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THE GREAT PYRAMID

WHEN THE DEAD COME BACK

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1956



ISSUED
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Journal of
The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

HORIZON LINES
AN EDITORIAL

Mens Sana in Corpore Sano



VERY few things in this world improve as the result of neglect. The human being must be constantly diligent in the protection of his physical health and his psychological integration. At the same time, