize or consider his own internal and eternal requirements. It was enough that he had found a new mental outlook which could keep him busy for thousands of years and would ultimately so completely dominate his mind that he would forget to ask such questions as his mentality could not answer.

The next step was also inevitable. Having dedicated his abilities to a prescribed end, he became dogmatic in his dedication. What he could not know, could not be knowledge. There was no longer any question about intangibles and overtones. These became the new heresy, and to doubt the sufficiency and sublimity of the scientific method was to face an intellectual inquisition. This motion was not immediate or spectacular, but was one of those inevitables which so often follow idea-hypnosis. Thus, materialism became synonymous



—From the portrait by Vertue

SIR FRANCIS BACON, KT., LORD VERULAM,  
VISCOUNT ST. ALBAN, LORD CHANCELLOR  
OF ENGLAND



with Modernism, and a deep fixation resulted. It is only after centuries that we begin to realize that we have departed from a "golden mean" and have fallen under a spell of fantasy. It does not follow that all we have done is wrong, for upon our foundations others must build. Properly defined, we have passed through the emotional adolescence of the inductive method. We have been strangely moved by pressures, internal and environmental, and we have not yet defined the purpose for the tremendous program which we have followed.

There is indication that the fathers of Modernism were well-aware of the danger, but had not available to them in their time any sufficient means to avert the possible disaster. They could only hope that the natural growth of man would gradually reveal to him the need for a richer internal existence. Perhaps they depended upon a law of reaction. Having moved in one direction with great intensity for a certain period of time, the consciousness itself, through its own autocorrective mechanism, seeks to re-establish equilibrium. There are many indications that this autocorrectivism is now functioning, and the need for a broader idealism is widely expressed. For the moment, then, let us compare 17th-century man with his equivalent in the 20th century. In this way we can more clearly observe the changes and reveal the workings of natural law in human society. In the observation of Nature and her methods, we have had a tendency to overlook her more subtle means of attaining her ultimate goal. Nature certainly did not intend that the human being should end merely as an intellectual. The mind was one rung on a ladder, by which creatures ascend from the darkness of primordial ignorance to the light of eternal truth. This is Bacon's ladder of wisdom, or his pyramid of Pan. Man climbs the ladder of Nature to reach that which is beyond him, and unless he is aware of this he is deficient in wisdom.

A man of the 17th century had all the essential characteristics of the human being we now know, but many of these characteristics were but slightly revealed. Perhaps the term *monotony* would best describe his existence. He was born in a trade or was early apprenticed to a craft. He lived and died in a society identical with himself. There was little to challenge ability or to require individual initiative. He ate too much, drank too much, and thought too little. Educational opportunities were comparatively few for that group we now would term the middle class. Possession was largely through inheritance, and men died in the same house in which they were born. Family ties were strong; divorce heavily censured; large families the rule. The infant death rate was appalling; sanitation primitive; hygiene hypothetical. Very few traveled; many never journeyed outside their town or village. Newspapers were comparatively unobtainable; roads were bad; and

books were few in the average home. Add to this, visitations of the plague, frequent wars, heavy taxes, and corrupt courts, and the lot of man was not exactly stimulating. Working conditions in large communities were extremely bad; wages seldom above a survival level; hospitals deathtraps; and prisons loaded with debtors, some of whom languished for years in jail because they could not pay one or two dollars to a creditor. The streets at night were infested with brigands, to say nothing of the fact that the moral atmosphere was heavy with demons and infernal spirits.

As is usually the case, reform had to be led by a small group of privileged intellectuals, whose births and positions enabled them to estimate the tragedy of their other fellow men. There was no possibility of the burdened group emancipating itself. All it could do was resort to violence, which, in turn, led to further disaster. To reach these levels of essentially good but hopelessly underprivileged classes, it was first necessary to make available opportunities for self-improvement. In the 17th century schools began to appear, and by the middle of the century most prosperous villages had something resembling a school teacher. Education seldom went beyond the three "R's," and that apprentice or farmer was fortunate whose burden of his survival permitted him to devote one month a year to the grade school. It was a great experience, however, to be able to write one's name, if only on a will or a promisory note. It was also a satisfaction of the soul to slowly and painfully read a few verses of the Bible. From such humble beginnings grew the thirst for knowledge, sustained by noble patronage and inner yearning.

That such a situation could lead to a violent outburst of mental hunger is in no way strange. It was only necessary to reveal the possibility of becoming a mental entity; and with many, inner incentives took over. Men who were not learned longed to see their children better equipped for life. In those countries where the parochial-school system broke down, secular schools were created, and these naturally included heavy indoctrination against theology. The Reformation had caused a great deal of bitterness, and this, transmitted to hungry and uninformed minds, was intensified, until it became a definite trend which still survives. We can contrast this general picture with the present state of the very descendants of these provincial Europeans. Today most live beyond their means and will accept no interference in matters of judgment or opinion. The average working man of today is better educated than the kings of Europe five hundred years ago. Yet, when we survey our achievements, let us not become so completely satisfied that we fail to notice the weaknesses of our present position. We have accomplished much, but not all, and we are faced



again with the possibility of a Renaissance and a Reformation. The giants upon whose shoulders we stand are well-appreciated, but little understood. We have derived much comfort from Plato and Aristotle, Bacon and Descartes, but we have skillfully and adroitly neglected a large part of their contributions. With their help and our own ingenuity, we have come to a state of comparative freedom. Yet, we have not found the satisfaction which we expected. Our very freedom is now a kind of bondage, and our advancement threatens to turn upon us with a menacing aspect.

The mind deprived of its spiritual reflections departs from the pattern of great thinking. The real heroes of progress have been both wise and devout. If they have gathered their knowledge from Nature, they have strengthened their faith from within themselves. Thus, the man whom we associate with the rise of modern scientific philosophy wrote: "They that deny a God, destroy man's nobility: for certainly, man is of kin to the beasts, by his body; and if he be not akin to God, by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature." A few lines later, Bacon adds: "So man, when he resteth and assureth himself, upon divine protection and favor, gathereth a force and faith; which human nature, in itself could not obtain."

To mature our heritage of wisdom, we must, therefore, consider the attitudes of those minds from which we have derived so much of inspiration and guidance. If we mature their philosophy, it might also be useful to consider their faiths and those fountains of inner life and light by which they were moved and nourished in their service to the human need. The 17th century gave us not only science and a new-world Modernism, but also conferred upon us a wonderful example of practical spiritual aspiration. It is wrong to perfect the former and to ignore the latter, even as it is unwise to perpetuate the political philosophy of Plato and to neglect his moral theology. We cannot assume that minds great of wisdom are also addicted to worthless superstitions. The power behind progress is not only impersonal inquiry into facts, but an internal spiritual incentive which is part of the perfect heritage.

#### *For the Book Lover*

During the 15th century books were so valuable that when one was presented to the library of a church or monastery it was an event of importance. It was usual that the book be offered first on the altar, so that the donor would benefit by the gift. The most customary form of presentation was the petition that the gift of a book would bestow forgiveness of sins.



## *In Reply*

### A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *Why does a perfect Creator create an imperfect world?*

ANSWER: Perchance, we are on the horns of a semantic dilemma. For instance, just what do we mean by a *perfect Creator*, or by an *imperfect world*? Are we not merely using words for which we have created definitions? Are these definitions factual or have they arisen from some traditional conditioning of our minds? Also, there may be confusion over the creating process itself. Do we assume that the creating power spontaneously generates its own mature reflection in the substances of the corporeal universe? Our natural rebellion against existing conditions is by no means unique. From the beginning of history men have complained that the universe was not to their liking. This in itself was prima facie evidence of an inconsistency which in old times was conveniently attributed to the eccentricities of Divinity.

There is an old saying: "When in doubt, look about you." A program of examination leads to the conclusion that the creating processes in Nature move through cycles of growth and evolution. Growth leads to the maturing of forms, and evolution to the collective maturity of species. Is the world imperfect in the sense that it falls short of its own essential substance or has failed to maintain its own processes of growth and evolution? We find some interesting evidences of natural method by looking around us.

It would not occur to the average person to consider his small son as an imperfect creation. The parent is fully aware that it is impossible for a five-year-old child to exhibit the maturity of an adult either physically or mentally. The problems of infancy are not especially attractive or enjoyable, but are accepted as inevitable. The same may be said of that emotional crisis commonly termed adolescence. Only



at maturity do we see the emergence of the human being to his full estate. We accept all these simple facts because we see them around us and because they are infinitely repeated throughout time.

Let us suppose for a moment that we live in a growing universe, and that the creating power has ordained that in all things maturity must follow processes of growth. How old is our universe among the evolving clusters of stars? This we do not know, and we are unable to make favorable or unfavorable comparisons. Would it not be wiser, however, to attempt to justify inevitable facts rather than to regret conditions which we cannot change? Actually, when we speak of an imperfect world, we do not generally mean geographical deformity. We have slight complaint against mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, and oceans, all of which seem to perform useful functions and to contribute to the diversity of unfolding flora and fauna. When we complain against the world, we generally refer to that social complex of creatures similar to ourselves who have created various institutions and policies, many of which are not entirely satisfactory. Our worries, therefore, are on the moral level as we contemplate war and crime, poverty and sickness, and the tyrannical operations of the laws of life and death among our own peculiar creation. Our thinking would be more constructive and we would have greater inspiration for personal adjustment if we recognized the inevitable immaturity of that which cannot be mature without further evolutionary process.

There is very little wrong that will not be corrected in due time by the unfoldment of consciousness through form by the mystery of growth. We realize this in our own affairs, but have not been accustomed to associating this concept with divine affairs. Yet, if everything that lives changes by growth, is it not safe to consider that the collective itself—the world and all its creatures—is subject to this vast statement of eternal purpose and method? If we visit the studio of an artist to examine a painting which is obviously unfinished, we judge the work only as far as it has gone. If he is a reputable painter, we assume that he will complete the work in due time. When we contemplate the cosmic mural, it would be wise to take the same attitude. The resources within man must perfect the works of man. This is the law. We may wish that the processes were more rapid, but we also wish that our small son would develop the intellectual powers of Plato before he turns his seventh year. If our desires are contrary to universal procedure, we may have them, but they profit us little.

Man has within himself not only the power to meditate upon the accomplishment of the past, but also the faculties which enable him to contemplate upon the possibilities of the future. The conduct pat-

terns of human beings reveal clearly the interval between inner conviction and outer action. We know many things to be good, but have not the courage or the skill to accomplish them all. We recognize the virtue of patience, yet we are impatient. We idolize the concept of progress, but when confronted by opportunities for growth we resent the changes and problems which growth must bring. There have been Utopians who visualized an ideal social state, but their concepts, though widely disseminated, have not resulted in the improvements which they advocated. Thus we must remember that we lack the resources necessary to the practical fulfillment of our noblest dreams.

It would be wrong to assume that some condition beyond immediate attainment should be accepted as a norm. If we fall into this delusion, we judge the present by the future, and become dissatisfied. It is wise to plan and build a better world, and our dreams inspire us to self-improvement. There is no good reason why we should expect to accomplish immediately that which is beyond our present means. We want world peace; and because the desire is deep within us, it will ultimately be attained. In the meantime, we must advance slowly, building the foundation for peace by the moderation of those personal and collective intemperances which result in war. Conflict cannot cease in the world until it ceases in man. It is proper to strive after that which is desirable, but it is also proper to maintain a perspective which sees all good things in their proper times and places.

One friend was disconcerted over the apparent contradiction between creation as a divine fiat and generation as an evolutionary process. As God is all-powerful, he could have brought into being a universe already perfect. Why subject miserable and benighted creatures to the long and perilous journey of growth? It would have been so easy for that which is all-powerful to manifest that which is all-sufficient. There is no real answer to such speculation, except recourse to Nature itself. The human being could be relieved of numerous unhappy situations if it were born into this world fully matured. To continue the thinking, other disasters could also be averted if man could depart from this sphere without the infirmities of age. Yet, all creatures are born, grow to maturity, pass to old age, and depart in their proper time. As this procedure is beyond human control, it must rest upon the divine will. Evidently the plan as it is, is the best when examined from the level of all-understanding. Man does not possess universal wisdom; therefore, he complains about and doubts Providence, the workings of which are beyond his comprehension.

There is a great security in the acceptance of the divine wisdom. It is better to make use of available opportunity than to complain about



inevitable limitation. When we take this constructive attitude, we begin to observe that all phases of life and living are important and contribute to the accomplishment of individual and collective growth. Without childhood, the mature human being would be deprived of a rich and wonderful heritage. Those periods in man's career most uncongenial with his purposes and ambitions are often the most valuable. By making good use of the several stages of his own unfoldment, the individual attains to the maximum of his own potential. Instead of wondering why there is not a better plan, it would be well to wonder why the plan is already best.

In times of general prosperity, selfishness and self-centeredness increase, and the essential progress of evolutionary motion is frustrated. It might be the same if men lived forever in a paradise which required neither effort nor incentive. The struggle to become secure, and not the security itself, strengthens character. We grow into universal citizenship, and while the procedure is arduous, there are innumerable pleasant interludes along the way. There are rare opportunities for friendship and service. Most folks enjoy living; and if there are days clouded by misfortune, there are also weeks and years of sunshine and fulfillment. We are so likely to forget the good and to remember only the difficult moments. If we really love to grow, we shall find living rich with opportunity. If, however, we resent the gentle pressures of Nature and develop stubborn streaks, we cannot blame the universe for our predicament. If we keep faith with our convictions, we will be rewarded both inwardly and outwardly, and by degrees will gain insight into the wonderful workings of natural law.

We should all learn to appreciate the intrinsic beauty and integrity of creative processes. The means by which growth is accomplished are as beautiful in their own right as the ends which they achieve. Recently, through the use of the slow-motion camera, it has been possible to capture on film the actual blossoming of a flower. Thus, in a few moments, the dynamic of unfolding life is revealed. We are reminded of constant living motions that normally are too gradual for us to notice. The expanding of the bud to the flower involves the intricate mysteries of generation and evolution. The growth of a culture, the maturing of humanity itself, and the evolution of our expanding universe are not merely transition periods to be endured.

If we keep our minds fixed entirely upon some distant horizon, we may not notice the pleasant road along which we travel. If we develop this habit of measuring everything in terms of remote futurity, we cultivate only dissatisfaction and impatience. We have no proof that this is an imperfect creation. What we call proof is only our inter-

pretation, conditioned by ambitions or aspirations. It is good to aspire, but not to the degree that we fail to observe the glory of God and of the Law in the simple works of Nature. Inner realization corrects impatience and reveals the dignity, even the sublimity, of each moment in the eternal unfolding of life through living.

QUESTION: *Is it selfish to want to be happy?*

ANSWER: It would seem to me that much depends upon the definition of happiness. If we mean personal comfort and satisfaction at the expense of other persons, or by a code of conduct basically unjust or unreasonable, then the answer would be in the negative. We have rights and privileges within a common pattern of social relationships. The security of our way of life requires that we protect the inalienable rights of others in their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. It could certainly be interpreted as selfishness to advance our own causes and pleasures at the expense of the common good.

The word *selfishness* carries with it the implication of self-centeredness. It suggests undue consideration for our own preferences, and a lack of equal mindfulness as regards the natural inclinations of our associates. The individual who attempts the ruthless advancement of his own fortune or who ignores the obvious indications that his conduct is inappropriate is penalized by the loss of friendships and the disintegration of his environment. In simple words, we must all pay in one way or another for the things we do. When the time of reckoning comes, we should not overlook our mistakes and blame the world or our neighbors for disasters of our own making.

There is nothing to indicate that divine or natural law requires that we be miserable or that we exist in a condition of perpetual self-sacrifice. Even when impelled by high moral convictions to deprive ourselves of certain rewards and privileges, there is some question as to the utility and ultimate benefit of such a program. Contented persons are of greater utility than those whose inner consciousness is frustrated with unreasonable limitations. To serve others is an opportunity as well as a responsibility. If we do not find happiness through usefulness, there is a character defect in us.

There is much also to be said about the re-education of our pattern of likes and dislikes. Our right to be happy depends in part upon our code of happiness. The individual who cannot regard himself as comfortable unless he is living beyond his means and demanding more of life than is his proper share should moderate his ambitions, and seek for happiness where it is likely to be found. Case histories reveal that



the fulfillment of extravagant desires seldom results in security or well-being. Freedom does not bestow the right to be unreasonable. Perhaps we can continue inordinate aspirations for a time, but we cannot succeed indefinitely in a cause for which Nature has decreed failure.

The happiest people in this world are not the ones who have demanded happiness for themselves, but rather have sought wisely and lovingly to increase the happiness of others. Scarcely a day goes by that we do not listen to grievances. By the time the storm comes to us, the situation is critical, and those involved are at their wits' end. A cloud of injustice obscures the light of common sense. Nerves are tense, perspectives seriously impaired, resentments are exaggerated, and the atmosphere is laden with self-pity. Usually the facts are simple, but are no longer of interest to those who must face them.

One point comes to mind that should be stressed. The natural inclination toward a comfortable state of existence causes many persons to evade unpleasant but necessary decisions. The parent dislikes to correct the child, because it places father or mother in an uncomfortable situation. It becomes an issue as to whether we must accept the tantrum and enforce discipline, or to avoid the scene and contribute to the future delinquency of the child. Too often the present happiness of all concerned takes precedence over solid and enduring principles.

In a case of this kind, the victim of a long career of compromises exclaimed mournfully: "I just never wanted to hurt anyone." This sounded like remarkable altruism and nobility of spirit, but the "anyone" was actually the sufferer himself. He was afraid of discord, antagonism, and the proverbial unpleasant situations. Had this not been true, he would have realized that by adherence to his policy he was hurting everyone. This is an instance of placing personal happiness before the protection of integrity. It does not follow that allegiance to an attitude of perpetual criticism would be an improvement. We are not required to dominate the careers of all with whom we come in contact. When, however, decisions are necessary to maintain a proper standard of values, they should be made after due and proper thoughtfulness.

The modern tendency toward eternal compromise on every level of moral and ethical behavior is contributing to the insecurity of our time. It may be that we do not wish to offend some elderly relative whose properties we hope to inherit. Even in a case of this kind, however, some strength of resolution should be exhibited. It is quite likely that a successful man disposing of his worldly goods will hesitate to entrust them to an heir who lacks the courage of his convictions. There

is little to be gained and much to be lost by failure to protect the natural dignities proper to the human state.

If we desire to attain proficiency in an art or science, we become informed about its rules and procedures, and do not resent the time or effort required to master its techniques. It takes rather more industry to cultivate the art of happiness. In most instances it is a by-product. The desperate effort to be happy seldom succeeds. More often, the development of a positive, constructive life dedicated to useful and creative endeavors brings with it the experience of happiness. For one thing, it is essential to escape from self-centeredness. The more we think about ourselves, the more inclined we are to sympathize with our own misfortunes. Most unhappy people have not learned to make proper use of time and opportunity. The average man is not yet wise enough or strong enough to do nothing successfully.

The traditional age of doldrums is closely associated with those past middle life. The accidents of living have often deprived the elderly of their active interests. Perhaps prudent investments or inheritances have given them economic security. Either they no longer need to work or are unable to maintain their business interests. Leisure invites enrichment of character through the development of internal resources. This is only an invitation, however, and too often the invitation is declined. The drift toward a solitary state when violently resisted leads toward melancholy reflection. The pursuit of happiness intensified by a kind of despair impairs judgment and destroys the more pleasant aspects of the personality. The victim demands happiness from those he has previously served, in this way further alienating natural regard.

Thus we learn that a principle of happiness is adjustment. When we are able to adapt ourselves easily and simply to the changes which time must bring, there are fewer resentments and less self-pity. When we cling to the past, we invite a nostalgic mood which can become habit-forming and is always detrimental. To be contemporary means to enjoy facts and certainties and to recognize in new situations the opportunity for new comfort and security. Age is not so much a matter of years as it is the loss of the psychic vitality which bestows zest for living. People say they are old and tired. Actually, they are excusing a state of boredom resulting from the loss of familiar interests. Weariness is often a psychic evasion, an excuse for failure to be constructively occupied. Few persons are so tired that they cannot do those things which they find enjoyable.

For the unhappy, then, we recommend self-analysis. An honest examination of our debits and credits will generally show that we are



the causes of most of our misfortunes. To change the pattern, we must correct our own faults. It is not always possible to change the past, but we can escape from its tyranny by a positive statement of present and future intent. We can stop once and for all bemoaning the indifference of our children, the unsympathetic attitudes of our friends, and the sad, cruel state of our world. We can realize clearly that in situations exactly like our own others have found happiness or preserved their native optimism. Some appear to be born with an unusual capacity to be happy, contented, and serene. This is like saying Paderewski was born to be a pianist. Certainly he had talent, but his potential gifts were strengthened and perfected by a lifetime of industrious application to the demanding requirements of his music. If some are born optimistic, others achieve optimism, and still others have it thrust upon them during the course of life. For each of us real happiness must be a personal attainment. We cannot ignore the proven patterns of human conduct and expect to arrive at a satisfactory end. Happiness is more than a spiritual grace. It is a vital contribution to health and success. The useful person is the one most likely to be contented.

If we believe that it is a spiritual and moral duty to contribute to the improvement of our families and friends, it is just as true that we should contribute to our own improvement. Man is an immortal being who must face his own future and must build today the character which must serve him tomorrow. To become better persons ourselves serves the identical end in terms of social progress that is attained by the improvements which we may bring to another.

Philosophically speaking, we are as responsible for our own place in the eternal plan as we are for the places of those others whom we seek to assist. To adorn another man's house with virtues is good, but there is no reason why we should ignore the beautification of our own sanctuary. While we can still learn, we can still grow. While we can grow and unfold and enrich our inner living, we can perform such natural and direct actions as are likely to contribute to happiness. It is selfish to seek only contentment on the physical plane of gratification. Too often we must gain at the loss for those around us. In attempting to please us because we require and demand such efforts, our friends must neglect many pressing problems. Selfishness of this kind is contrary to the rules of human behavior, and happiness so-attained is not valid. When we grow, however, through the enlargement and enrichment of character, we gain with no loss to another. We store up treasures in the heart and soul, and we find that gratitude for the blessings of a rich and fruitful experience is a lasting source of happiness and security.

## Plato's Doctrine of Reincarnation

BY HENRY L. DRAKE

IT is impossible to understand the real meaning of Plato's philosophy without a knowledge of his doctrine of reincarnation. How strange, then, that this aspect of his thought is seldom discussed. Western thinkers of the present era seem not to realize that reincarnation is an important key to Plato's thought. Beyond this, the doctrine is essential to any adequate comprehension of man's psychological integration.

That Plato's reincarnation theory should not have received more attention in recent years is even more perplexing when it is considered that he makes reference to it many times. One important reference to a principle has often been enough to establish it as a significant part of a philosophic system. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that thoughts on reincarnation appear at the most vital points of Plato's dialogues, they continue to be disregarded. One of the important places where the doctrine is discussed is evidenced by the following quotation. "I am confident that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead, and that the souls of the dead are in existence, and that the good souls have a better portion than the evil." It is because this theory has not had its due that this article was written.

That this reincarnation theory should have been overlooked—perhaps as the result of misunderstanding—is a loss to psychology, to religion, to philosophy, and, hence, to culture generally. It is a serious matter not to understand Plato, because his philosophy, with the possible exception of Aristotle's creative work, is the most profound philosophic contribution of the Western world. It leads directly to a solution of man's most vital questions, specifically answering: Where did man come from? Why is he here? Where is he going? These questions every man must answer for himself. To this end, Plato's reincarnation theory, properly understood, is a direct aid, presenting adequate answers and a way of life.

The recent dilettantism of failing to understand reincarnation is not supported by the cultural tradition mankind has inherited. During the last several thousand years many great teachers and hundreds of millions of people have adhered to the doctrine. In fact, it is highly probable that a larger number of individuals believe in this doctrine, and have received solace therefrom, than any other philosophic doctrine.



Many religions, including Christianity, make reference to it. More recently, the German philosopher Schopenhauer said: "The belief in metempsychosis presents itself as the natural conviction of man whenever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner."

Plato's doctrine of reincarnation is important because it establishes a just universe and eliminates both the concept and fear of death. Thus, it is metaphysical. It maintains that man knows relative things, because the soul once knew absolute Ideas. Thus, it is epistemological. In relating man's mind with universal intelligence, it associates his soul with the eternal, establishing his immortality. Thus, it is ontological. It deals with man as a creature who is integrating his potentials. Thus, it is psychological. It maintains that man's growth is accelerated by good acts. Thus, it is ethical. It is self-consistent in relation to itself, to man's life, and to Plato's entire thought. Thus, it is logical. It is beautiful in the results it produces. Thus, it is aesthetic. Hence, who follows the dictates of rebirth's law will become noble and wise, in time ascending to the heights of philosophic accomplishment. This, man must do, for any other direction results in pain. The law of perfection is not to be violated. Man's soul will continue to evolve until, with the aid of insight, all lessons to be gleaned from earthly experience are mastered. Plato knew this and taught it in terms of the soul's unfoldment by means of natural law of which rebirth is an essential part.

The over-all import of Plato's doctrine shows that man's life should be dedicated to continual growth. To be aware of how this might be brought about is the chief reason for understanding all that rebirth implies. Man must see the Ideas of the upper world time and time again and learn their relation to growth before he can live the life of self-improvement. This ascent to true knowledge is especially portrayed in the dialogues, *Timeaus*, *Meno*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, *Republic*, and *Laws*.

In the dialogue *Timeaus*, Plato tells of the origin and early unfoldment of humanity. Man came into being as a result of the activity, not of God alone, but of God and the gods. It was God's part to supply the soul and that of the gods to supply the body. Man, therefore, was not a perfect being in the beginning, since not even the gods are perfect. The state of perfection belongs to God alone. Because of this, it was necessary for mankind, with the aid of the gods, in whose care man was placed, to work out his own destiny. By creating all souls at the same time and at the same level, God made the beginning equal for all. Then the harm that was to befall them would not be his, but the result of their own errors.



—From a painting by Raphael

#### THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS

Plato and Aristotle stand beneath the central arch, surrounded by the great sages and scholars of the classical world. The first standing figure from the left in the foreground is a self-portrait of Raphael.

In the beginning, the psychology of primeval humanity was in a sad state. In Plato's account, the first human beings were not found in any garden of Eden. Rather, the human souls were moving about in an almost unconscious condition. Yet, their evolution had commenced. And, while they were not then able to balance the powerful forces which flowed through them, they were to learn through trial and error. Thus man gradually came to have a better control of his psychology. This process continues even today, and will continue until every soul has brought forth all that is potential in its nature.

In Plato's philosophy this accomplishment is the result of numerous reincarnations which first lead to consciousness, then to self-consciousness and further unfoldment. In regard to this process, which obviously requires a great span of time, it is good to know that he maintains the soul to be immortal. He says: "The soul, which cannot be destroyed by evil, whether inherent or external, exists forever, and is immortal. That is the conclusion, and, if a true conclusion, then the number of souls must always be the same, for if none be destroyed, they will not be diminished in number." Nor will human souls increase in number, because all were created at the same time by one



action of God and the gods. What passes for the beginning of human life in birth is the return of an eternal soul from heaven, as it acquires a new body.

In the *Meno*, Plato records that the soul, having been born many times, has seen all things, both in this world and in the other, and at one time possessed all knowledge. Hence, it is now in a position to recollect that knowledge. There is, he thinks, no wonder in its ability to remember what it has known about virtue and all other things. Every part of Nature is akin, and it is possible for the soul, since it knows all things, to elicit, by means of recollection, that which it knows. But to do this, it must be strenuous and not faint.

Having worked diligently to improve, by doing good while in this life, the soul, upon death, passes to its judgment. There, in the other world, where the judges are always fair and never deceived, it receives its just reward. When all past obligations—both those contracted here and in the other world—are paid in accordance with the law, then “In the ninth year Persephone sends the soul of those from whom she has received the penalty of ancient crime back again from beneath into the light of the sun above, and these are they who become noble kings and mighty men and great in wisdom and are called saintly heroes in after ages.”

How is it that some are able to pay their debts, becoming wise and noble kings of their countries and of themselves? This psychological integration of soul is, for Plato, not by chance. The way to attainment is well-marked, not only by him, but also by those who have already accomplished this final goal of mankind. These men, psychologically speaking, have become whole. Their intellects are brilliant, inclusive, and know truth. Their emotions are manifested as a love, not of the sensuous, but of the beautiful. Their lives are dedicated to bringing mankind nearer to the Idea of the Good. With their senses they know the various phases of the physical world. Their powers of intuition make it possible for them to arrive at correct conclusions concerning difficult problems. Their human potentials so developed, such men are capable of directing others to the ultimate aims of reincarnation. Thus they live justly and happily while on earth, and in the other world are among the blessed. This is the doctrine of evolution learned by those who attended Plato's Academy. “There is a law of Destiny, that the soul which attains any vision of truth in company with a god [one whose faculties are highly developed] is preserved from harm until the next period, and if attaining always is always unharmed.”

When does the soul acquire that wisdom which leads to the unfoldment of its faculties? In the *Phaedrus* and *Symposium* special at-

ention is given this question. Man's soul is now observed as it endeavors to move toward truth. This struggle is set forth in an allegory. A charioteer is presented directing his chariot, which is pulled by two powerful steeds—one white, the other black. The charioteer represents the human mind; the chariot, man's body; the white steed, his power for good; the black steed, his power for evil. All are parts of man's psychological nature. The horses at first pull against one another and cause the charioteer great difficulty. But as the centuries pass and many incarnations bring understanding, opposite qualities, represented by the steeds, are harmonized. Evolution gradually unfolds the divine principles residing within the soul. Thus the charioteer is now able to direct his chariot with greater ease, and to comprehend ever more clearly the nature of Truth.

The levels of comprehension are thus delineated: “The soul which has seen most of truth shall come finally to birth as a philosopher, or artist, or some musical and loving nature; that which has seen truth in the second degree, shall be some righteous king or warrior chief; the soul which is of the third class shall be a politician, or economist, or trader . . .” This descent of souls continues to the lowest degree of existence which is that of the tyrannical nature. All of these conditions are levels of consciousness, and the higher of them is the reward of the righteous, while the lowest is the retribution of the unrighteous.

Plato firmly believed reincarnation to be the means by which the wicked become better and the good may make further progress. The average time required for integration is said to be ten thousand years. For the philosopher, or lover of beauty, however, this period may be reduced to one third the time. And, conversely, when the soul is not sufficiently conscious to perceive Truth, failing in its efforts toward the Good, then it must drop to earth again and again, each incarnation requiring a thousand years for its completion. Such a soul must remain under the cycle of necessity until sufficiently matured. Then only is it able to avoid pain, the result of ignorance, and enjoy happiness, the result of intelligent action.

The movement from not-knowing to knowledge is, as Plato instructs, a motion from a comprehension of particulars to a possession of generals. In regard to beauty, for instance, the soul which proceeds correctly will commence by loving beauty in particular instances. It first knows the beauty of objects, then the beauty of institutions and their functions. Then, by relating such ideas of beauty, the soul comes finally to know the universal Idea of Beauty. This process applies to all other Ideas. But there are many souls in human bodies who do



not have the power to see universals. Even these, however, gradually come to see that the beauty of one form is related to the beauty of another. Finally, beauty in general becomes the pursuit, and all beauty is realized to be from one and the same source.

Only then will the violent love of individual forms cease. Beauty of mind will then be honored above beauty of body, and so, the comely soul learns to love the beautiful. He who has been thus properly instructed will end by seeing, while on earth, that which he knew while still in the world above. This beauty is permanent and everlasting, not forever vacillating; not fair in one respect and foul in another. It is simple and supreme. This Idea of Beauty imparts beauty to all other things. Thus wise souls use beautiful objects and institutions of this earth as stepping stones to the participation in that one Beauty which is the sustenance of all beautiful things. From fair objects such souls acquire fair notions, and from fair notions create just, temperate, good actions.

He who, rising up, partakes of the reality of Plato's message has made tremendous strides in growth. This life belongs to man and is beyond any other earthly value. Beholding eternal realities, the soul now brings forth not images, but realities, becoming the friend of God, and is immortal insofar as man may be. This is the life proposed by Plato for all men.

For those who have begun the ascent toward universals and divine attainments, each return to earth is accompanied by greater consciousness, so long as they stay with the path. Great are the blessings which befall the friends of true values. But those of opposite temperament, vulgar and niggardly, have only earthly ways. Their motives can only breed meanness in their souls. The reward for the negative tendencies of these souls is to roam haplessly on and above the earth. Unless they change, then, even after thousands of years, they are as uninformed as before. Being without an insight of higher values, they are incapable of establishing a positive consciousness.

Plato, the greatest Western thinker, had no doubt concerning the importance and necessity of reincarnation, as becomes even more obvious from the profound statement appearing in his best known work, *The Republic*. Here is a story about the journey of souls to the higher world and back again to earth by way of rebirth. A hero, Er by name, was chosen as a messenger to visit the heaven world. He had been wounded in war, and for ten days lay on the battlefield, supposedly dead. Finally he was taken home for burial, but when the body was placed on the funeral pyre, his soul returned to it. During the time when he was apparently dead, his soul had visited the heaven world.

Here is the report that Plato has Er, the messenger of the gods, give to man.

In the higher world some souls were happy, and some unhappy, because of what they had been in former lives. For the good and holy there were compensatory rewards; but every evil sinful souls had committed caused them to suffer. The rewards and sufferings of souls were in direct proportion to the good or the evil they had done.

When the soul had been in the higher world for the proper time, a prophet spoke to them saying that they must hearken to necessity, for it was requisite that they again return to earth. "Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of mortal life." When the time arrived for the souls to descend into their new lives, each soul chose the type of life it would live. Within certain limits, each soul was given the privilege of choosing the life it would live. But its character was not fixed. This was the very purpose of the coming life. Er said that no soul, if it chose wisely and if it should live with diligence, need have reason for despair. When all had chosen, the decision which each had made became set and irreversible. The souls then drank the water of unmindfulness and forgot their past. Woe to him who drank too heavily of this liquid, for he would not be able to remember, while on earth, those glories and divine Ideas of the higher world. The souls being ready to begin their new lives on earth, there followed a thunderstorm and an earthquake. In an instant the souls were driven in all manner of ways, and descending, moved with the rapidity of shooting stars to their new incarnations and the destinies which their past lives had wrought.

In his *Laws* Plato reveals why reincarnation is necessary. The ruler of this universe has ordered it with a view to perfection. His first aim being the glorification of the whole, his second, the unfoldment of each part. We must know, too, that directing even the smallest fraction of the universe there is a presiding power. Every man constitutes one of these portions, a small fraction of the whole, but one that is, nevertheless, meaningfully related to the whole. This is a necessity if the universe is to be blessed, for ultimately no part is to be unredeemed. Be not annoyed if you do not see that whatever happens is truly best for you, and for the universe. The responsibility is yours, "As soul combining first with one body and then with another undergoes all sorts of changes, either of herself, or through the influence of another soul, all that remains to the player of the game is that he should shift the pieces." Plato firmly believed that it is the responsibility of every man to so shift the pieces as to develop the best in himself, bringing it from potentiality to actuality.





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## Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

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### Haste! Haste! and be Faithful

The three great barriers to the cultural progress of ancient man were lack of common language, insufficiency of transportation, and inadequacy of communication. Even today, several larger countries are burdened with dialects which prohibit the free distribution of necessary and useful information. Progress depends upon sharing, experience, and observation. This can be observed in the rise of metropolitan communities along caravan routes and roads of merchandising. Good roads may be likened to the arterial circulation of the human body. Not only do they contribute to the economy of barter and exchange, but they also enable the stranger to share in the life-ways of distant peoples. Empires always expanded by road-building programs, and it became a responsibility of the State to preserve the highways and protect the travelers.

Communications developed rapidly after the invention of writing. There are records of the use of couriers in the Bible and in other sacred writings. War contributed to the conveying of messages rapidly and efficiently. At first, news was brought by runners, who functioned in relays when the distances demanded. Later, horses were used, and stations built along the principal roads where the couriers could secure fresh mounts. During the Dark Ages when illiteracy was general, the couriers were used mostly on State business or by powerful families. At an early date the Chinese and Hindus found carrier pigeons an efficient means of carrying messages. The African tribes to this day

depend upon their drum signals, and the American Indian developed his smoke signals to a high degree of practicality.

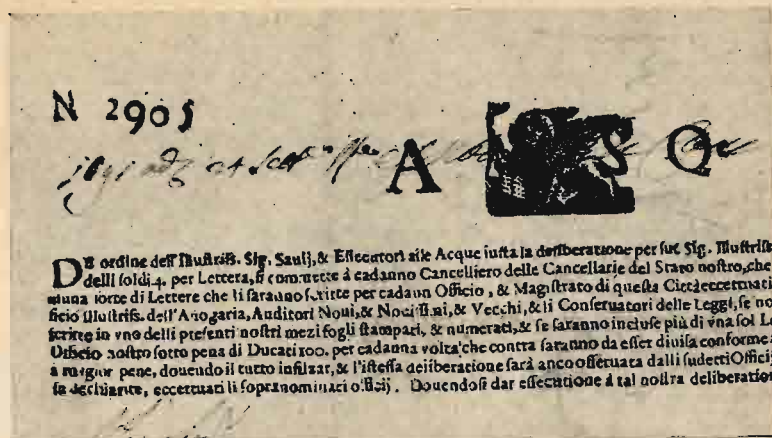
In early days, the dispatch-riders faced many hazards. Storms and natural disasters complicated their duties, and the ways they traveled were infested with brigands and sometimes savage tribes. It was only natural, therefore, that they should seek divine aid and place themselves under the protection of certain divinities. As further precautions, they wore charms and amulets and sometimes adorned themselves in fantastic garb. The dispatches were also appropriately inscribed with magical figures, prayers, and verses of Scripture. The last use of ceremonial magic for the protection of the posts was in India, where the mystical "sign of the four" occurred as late as 1852. The Tibetans and Mongolians still protect themselves from road demons with prayer flags, prayer wheels, and similar devices.

By the time of the Renaissance the carrying of private mail increased sufficiently to suggest the formation of a postal system. In the beginning this was merely an extension of the program of dispatch-riders maintained by the princely houses and the Roman Church. Gradually, these systems of couriers passed into private hands, and a vast monopoly came into existence. No funds were available from the comparatively-small States and free cities where the service functioned. For a time little consideration was given to the calibre of the dispatch-messengers. They were chosen for physical strength and endurance, and some could scarcely read the addresses on the messages they carried. They were a poorly organized and untrustworthy group, yet in their keeping was intrusted one of the heaviest responsibilities of their day.

It then became fashionable to inscribe letters with words and symbols calculated to intimidate dishonest couriers. Also there was need for a constant reminder that, regardless of all else, the messages must be quickly delivered. The dukes of the Medici and other noble houses marked their dispatches with such phrases as: "Haste! Haste! and be faithful," or "Deliver safely at all cost." Then, as a further fragment of moral counsel, a hangman's noose or a gallow's tree was drawn upon the letter. Heavy penalties were exacted for dishonesty with the mails, and those inclined to pilfer became thoughtful at the sight of a crudely drawn gibbet or a skull and crossbones. If delinquency was heavily punished, there is little to indicate that virtue was rewarded. This was a day of fear, and men had little time to contemplate or recognize the abilities or devotions of their public servants.

In the course of time, the postal system of Europe passed to the control of the princes of Thurn and Taxis. This family is believed to have risen to its powerful station as a result of its monopoly over the





#### RARE VENITIAN "A. Q." LETTER SHEET

This detail from the complete sheet shows the Lion of St. Mark and the letters A. Q. believed to stand for *aquatine post*. Dated 1695, this is a forerunner of postal paper. These sheets were purchased, and the price paid included the transportation of the letter to its destination. The rules governing the use of these letter sheets appear beneath the heading.

postal system of the Italian States. It was not until a comparatively late date that the loose ends of the postal system came under national control. As late as 1840, local posts of a private character were maintained in the United States.

Old maps show the routes which connected the postal service of Europe from the 12th to the 17th centuries. They tell an important and interesting story. Wherever the service reached, there was more rapid development of arts and cultures and the expansion of trades and industries. By degrees the thin threads of the post roads were woven into a fabric, and this contributed much to the final integration of Europe. Men first create for their convenience, but later their ingenuity is directed toward ends not originally contemplated. Today radio and television are new forms of communication. Like the postal system, they have become principally instruments for the advance of economic and industrial projects. Yet, they also are creating a network of roads in the air, and their cultural possibilities are incalculable. The time will undoubtedly come when education, religion, philosophy, and science will find the airways of sound indispensable to the furtherance of human knowledge.

There was a school in Venice to teach the mail couriers the solemn responsibility of their profession. In their hands was the life and des-

tiny of individuals and nations. They must haste, and be faithful in fulfillment of their duties. Those serving radio and television should also realize the ethical obligation that goes with communication. They must be faithful, and make sure that the world is better and wiser because of their contribution to progress. Communication is the proper way to share with others the experiences and reflections of living. In this way, distances are bridged and the wisdom of all is made available to the needs of each.

#### By Way of Introduction

Erasmus is said to have visited England for the purpose of meeting Sir Thomas More, the author of *The Utopia*. The Lord Mayor of London so contrived the meeting that the two men found themselves at dinner without an introduction. Without a knowledge of each other's identity, they immediately involved themselves in an argument. Suddenly Erasmus said: "You are More, for you can be no one else." Where upon Sir Thomas answered: "If you are not Erasmus, you can only be the devil."

#### The Burning Question

A certain lady asked Dr. Samuel Johnson if he would pass judgment upon a work she had just written. She added that she had other irons in the fire, and if literature was not to be her career she would turn to something else. After examining the manuscript for a few moments, Johnson said seriously: "I advise you, madam, to put this manuscript where your other irons are."

#### Backgrounds of the Great

Hans Sachs, one of the most famous of the Meistersingers, was the son of a tailor, served an apprenticeship as a shoemaker, and later became a weaver.

Linnaeus, the founder of the science of botany, was apprenticed to a shoemaker in Sweden.

Epictetus, the celebrated Stoic philosopher, was born a slave.

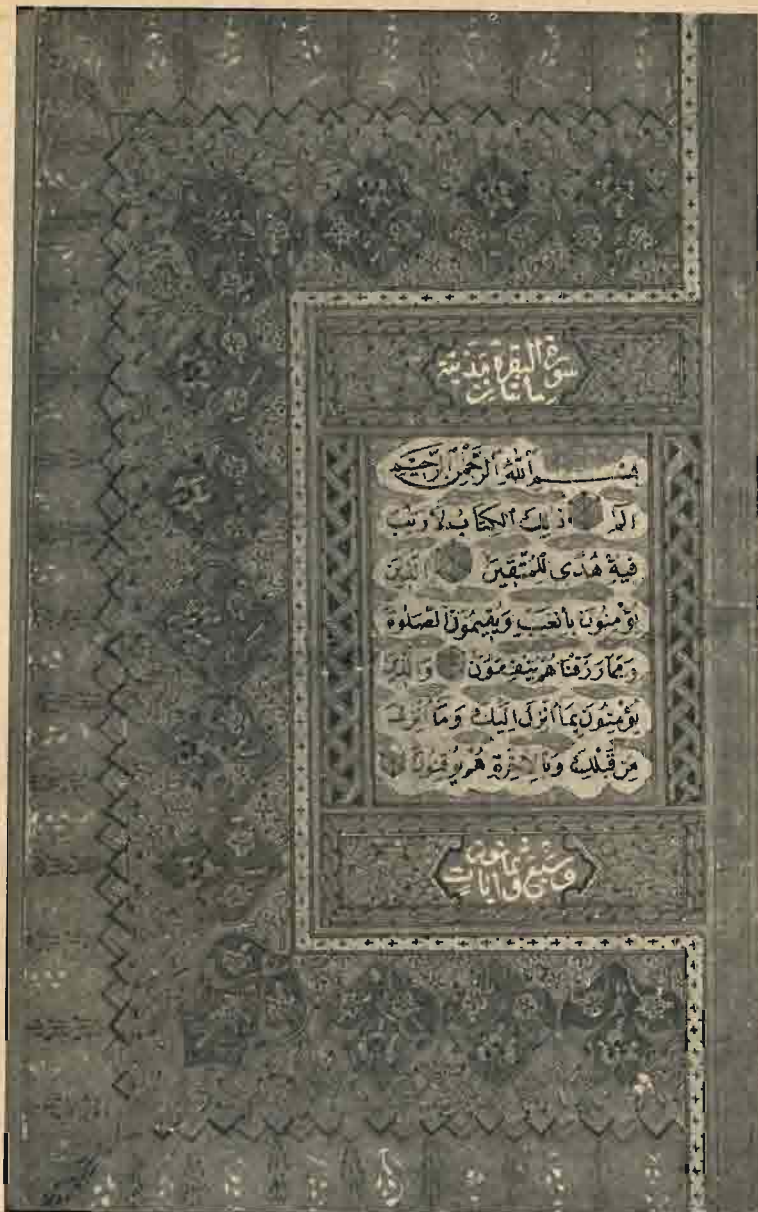
The father of Haydn, the great composer, was a wheelwright.

The father of Virgil was a brickmaker.

Bunyon, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, was the son of a traveling tinker.

Voltaire was the son of a tax collector.





—From the Library of The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

ILLUMINATED LEAF FROM AN  
18TH CENTURY KORAN



## The Story of the Koran

THE prevailing attitude of the non-Moslem world toward the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed is clearly revealed by the comparison of two definitions that appear in the 1953 edition of *Webster's Dictionary*. Consider the following: New Testament: *the covenant of God with man embodied with the coming of Christ, and the teaching of Christ and his followers as set forth in the Bible*; ... Koran: *the scriptures of the Mohammedans, containing the professed revelations to Mohammed*.

It is evident that the use of the word *professed* in reference to the Koran is intended to imply grave doubt as to the spiritual validity of the book, and therefore of the religion founded thereon. Yet, today, the faith of Islam is practiced by approximately 255,000,000 human beings and influences strongly the lives and policies of another 100,000,000. These figures may be regarded as conservative. Although Moslems are more or less divided politically and their religion lacks the strong structural integration of Christianity, a definite Pan-Islamic motion is noticeable. This is designed to meet the challenge of contemporary conditions, especially the threat of Communism. It is interesting that the new head of the Egyptian government recently made a pilgrimage to Mecca, performed the 7 circumambulations of the Kaaba, and reverently kissed the Black Stone of Abraham. He also fulfilled other rites required or recommended by his faith. This direct commitment of himself in the Islamic world is being weighed by international observers on both the religious and political levels.

The word *Koran* (Arabic, *Qur'an*) literally means *recitation*, and indicates the method by which the *suras*, or sections of the book, were revealed to the Prophet. Islam is translated *submission*, and the re-



ligion, therefore, proclaims itself as a faith of submission to the will of God. With a few clearly marked exceptions, the Koran is written in the first person, and the speaker is God. The book deals with a variety of subjects, including theology, ethics, and jurisprudence. Idolatry and the deification of human beings are strictly condemned. Such religious observances as fasting and pilgrimage are established and defined. The Moslem legal code is founded upon the authority of the Koran, and this brings the religion into direct contact with the private citizen and the concerns of his daily living.

The conflict between Christianity and Moslemism is the direct or indirect result of several factors present in both religions. The Mohammedan is considered fanatical because he insists that he follows the true faith revealed by God. He is unwilling and morally unable to compromise this position, because to do so would endanger his mortal soul and destroy his hope for blessedness in the future life. Actually, there is nothing remarkable in this attitude, which is shared by the members of most religious groups. The Arabs, and somewhat later other Near Eastern and Far Eastern peoples, were many of them highly emotional and given to military pursuits. It is inevitable that an aggressive following should not only encourage aggressive leadership, but should also affect the structure of the faith and the methods used in its promulgation.

The Koran itself implies that it was revealed, at least in part, to correct the excesses and abuses which had arisen in the early Christian Church, and this in no way endeared it to the medieval theologians of Europe. Perhaps the larger offense of Mohammed was his audacity in founding a religion *after* Christianity had proclaimed itself the Universal Church. Proximity also played a part. Other pagan religions were far removed in time or place. Islam flourished on the borders of Christendom, and for centuries threatened the very survival of the Near Eastern Christian communities. It actually occupied and controlled the very territories sacred to the Christians and the orthodox Jews. After the Crusades, the Holy Land, with its shrines and sacred places, passed gradually into the control of the Moslem world, and this certainly intensified Western antagonisms.

Due to the general lack of communications, Europe was unable to cope with the motions in the religious and cultural spheres that were developing in the Near East. It never occurred to the Churchmen of that day that their spiritual and temporal authority could ever be questioned. As part of their personal faith, they accepted the inevitable Christianizing of the entire earth. As this broad program of evangelism was according to the divine will, Moslemism could only be the

work of the devil attempting to discomfit the righteous. A further and costly disillusionment came when the Saracens proved that they were more than a match for the armies of Christendom, and that even the holy relics carried by the Crusaders were of no avail. The victories of the Moors in Spain and the spread of Islam along the coast of North Africa brought the problem directly to the door of southern Europe. When Islamic culture began to affect European education, its liberalizing influence also caused grave concern among conservatives. As the result of these pressures, there was little time or inclination to analyze the possible contributions of Islam to world civilization.

Even before the end of the medieval period, Christian scholars found it useful and practical to attend Moslem schools and to fraternize with the growing body of Eastern instructors. This tendency was especially pronounced among those mental liberals to whom Europe is indebted for much essential progress. Paracelsus, for example, found the scientists of Constantinople far better-informed than the professors at Basel and Zurich. In the Rosicrucian allegory, the mysterious founder of the society traveled to Damascus and North Africa, and was there inspired to lead a religious-educational reform in Germany. Altogether, a very complex pattern gradually developed which undermined not only the power, but the validity of the European system.

Earlier, even centuries before the birth of Mohammed, Arabia had become a refuge for oppressed and persecuted philosophers, mystics, poets, and sectaries. Even heretical Christian groups took refuge in the tolerant atmosphere of Bagdad, and, as a result there was a rapid growth in several fields of science and art. There can be no doubt that these overtones contributed to the rise of Islam and made possible much of the glory of the Saracenic and Othman Empires. Thus, it happened that the problems Europe believed to have solved at an earlier date returned with added momentum after the rise of the Caliphate.

The Koran itself is not dissimilar in structure to other sacred books, but, as always, there were differences which became highly important as the religion grew and spread. It is now believed that all the sections of the Koran were actually dictated by the Prophet during his own lifetime. The arrangement of the *suras*, however, is in some instances arbitrary, and resulted from learned counsels by leaders of the faith. We may say, therefore, that the book was compiled over a period of years preceding the Prophet's death in A. D. 632, or A. H. 11, to use the Moslem method of recording. It is usual for a strong religious motion to result from a serious crisis in the affairs of a nation





MINIATURE FROM A PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT DESCRIBING  
MOHAMMED'S ASCENT TO HEAVEN

The central figure evidently represents the Prophet riding on a cloud of flame with a palm-leaf-shaped nimbus behind his head. As is usual the face is veiled showing only the tip of his beard. The manuscript is dated 1636.

or race. In this case, what may be termed Arabian paganism, sometimes gathered under the general term *Sabaism*, showed indications of decline. The people of Arabia were gradually falling under the influence of Byzantine Christianity, Judaism, Persian doctrines, and beliefs originating in Abyssinia. Obviously, a small group—the then-Arab world—was unable to absorb, reconcile, or interpret these numerous foreign elements. In the presence of too much religion, especially discordant beliefs, there is always a tendency to a bewilderment leading to lack of belief. The citizens of Mecca and Medina were suffering from this confusion, and it is possible to imagine the state of these highly imaginative and intensive Arabs.

Mohammed, like most mystics, was evidently born with a seriousness of heart and mind, and could not easily endure the sorry spectacle of religious decadence. He was inwardly offended, and outwardly indignant. His marriage to Khadija, reputedly a wealthy widow, resulted in social prominence and the invitation to leadership. Unlike his fellow citizens, Mohammed was not content to protect his own interest or to advance the fortunes which Fate had bestowed. Daily he became more introspective and internally confused. Many have attempted to psychoanalyze the Prophet from the text of his book. The conclusion seems to be that he was under a pressure of intensities which resulted in his illumination. He gradually resolved to attempt a broad religious reform, and there is no doubt that his primary incentives were well-justified. He could only follow such knowledge or intuition as was available to him, and seems to have leaned heavily upon the Old Testament and its record of the prophets and patriarchs. In his personal emergency, Mohammed followed the old path of prayer and meditation. There is no evidence whatever to support the feeling that he was insincere or self-seeking. The change that gradually came over him was a profound concern for his family and friends, and by degrees he took them into his confidence. He was convinced that he had a responsibility which could not be shifted or denied. With the approval, therefore, of those most intimately concerned, he retired further into his own nature, and practiced his devotions as he felt so impelled.

The life of the mystic is closely associated with dreams and visions. In the cave on the side of Mt. Hira, Mohammed received his first direct mystical experience. The angel Gabriel appeared to him, confirmed him in his mission, and showed him the *suras* of the Koran in luminous letters upon a silken scarf. If we assail this occurrence, we must at the same time in fairness question parallel occasions in all the religions of the world. We cannot safely assume in an arbitrary manner that one such revelation is authentic, and another unauthentic.



Historically, we know that the visions of Mohammed inspired a powerful faith, which still is the basis of the spiritual integrity of many nations. It seems wise, therefore, to accept the record and pass on to the interpretation of the consequences.

The Koran parallels in so many ways the Old and New Testaments that we must assume that Mohammed was not striving for originality. He did not hold himself up as a peculiarly inspired person, and most of the veneration which he received was neither required nor expected. Several times, especially on his last pilgrimage, Mohammed preached to his followers assuring them that he was not a Messiah or one peculiarly favored by God. He was a simple man, who made his own shoes, rejected all ostentation, and required nothing better than that suitable for the humblest of his followers. There is ample proof that the esteem in which he was held was due to his example and the natural dignity and sincerity of his personal life.

The faith of Islam is often referred to as an extreme monotheism. Today the cry of the muezzin is the same as it was 1400 years ago: "Allah is great. There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the Prophet of Allah." There was rigid insistence upon the basic principle of the unity and absolute sovereignty of the divine power. This power reaches into the hearts of men, and those who are possessed by this power become prophets. In so doing, however, they never cease to be men. They can suffer and die the same as other mortals. Their whole strength lies in the God-presence in their own hearts and souls. No amount of virtue or of wisdom or of understanding changes these basic relationships in the Islamic world. Some men may be more virtuous in their conduct than others, but they must still remain submissive to the will of God and be content to serve when and where God sees fit.

This position shows clearly the reform Mohammed was attempting to bring about. He opposed the old faith of his people with its many gods, and Christianity with its Messianic dispensation. At the same time, Mohammed revealed a profound admiration for the life and ministry of Jesus. He in no way blamed the gentle Nazarine for the later dilemmas of the Church. As a mystic, Mohammed felt the wonderful sincerity of Jesus, but he doubted if others, especially the theologians, were inwardly conscious of the faith that Jesus had promulgated. Thus, in the Islamic world Jesus is revered as a great Prophet, but not as an incarnation of Deity. The moral codes and statutes of the Koran are heavily colored by the Mosaic law, and this followed into the priesthood which held to the Jewish persuasion that the priest was essentially a teacher rather than an intermediary between God

and man. In Islam, worship is thrown squarely upon the believer. He is required to grow in grace from within himself. This probably explains why the formal structure of Islam has never been strongly unified.

The mystic sects, which inevitably developed in the Moslem world, sustain their own positions by the direct authority of the life and teachings of the Prophet. The revelation of the Koran occurred under highly mystical conditions, and the purity and humility of the Prophet justified the assumption that he was devoted to an inner kind of experience and guidance. This resulted in the peculiar sphere of influence attained by the Dervishes and other related sects. It is not possible that these groups could have survived without early sanction and support. Here, again, there are traces of Nestorianism and those Christian sects which were forced into the Arabian desert because of their mystical persuasions. Mohammed traveled considerably along the caravan routes in the management of his business, and had the opportunity to meet and know the small communities of recluses and hermit-monks.

In its present form the Koran consists of 114 chapters, each of which has a title and a statement of the place at which it was revealed. Experts are of the opinion that the sections reflect strongly the period in the Prophet's career at which the *suras* were written. There is also a unique factor in that certain verses were abrogated; that is, removed, revoked, and another revelation put in their place. Much has been made of the way in which the *suras* were dictated. Apparently, they were accompanied by unusual physical symptoms. The Prophet seemed to pass into a kind of trance in which he perspired excessively, and it was necessary to wrap him in warm blankets or robes. The words which were spoken were carefully recorded, and Mohammed's suffering was also duly remembered. On one occasion he referred to the agony of revelation when he said that each white hair in his beard was a *sura* of the Koran. There seems little ground, however, for the belief that the Prophet suffered from some nervous ailment. An almost identical record describes the peculiar agony of spirit which possessed the Egyptian reformer, Pharaoh Akhenaten. It is certain that Mohammed's health was affected to the alarm of his associates. He also seems to have had a premonition that his religion would be the cause of his death, and we know that his end was hastened by poisoning.

After the death of the Prophet, it appeared that some parts of his instruction had not been committed to writing. The secretary of the Prophet, Zayd ibn Thabit, was entrusted to assemble all of the sections and verses into one volume. For some time, apparently, only this one

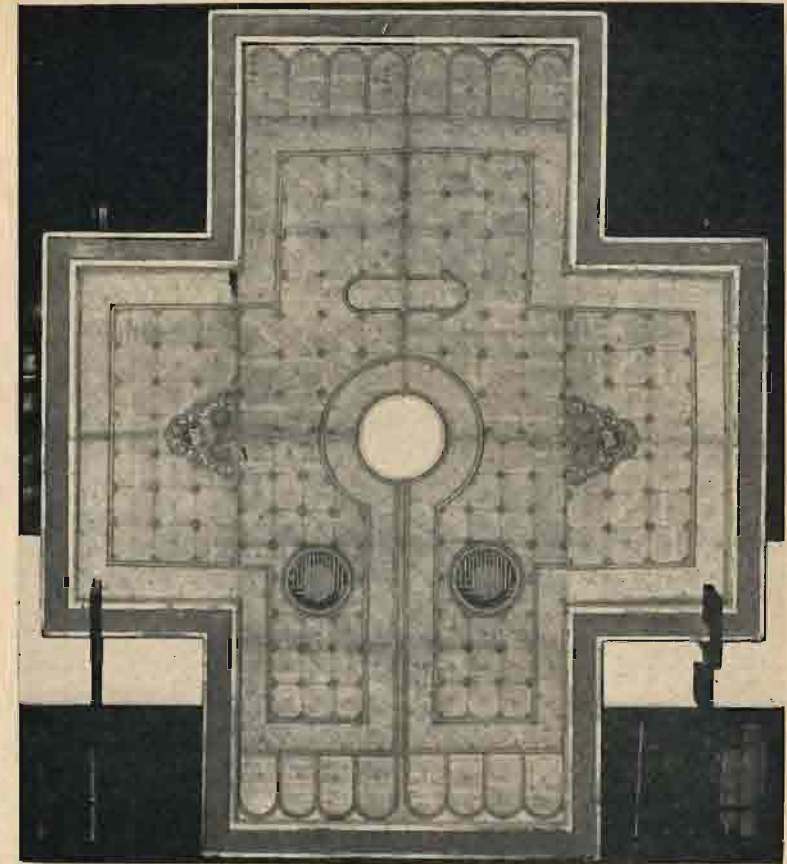


copy of the Koran existed. Later this same Zayd was appointed to revise his previous compilation. This became the standard text, and most of the earlier manuscripts were destroyed. Thus, there can be some doubt on particular aspects of the work, but as these revisions are early they would not have been accepted had they deviated too widely from the popular tradition.

One of the elements which strongly supports the sincerity of Mohammed was the complete lack of a formal plan in his own mind during the early years of his ministry. Even the revelation of the Koran did not immediately lead to any vital results. The Prophet, wrapped in his blankets, spoke like an oracle. It is not certain that he required or intended the words to be written. He spoke only to his most intimate friends, and this small group at his instruction kept the entire program with utmost secrecy. It seems that the listeners were the ones who decided that the utterances should be preserved. This is why some parts were in oral tradition only, until a later date. The context seems to have moved with some continuity from a religious level to one of more immediate utility. There can be no doubt that the new problems that arose influenced the direction of the teaching. Always, however, it was immediate and concerned with the problems of Arabia. There is nothing to indicate that Mohammed expected the doctrine to extend to other nations. Even the time of its duration is only intimated on a philosophic level. He was moved mostly to provide a solution to a conflict raging around him and, to a degree, within him.

In the centuries that followed, the Koran took on many unique qualities. Of all sacred books it has become the most beautiful in terms of artistry. The Arabic writing is extremely decorative, rhythmic, and graceful. There are several different scripts, and the illumined pages of fine manuscript are works of art. The written form lends itself to exquisite internal patterns, and is not like our printed text which is generally restricted. Prayers take the forms of arabesques, and verses of the Koran have been wonderfully inlaid in semiprecious stones and precious metals into the arches of mosques and the doors of shrines. Due to the teaching itself, the Koran may not be illustrated, as it was against the wish of the Prophet that the human form be reproduced in religious art. This admonition led to the disfiguring of ancient art-works in areas which came under Islamic control. Floral motifs were acceptable, however, and it is not unusual to find the words of the Prophet unfolded through elaborate floral devices.

Many scribes devoted their lives to making copies of the Koran. Some are known to have gone blind in their zeal. The older copies



PILGRIM'S CLOAK DECORATED WITH EXTRACTS  
FROM THE KORAN

This elaborate religious vestment is said to contain all the important sections of the Moslem Scripture, and was made in the late 17th or early 18th century.

are simpler than those after the 12th century, and in order to show graphically these transitions, we have selected several pages from different periods, and produced them herewith. Even in its printed form the Koran is a fascinating example of the combination of calligraphy and typography. We have in the Library a pilgrim's cloak decorated with extensive sections of the Koran. Also we have a small roll, usually carried in a kind of amulet, containing selected prayers from the larger work. There is a class of art in which a verse is actually fashioned into a picture. The writing, usually in large bold letters, is against a background of delicate gold design. Surrounding the inscription is a high-

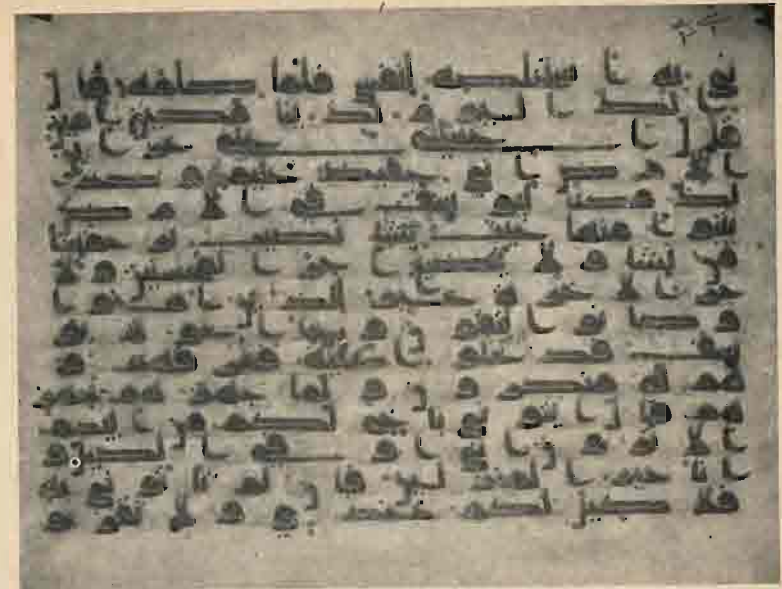


ly-decorative border touched with many colors and sprays of gold, which make the whole composition resemble a burst of light.

It is important at this time to briefly summarize the doctrinal aspects of the Koran. We have already intimated its principal overtone as absolute monotheism. The revelation takes the form of admonition. God is made to speak and to tell the faithful his will for his creatures. The book, therefore, carries the implication of final authority on numerous disputed subjects. Obviously, there is not the possibility of such authority being accepted by other religions. Yet, for the most part, there is little in the Koran that is basically in conflict with the Old Testament or the doctrinal parts of the New Testament. Mohammed revealed to the faithful that in the fullness of time another prophet would come, whose name was to be Ahmed—the Desired of all nations. Those who kept the law and obeyed the revelation which Mohammed had brought would benefit both materially and spiritually. He enjoined his followers to keep the simple virtues of honesty, integrity, and fraternity. Only those who lived constructively would be acceptable in the sight of God. There are some controversial points, and we shall select a few as indicative.

There is considerable interest in the fourth *sura* revealed at Medina. This is partly concerned with the spiritual, moral, and legal rights of women. While in our day the code set forth in the Koran may not appear exactly progressive, it was a distinct improvement over the general perspective of that time. The devotion of Mohammed for Khadija is reflected in the doctrine. The rights of women are clearly set forth, and it is a mistake to assume that popular policies relating to the condition of Eastern women are required or sustained by the Koran. Most of all, the spiritual right of woman is strongly emphasized, and this may be considered in conflict with the general trend of religious writings.

The Koran has been divided into four general institutes. The broad foundations of faith are associated with the earliest periods of revelations. Under the second heading are listed the procedures and forms of worship. Under the third, the ethics, or code of conduct; and under the fourth, the moral burden of the teaching unfolded through legends, myths, fables, parables, and historical incidents. The career of Mohammed as revealed through the writings is also divisible into three epics, which correspond very closely with the growth of Christianity. The first epic reveals Mohammed as unfolding his own belief, and setting in motion the spiritual concept of his religion. In the second epic the faith took on a more aggressive form and moved against the idolatrous system and other sects within the Moslem sphere



THE KORAN

A leaf in Kufic script on vellum, Egypt, 9th century. In this specimen, which was written prior to the addition of diacritical marks and points, a later scribe had added these to simplify the reading of the text.

of influence. In the third epic Mohammed emerged as a ruler over his people, as the Prince of the faithful, with both spiritual and temporal power. His attitude became paternal, and the believers were regarded as his children. As necessary, he made new laws, and revised those which had previously been given. Thus the Koran differs from other religious writings in that it involves the actual biography of a man and all the vicissitudes of the faith he was building. Some have said that the Koran is a sacred commonplace book, combining doctrine and diary. Mohammed did not seem to object to revealing the transitions in his own nature inevitable to the development of his message.

It may be well to quote a few lines from the Koran relating to Christianity. The Prophet writes: "The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, is but the apostle of God and His Word, which He cast into Mary and a spirit from Him; believe then in God and His apostles, and say not 'Three.' Have done! it were better for you. God is only one God, . . ."



By *three*, of course, Mohammed opposed Trinitarianism, and this may be said to be the main charge against him. Another complaint is that he sanctioned an aggressive militant program, but in this he only followed his interpretation of the Old Testament. He was not a warlike man himself, and his biographers question whether he ever carried a sword except as an insignia of rank. If we transpose ourselves to the time in which Mohammed lived, I think we will find that he was a powerful, constructive influence. We may disagree with some of his opinions, but his sincerity and dedication to his cause distinguish him as one of the world's great leaders.

## THE ARHATS OF BUDDHISM

PART II OF *THE ADEPTS*  
IN THE EASTERN ESOTERIC TRADITION

By Manly P. Hall

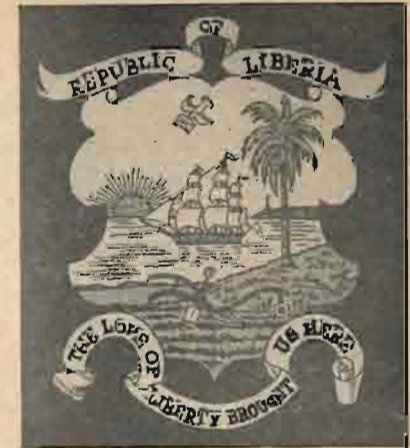
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## "The Love of Liberty"



ON the west coast of Africa between the 4th and 8th degrees of north latitude there is a little country with an area of 43,000 square miles and a coastline of about 350 miles. This is the Negro Republic of Liberia and can be visualized as slightly larger than the state of Ohio. The population of Liberia is approximately 2,000,000, and the capital of the country is Monrovia, named in honor of the American president, James Monroe. The history of this Republic is closely identified with the development of the United States. It all began in 1816, when the American Colonization Society was founded in Washington, D. C. for the purpose of sending to Africa, with their own consent, free people of Negro extraction living in the United States. In 1818 agents were commissioned by the Society to visit the west coast of Africa to determine whether they could obtain through barter with the native tribes a suitable area of land for the settlement of a new colony. Unfortunately, the region was so unhealthful that many, including the agents themselves, died in the region.

It is likely that the entire project would have come to an untimely end had it not been for the courage and insight of Jehudi Ashmun, who is the popular hero of Liberia. Ashmun was an American missionary, born in Champlain, New York, on April 21, 1794, and was educated at the University of Vermont and other places. Although he was not a Negro, he became a powerful champion of the American Colonization Society and became its agent. He arrived at Cape Mesurado (now Monrovia), in 1822, and found the settlement in an almost hopeless situation. Most of the original settlers were dead, and there was much illness among those who had survived. All the other white agents had left, and African natives were organized to destroy the settlement. When Ashmun found it necessary to create a defense force



to protect the colony, he found only 27 persons capable of bearing arms. With these, however, he repulsed an estimated army of 800. Ashmun remained in Liberia for 6 years, and then was forced to leave because of health. In the meantime, however, conditions in the settlement had improved, and there were 1200 inhabitants. Ashmun died, as the result of his service to the settlement, almost immediately upon his return to the United States.

On July 26, 1847 the settlers of Liberia declared themselves a sovereign and independent State. On this occasion Liberia proclaimed its declaration of independence and a Bill of Rights. The national flag consisted of 6 red and 5 white stripes, alternately displayed longitudinally. In the upper, inner angle of the flag was a square, blue ground, similar to that in the flag of the United States. In the center of this blue ground is one large star. In the symbolism of the country, the 11 stripes represent the 11 signers of the declaration of independence. The blue ground represents the continent of Africa, and the single star, the only Negro Republic in Africa. On the first Tuesday of October 1847, the new nation elected its first president, the Honorable Joseph Jenkins Roberts, and he assumed his active duties on the 3rd day of January 1848.

When a new nation comes into existence, it is very important that it be recognized by other nations as belonging to the sovereignties of the world. The first power to recognize Liberia was Great Britain, which welcomed the new nation in 1848, almost immediately upon its foundation. France followed in 1852, the free city of Lubec in 1855, the free city of Hamburg later the same year, Belgium in 1858, Denmark in 1860, and the United States in 1862. It is somewhat unusual that the United States should have waited 14 years, considering the fact that Liberia was founded by American philanthropy. The government of the United States was the pattern used in establishing the legislative, the executive, and the judicial branches of the Liberian administrative system. At the present time William V. S. Tubman is President of Liberia, the Honorable Martin N. Russell, Chief Justice, J. A. H. Jones, President of the Senate, and Benjamin G. Freeman, Speaker of the House.

Of interest to most practical persons is the financing of a country. Liberia has its own currency, and uses in addition American currency, which is legal throughout the country. The principal revenues of the Republic are import and export duties, taxes, and licenses. Rubber is an important source of income. The native population contributes to the maintenance of government through what is called the Hut Tax. There is a development tax of \$1.00 levied on all male and female

citizens of the country between the ages of 16 and 60. The ad valorem rate is 15%. In 1949 the revenues of the government were approximately \$3,700,000, and its expenditures \$3,600,000. Liberia, therefore, is one of a small group of countries that is living within its means. The total foreign indebtedness is less than half a million, and it has the astonishingly small domestic debt of \$5,000. This is the more impressive when we realize the tremendous amount of internal improvement that is being accomplished.

In the sphere of education should be mentioned the government-maintained Liberia College located in Monrovia. It has new buildings, an excellent staff, and a strong and enthusiastic student body. This nucleus is the first step in an already well-organized program for the University of Liberia. Religious organizations maintain grade schools and high schools within the country, among which should be mentioned the Methodist College of West Africa in Monrovia and the Cuttington College created by the Protestant Episcopal Church now functioning in the Central Province. There are high schools scattered through Liberia and elementary schools in every section of the country. Some are maintained by the government, some by Catholic or Protestant missions, and the rest by private individuals. The Booker T. Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute was founded in 1929 to advance the essentials of community life, including agriculture, mechanics, and the Christian way of life. The Institute was built on a 1,000 acres of land donated by the Liberian government. It is well-equipped, and instruction is carried on the 8th grade, the curriculum divided equally between academic and trade instruction. The Liberian schools are geared to the public-school system of the United States. This enables Liberian students to advance their education in the United States if their interests incline them in specialized fields.

A program for the training of teachers is well under way. It invites persons from all parts of the Republic to prepare themselves to educate their fellow citizens. Those attending this teaching-program are subsidized by the government. The first class graduated in 1948. A National Teacher's Association is functioning under the provisions of the law. There are 8 supervising teachers who plan and follow the work being done by the various schools in the country. Liberia has recognized the importance of education in the advancement of the social and political life of the country.

One of the earliest problems of the settlers was the general unhealthfulness of that region. This has resulted in the appropriation of 10 per cent of the total national budget to projects of public health and sanitation. In 1948 the government maintained 15 physicians, 5



hospitals, and 15 clinics. In addition, other groups maintained 15 more physicians and 7 hospitals. There is a program which will add from 15 to 30 additional government hospitals, ten times the present number of clinics, and it is hoped that the number of government employed physicians will be increased to 1,500. Such growth, of course, must follow industrial expansion and the strengthening of the national treasury.

The trade relations of the country are at present favorable. In 1949 Liberia exported a total of \$13,500,000 worth of goods. The United States led in the field of customers, absorbing \$10,700,000 worth of goods. Holland was second with \$1,700,000 worth. During the same year, Liberia imported \$8,100,000 worth, thus showing a healthy relationship and a high degree of self-maintenance. The United States again led in imports in the sum of \$5,600,000. Thus the annual total trade of Liberia has reached approximately \$21,000,000. A new free port has been established at Monrovia. It was built under contract to the United States Navy at a cost of \$20,000,000. There is still need, however, for a general transportation and communication program, as the country is without land-contract with its neighbors, and most of the traffic is by water or air.

The industries of the country include soap manufactured from palm oil, wood-working, and a variety of native trades. There is considerable jewelry manufacturing and ivory work. Natives in the remote parts of the country are skilled in weaving, dyeing, leather work, pottery, bronze work, and related handicraft. These are prized as souvenirs, and some for their utilitarian value. The native cloths are beautiful and colorful and have a large market. The Firestone Rubber Company, after extensive researches begun in 1923, has found the country ideal for rubber plantations. It is operating 2 rubber plantations, which export as high as 22,000 tons of rubber a year. Agriculture includes rice, the staple food of the country, Indian corn, sweet potatoes, ginger, and arrowroot. Fruit is plentiful, and features the mango, the papaya, and the breadfruit. The fauna of Liberia includes most animals associated with African life. It is noted that the pygmy hippopotami is to be found only in Liberia.

In these involved and troublous times, when most world attention is directed to the less desirable activities of nations and States, we should never overlook those unpublicized minorities which are quietly, but steadfastly, dedicated to constructive ends. Liberia can be a symbol of numerous sincere groups striving after improvement and natural progress. With limited resources, this little Republic is a living example of convictions in human consciousness seeking opportunity for expression,

It is heartening to realize that various racial, religious, and national groups can solve their own needs, and can develop from within themselves sufficient standards of statesmanship and social organization. Each problem that arises in society has within it the key to its own solution. If, instead of complaint, there is earnest and intelligent action, our world can attain the unity and security of which we dream. Liberia is of interest to leaders everywhere, for it is an expression of an inherent pattern, and proves that the will to do cannot be denied.

The Republic of Liberia is a complete psychological entity. Its older traditions are rooted in the African continent, but it has enriched its heritage with more-recent contributions. The heroes of the country, the men and women who sacrificed even life itself to make possible freedom for those who came after them, are remembered and respected. There has been very little indolence in this colonization program, and much evidence of devotion beyond the normal call of duty. The search for freedom, the longing to build a better way of life, and the necessary inventiveness and ingenuity have made possible this little Republic, whose motto is: "The love of liberty brought us here."

#### *Passing Judgment*

Gilbert Stuart, the celebrated painter, was also a student of physiognomy. Among his many visitors was Talleyrand. After examining the features of Talleyrand for a moment, Stuart exclaimed to a friend: "If that man is not a villain, the Almighty does not write a legible hand."

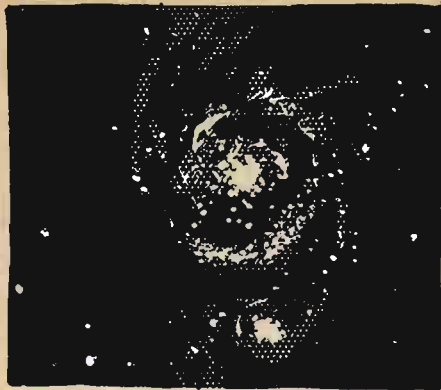
#### *Ways of the Wise*

Luther's great friend during the long years of the Protestant Reformation was Philipp Melancthon. This celebrated scholar was devoted to his family, and is said to have studied the deepest books on philosophy and theology, holding the volume in one hand and rocking his child's cradle with the other. He was never impatient with domestic interruptions, but had the faculty of continuing his thoughts, even if several hours intervened. It was said of him that he did not know the experience of confusion.

#### *The First Page Only*

In the British Museum there are a number of thick volumes composed of title pages only. These collectors mutilated thousands of volumes to fulfill their projects.





## Beginnings of Atomic Philosophy

ATOMIC speculation is intimately associated with the name of Leucippus of Miletus, a Greek philosopher who flourished in the 5th century B. C. He was a contemporary of Zeno and Anaxagoras. Epicurus doubted the existence of Leucippus, and very little is known of his personal life. Aristotle, however, credited him with the invention of Atomism. According to the opinions of Leucippus as preserved by Laertius, the universe consists of vacuum and atoms. The word *atom* itself is from the Greek *atomos*, which means *indivisible*. In the original theory, creation resulted from the entangling of atoms, which were of several kinds, shapes, and appearances. Smooth atoms did not unite as closely as those of rougher structure. Liquids are the result, therefore, of the association of smooth atoms, and solids are formed by rougher atoms which could be more permanently entangled with each other. Atoms of a similar nature became more intimately associated, and from such compounds dissimilar atoms had a tendency to escape. After structure increased, it was sustained by the addition of further atoms from vacuum, or from a free state. They were drawn to structure of their own kind, whereas the most subtle and illusive of atoms remained free in vacuum to become the cause of the most volatile of substances.

The original concept passed to the keeping of Democritus, who was probably a Thracian, born about 460 B. C. The date is uncertain. He organized and refined the older doctrine, and gave it both philosophical and scientific organization. Certain definitions of Democritus are indicative of his thinking.

"Bodies must consist either of atoms or of nothing; for if a body be divisible and it be divided, there will remain either atoms or noth-

ing." Of this Aristotle observed: "Of nothing, nothing is made, and nothing goes away into nothing."

"Neither of these principles vacuum and atoms is made of the other, but the common body itself is the principle of all things, differing only in magnitude and the figure of its parts."

"Both are infinite, atoms in number, vacuum in magnitude." "The properties of atoms are two: shape and size. As to shape, they are infinite; and as to size, they are invisible because of their smallness." Epicurus added another property, which he called *weight*.

Atoms, or the first bodies of things, are continually in motion in the vacuum, which is itself beyond dimension. The motion of atoms has no beginning, for it exists throughout eternity. According to the earliest concept, atoms have only one motion, which is termed *oblique*. The term *oblique* was used to indicate that these tiny bodies moved in such a way that they could be entangled with one another. In this possible association there were several probabilities. The atoms could strike against each other, and then rebound or separate, or they could remain in association with each other, or they could remain in proximity, but without direct association. Whatever is made in the world bears witness to some association of these minute particles.

Democritus held that the human soul is composed of a kind of fire and heat, and that the atoms composing fire are spherical, and as a result do not form a close association. He also pointed out that the sphere is the most perfect symbol, and, therefore, spherical atoms are the most subtle and mysterious. He also held the mind to be identical with the soul, and also composed of smooth atoms by which it was able to function in a highly volatile state. Although Democritus is not included among the theologians, and his physical scientific speculations would seem to incline toward materialism, he included the divine being among those creatures fashioned by the association of atoms. His ethical remains would indicate a person of good character and thoughtful nature. To quote a few of his moral sentences:

"He is well-disposed who grieves not for that which he has not, and rejoices moderately for that which he has."

"He is most valiant who vanquishes not his enemies, but his own pleasures."

"Every country is open to a wise man, for the whole world is the country of the enlightened soul."



"It is a grievous thing to be ruled by a person less good than ourselves."

"Freedom of speech is proper to generosity, but occasions may arise in which it is dangerous."

There is an interesting anecdote about Democritus which would indicate that he believed his own teaching. Being of contemplative mind and not much given to mingling in public affairs, he withdrew to a cemetery near the city and took up his abode in an old sepulcher. Some young men of the community, intending to frighten him, dressed themselves as ghosts and, coming at night, made unearthly sounds and moved about like specters. Democritus continued to write by his little lamp, only looking up to say: "Stop this fooling." He explained that, according to his philosophy, souls have no existence apart from bodies, and, therefore, he was not concerned over the possibility of being haunted.

Democritus anticipated the findings of Locke on primary and life at from 98 to 109 years. Even in death, he was most considerate. His aged sister was gravely troubled lest he die through the festival of Ceres. He comforted her, and told her to bring him some hot bread, and that he would remain in this life until after the festival. He was buried at the expense of the community.

It is noteworthy that in his treatise, *Of the Planets*, he said there were more than seven planets and in the future they would be discovered. He wrote a work on Pythagoras, to whose philosophy, especially the scientific parts, he paid special respect. Among other subjects were works on the causes of sounds and the causes of seeds and their generation. He is listed with the Eleatic sect.

Democritus anticipated the findings of Locke on primary and secondary qualities. Only atoms and vacuum are eternal. All other forms in Nature proceed from them and return to them. Thus, all forms are destructible in their appearances, and subject to eternal change. Destruction means to return a compound of atoms to their original state. Here is the concept of the indestructibility of matter. He also maintained that there was no chance in the universe. Every action which occurs is the result of changeless and necessary laws. Growth is the result of the increase of the number of atoms in a structure rather than the increase in the size of the atom. Disintegration, decay, and death are, therefore, the decrease of atoms due to their separation. All separate atoms remain invisible, and therefore forms seem to disappear if their atoms are no longer held together.

The debate as to the theological implications of the atomic concept led to several conflicting conclusions. Some have taken the stand that Democritus rejected completely the idea of a Deity participating in the creation or perpetuation of the universe. Plutarch was of the opinion that Democritus accepted the fiery sphere of the universal soul as a deity. This, however, may have been a Neoplatonic interpretation. It would not be an exaggeration, however, to say that Democritus acknowledged the existence of beings superior to man, composed of more subtle atoms, and enduring much longer than mortals. These higher creatures would be invisible because man has no faculties with which to perceive them. As man himself has taken a proprietary attitude toward the lesser creations, it is also possible that superior beings may choose to influence mankind. This influence, however, is not by eternal will, but by the wills of these beings themselves. If they are superior in composition, they may also surpass man intellectually and in terms of soul power. Such exalted beings would inspire reverence and be supplicated for such services as they might be able to render. Democritus took the view that the popular concept of gods arose from within man himself in his effort to explain natural phenomena.

This philosopher was one of the first to explore the mystery of color. His primaries were black, red, white, and green. He did not regard color as intrinsic to either atoms or vacuum. He held that colors resulted from the reflecting and absorbing powers of these atoms in relation to light. Thus, smooth atoms reflected light, cast no shadows, and gave out the appearance of luminosity. The rough atoms absorbed light or caused shadows, thus giving the impression of darkness. The other colors of the spectrum resulted from a mixing of the primaries, and therefore tones and shades could be infinite in number.

Out of his reflection, also, came a series of recommendations and admonitions for the conduct of the wise. He was among the philosophers who considered pleasure as the desirable state for man. He did not, however, consider pleasure merely as sensory gratification or abandonment to worldly ambitions. Pleasure belonged not to the senses, but had its principle and origin in the soul. The greatest possible pleasure resulted from tranquillity of the inner nature. Tranquillity, in turn, implied avoidance of all extremes and immoderations. Excess of all kinds contributed to pain, revealing the importance of moderation as a universal law. Democritus included good humor or good nature as a philosophic asset. To enjoy moderately and to contribute to the enjoyment of others could be as important as instruction. Simple pleasures, arising in the soul and expressing themselves through gracious human impulses, witnessed internal integration of character. Inciden-



tally, the ethical precepts of Democritus are the first collection of such recommendations known to have been compiled by the Greeks.

In addition to those sensations which stimulate the perceptive powers, certain atoms thrown from the surfaces of objects pass through the pores of the human skin and reach the soul, where they are accepted and interpreted. In this way, he explained the apperceptive faculties, such as intuition and clairvoyance. Obviously, man sees and hears, tastes and smells, and feels because he is being constantly bombarded by atoms. While we may regard the findings of Democritus as incomplete and in many ways inadequate, we must realize that he was pioneering an extremely obscure subject. Building upon the fragments of Leucippus, he integrated a concept which, further built upon and enlarged, certainly contributed to modern research. He sensed or knew, but lacked the means for completing his knowledge. Thus, he left a heritage which inspired both philosophy and science.

#### *Further Experience*

A wealthy amateur artist showed Poussin, the great painter, a picture he had just finished. The artist examined it carefully and said: "A very good start. Now all you need is a little poverty, sir, and you will be a great painter."

#### *The Traditional Element*

In the days of Sir Joshua Reynolds, portraits were painted in traditional poses. In the case of a gentleman, one hand should be in the waistcoat, and the hat should be under the arm. It was an emergency, therefore, when a client asked for a portrait with his hat on his head. Reynolds did as requested; but when the picture was delivered, there was a second hat under the gentleman's arm.

#### *Freedom of Speech*

Dante suffered throughout life as the result of reckless sarcasm directed against the prince of Verona. One day the prince asked Dante why it was that in noble houses the court fool was in greater favor than the philosopher. Dante bitterly replied: "Similarity of minds is throughout the world the first cause of friendship." The prince never forgot.



## Happenings at Headquarters



There have been a number of outside activities during the early fall. On August 27th, Mr. Hall delivered the graduation address for the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic at the Glendale City College. He stressed the importance of the consideration of religious, philosophical, and psychological factors in the diagnosis and treatment of disease.

Mr. Hall spoke on September 30th at a dinner meeting of the Lockheed Masonic Club, on the subject *Masonic Foundations in America*. This talk followed rather closely the material in his published book, *America's Assignment with Destiny*. This Masonic Club is composed of members of the Fraternity employed by the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. Nearly 300 men were seated for dinner.

There was a short campaign of lectures in Oakland between September 9th and 23rd. This trip was highlighted by the worst local transportation strike in the history of the country. In spite of this, the tour was successful. In addition to several talks for local groups, Mr. Hall gave a Sunday morning sermon at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. He appeared on radio stations KRE and KROW, and the local press was most kind in publicizing the campaign.

Mr. Henry L. Drake, our vice-president, will be the guest speaker at the December 9th meeting of the Psychological Roundtable of Los Angeles. His subject will be *Philosophic Psychology as Therapy for the Well*. He has long emphasized the preventive power of right thinking, and the essential points which he will cover will appear in the next issue of *Horizon*.

A recent issue of the *Apostolos Andreas* is at hand. The paper is an official organ of the Greek Orthodox Church; and while we are not able to find the place of publication, we suspect that it was printed in Athens. The text is entirely in modern Greek, and the leading article is devoted to a review of Mr. Hall's book, *The Secret Destiny of America*. Scattered through the paper are three photographs of the Patriarch Athenagoras, who was for many years a close personal friend



until his elevation caused him to leave this country and take up his residence in Istanbul. His Grace attended many of Mr. Hall's lectures in New York at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall. There were several visits to the archdiocese, one in particular when Mr. Hall met the delegates from the monastery of Mt. Athos. The Patriarch is an important scholar with great love and respect for classical Greek learning.

We are happy to report a most constructive response to our recent publicity which invited our friends to subscribe to *Horizon*, the quarterly journal of the Society. If this motion continues, we shall be in a position to further improve this magazine. If you have friends who do not receive our publicity, we shall be grateful for their names and addresses.

Because of the prolonged illness of Virginia Pomeroy, she and her sisters are no longer able to take and transcribe the notes of Mr. Hall's Sunday lectures in Los Angeles. Until satisfactory arrangements are made to continue this service, digests and extracts from lectures will appear in *Horizon*.

Be sure to keep us informed of your change of address. Every issue of *Horizon* reminds us of this important point. Too frequently magazines come back inscribed by the post office: "Moved, address unknown." We lose track of many friends this way and are unable to keep them informed of activities of general interest.

It is not too late to remind you that our books, magazine, and booklets are useful and inspiring Christmas gifts *from* thoughtful persons *to* thoughtful persons. Even a token of remembrance can be meaningful and, if wisely selected, of direct and immediate help.



A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A  
USEFUL AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU!  
FROM ALL OF US!



## Library Notes

### The Five Hundred Lohans

By A. J. HOWIE

The subject of this article is an undated ancient Chinese wood block print scroll which unrolls to reveal a panoramic group picture of the 500 *Lohans*. While all of the figures are rather stylized, the unknown artist has imparted an interpretative individuality to each member of this body of teachers who preached the Good Law. The scroll must have been sponsored by some important personage because it is monumental in its size, 24 feet by 18 inches.

In the same spirit that Christian artists have labored to capture in sculpture and painting the divinity of Jesus and the holiness and devotion of the saints and prophets, so in earlier centuries Buddhist artists interpreted and dramatized the legends of their faith. Sometimes literal and more often in an ecstatic or spiritually illumined mood, they exercised uninhibited imagination in their mediums. There was understanding when the picture or statue awakened in the beholder a similar realization. They were expressions of devotion and merit not intended for profanation in the art galleries of a world of alien faiths.

Hence with our present scroll we can not offer a specific interpretation. Instead we will suggest only fragments of traditions as a nucleus to which those who are interested may add as they read further in the Buddhist sacred books. The present selections are from the more orthodox books that have been translated. There is an infinite amount of lore that exists only in the original tongues—and for the present scroll in the Chinese particularly.

According to Father Henri Doré, the name *lohan* is applied to certain Buddhist priests from the countries west of China who made



a reputation for themselves by the original spirit of their teachings and by their remarkable personal ugliness. The 18 *Lohans* are usually meant when the *lohans* are mentioned, but the number and their names vary unexplainably according to the painter, sculptor, or writer, and they are depicted under the most diverse forms and character.

The word *lohan* is a Chinese Buddhist expression which gives to understand that the person so described has penetrated the mysteries of heaven and earth. The various authorities are vague rather than specific in accepting the word *lohan* as an equivalent of *arhat*. However, the numerical symbols of 18 and 500 seem to justify such an interpretation. At least it is said that an *arhat* is a man who has arrived at perfection and will be a *buddha* at the end of his actual existence. He will not return again into the wheel of transmigration of souls.

One popular tradition is that the 18 *Lohans* were celebrated brigands who were canonized for the heroic nature of their exploits—suggestive of the Robinhood idea.

Among the many ideas that characterize the *lohans* are the traditions that indicate the *earning* of the title, or the selection of the individuals by Buddha because of special *merit*. While the meritorious acts may be symbolical, they represent significant service in one way or another. For example, Buddha, observing the ability of *Ming-i-t'ong-tche*, chose him "to turn the wheel of the Law." Another proved his powers by indicating where a well should be sunk from which sprang a flow of salt. This was the first such well in that part of the country, and in recognition the natives reared a pagoda to his memory. Another was remembered for crossing a raging river during a dangerous flood-time, seated in his straw hat.

One interesting account of the selection of 500 *Arhats* is told by The Sister Nivedita (Margaret E. Noble) in her *Myths and Legends of the Hindus and Buddhists*. No authority or origin is cited.

The cities of Kapilavastu and Koli both irrigated their fields from the river Rohini whose waters had been dammed. During a season of great dryness, the farmers on each side of the river sought to claim all of the little water that was available. Incident and rumor spread until the Shakyas and Kolis declared war against each other.

Just at this crisis Buddha appeared in the place where the armies were arrayed for battle. The Shakyas recognized him, and out of reverence they threw down their weapons; the Kolis followed their example. Buddha proceeded to question them about what was taking place. When he was informed that they were about to fight over the



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#### BUDDHA OF THE FIVE HUNDRED LOHANS

A rare example of Chinese art showing the Doctrine "robed" in its saints.

water supply, he compared the value of water to the value of men. When they admitted that men were of greater value than water, he asked: "Why do you propose to throw away that which is of great value for the sake of that of little value?" Both sides decided that battle would not solve the problem.





—Collection of The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

#### SECTION FROM THE SCROLL OF THE FIVE HUNDRED LOHANS

The complete scroll was assembled by joining a sequence of wood-block prints. The above is one of these sections. The more important figures are accompanied by attributes by which they can be identified.

It was then agreed that 250 princes of each city should become (500) disciples of Buddha. The princes complied unwillingly, and their wives complained most bitterly. But it was not long before they entered the paths to Release and became *arhats*.

In the *Dhammapada* we find several descriptions of an *arhat*. In one section, an *arhat* is named as *The Venerable*, and such a one is characterized in this way:

There is no suffering for him who has finished his journey, abandoned grief, freed himself on all sides, and thrown off all fetters. The path of those who have attained these qualities is as difficult to understand as the course of birds in the air.

Even the gods envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued; who is free from pride, free from appetites. Such a one who does his duty is tolerant like the earth, or like a threshold; he is like a lake without mud. No new births are



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#### SECTION FROM THE SCROLL OF THE FIVE HUNDRED LOHANS

Traditional portraits of the sanctified men who became teachers and missionaries of early Buddhism.

in store for him. His thought is quiet; quiet are his word and deed when he has obtained freedom by true knowledge.

In another section of the *Dhammapada* an *arhat* is described as a Brahmana with many flawless virtues:

Stop the stream valiantly, drive away desires, O Brahmana! When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made. He who is thoughtful, blameless, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a Brahmana.

No one should attack a Brahmana, but no Brahmana should himself fly at his aggressor! Woe to him who strikes a Brahmana, but more woe to him who flies at his aggressor.

Him I call a Brahmana who does not offend by body, word, or thought, and is controlled on these three points....whose knowledge is deep, who possesses wisdom, who knows the right and the wrong...



..who without hurting any creatures whether feeble or strong, does not kill or cause slaughter.....who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with the violent, and free from greed among the greedy.....who has traversed this miry road, the impassable world, difficult to pass, and its vanity, who has gone through and reached the other shore, is thoughtful, steadfast, free from doubts, free from attachment, and content.....whose path the gods do not know, nor spirits, nor men, whose passions are extinct, and who is an *Arhat*, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the indifferent, the accomplished, the awakened.....who knows his former abodes, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of birth, and whose perfections are all perfect.

In the *Saddharma-Pundarika* Buddha announces the future destiny of the *Five Hundred Monks*:

Buddha had just finished a moving instruction on the ancient devotion which had closed with the following words:

"Monks, I am the guide of thousands of kotis of living beings. I see creatures toiling and unable to break the shell of the egg of evils. Then I reflect on the matter thus: These beings have enjoyed repose, have been tranquilized; now I will remind them of the misery of all things and say—at the stage of *Arhat* you shall reach your aim. At the time when I see all of you become *Arhats*, then I will call you together and explain to you how the law really is.

"Therefore, I now tell you, monks: Rouse to the utmost your lofty energy for the sake of the knowledge of all-knowing. As yet, you have not come so far as to possess complete Nirvana.....In order to give quiet, the Leaders speak of repose; but when they see that the creatures have had a repose, they, knowing this to be no final resting-place, initiate them in the knowledge of the all-knowing."

Purna, in an ecstasy of amazement, pure-heartedness, delight, and joy, rose up and prostrated himself before the Lord's feet: "These are wonderful things that the Tathagatas perform. What could we do in such a case? None but the Tathagatas know our inclination and our ancient course." He saluted the Lord and retired to a place apart, gazing up to the Lord with eyes unmoved in veneration.

The Lord then proceeded to foretell the future of Purna. When he had finished, this thought arose in the minds of those 1200 self-controlled *Arhats*: "We are struck with wonder and amazement. How would it be if the Tathagata were to predict for us severally our future destiny as the Lord has done for those other great disciples?"

Buddha apprehending in his own mind what was going on in the minds of these great disciples, addressed the venerable Maha-Kasyapa: "Those 1200 self-controlled hearers whom I am now beholding face to face, to all I will presently foretell their destiny..... Among them, the monk Kaundinya, after an infinite time, shall become a Tathagata, an *Arhat*, endowed with science and conduct; but of those 1200, 500 shall become Tathagatas of the same name. Thereafter shall all those 500 great disciples reach supreme and perfect enlightenment."

In the *Sutta Nipata* there is a significant anecdote involving the symbolism of the 500:

While staying at Magadha, Buddha one morning dressed, took his bowl and robe, and went to the place where the Brahmana, Kasibharadvaga had his 500 ploughs tied to the yokes in the ploughing season. He stood apart where the distribution of food took place to get alms.

Kasibharadvaga saw him and said: "Samana, I both plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, I eat. Thou also shouldst plough and sow."

"I also plough and sow," answered Buddha.

"But I see no yoke, nor plough, nor ploughshare, nor goad, nor the oxen of the venerable Gotama. Thou professest to be a ploughman, tell us of thy ploughing that we may know it."

"Faith is the seed, penance the rain, understanding my yoke and plough, modesty the pole of the plough, mind the tie, thoughtfulness my ploughshare and goad. I am guarded in respect of my body; I am guarded in respect of speech. Temperate in food. I make truth cut away weeds. Tenderness is my deliverance. Exertion is by beast of burden carrying me to Nirvana without turning back.

"So this ploughing is ploughed. It bears the fruit of immortality. Having ploughed this ploughing, one is freed from all pain."

The Brahmana immediately poured rice-milk into a golden bowl and offered it to the Buddha who refused it saying: "What is acquired by the reciting of stanzas is not to be eaten by me. One whose passions are destroyed and whose misbehavior has ceased, thou shouldst serve with other food and drink, for this is the field for one who looks for good works."

The Brahmana expressed his awakening in many symbolical speeches, closing with: "Gotama in manifold ways has illustrated the *Dhamma*. I take refuge in him and the *Dhamma*. I wish to take holy order and the robe."



And it was thus that Kasibharadvaga of the 500 ploughs started the life of good works and so became one of the *Arhats*.

None of the foregoing is convincingly factual, but it does carry a suggestion of the tremendous impetus that the Buddhistic teachings gave to the spiritual life of the Orient. Everything within the knowledge of the times was included in the cycle of necessity, and from time to time the dormant seed of aspiration awakened in an individual to be nurtured until it flowered as a Buddha-potential in every man. Buddha and his disciples preached a lofty doctrine, and from reading it is easy to understand how it inspired the talents of countless artists to portray the transcendent qualities of these teachers.

We have come to accept Buddhist art as highly acceptable and decorative. But who stops in this busy world to estimate how the smiling, tranquil face of a Buddhist image may be casting a benign influence unnoticed or just unacknowledged? I believe that this great art does just that.

In our library is a large bronze casting of the Buddha of the 500 *Lohans*. It was cast probably during the Ming dynasty and ultimately found its way into the Summer Palace collection of the late Dowager Empress of China. It was purchased by Siegfried Hart, and later presented to the library by his wife as a memorial to him after his death.

The casting is unusual in that the face has been finished in lacquer. There have been various counts made of the multiple images covering the body, but even though the counts differ between 300 and 350, the symbolism of the 500 apparently was intended.

Also we have two volumes of portraits of the *Lohans* sketched on specially treated mulberry leaves mounted on silk brocade. One is in black and white, the other is executed in brilliant colors.

In all of these works, there is high quality workmanship coupled with high idealism. There is no straining for effect, no appeal to the sensual, no intent to distort. The *lohans* are not portrayed as beautiful. They are strong, drawn from the ranks of men such as you and I. All of them rose from the ranks. All of them remembered destructive mistakes and obligations from the past. All of them discharged the obligations of the material world. And all labored to achieve as quickly as possible the ideals taught by Buddha.

And it is told that the 500 *Lohans* succeeded. They are remembered as a band of men who came to know the secrets of heaven and earth, and went forth to sing the praises of the law in strange lands.

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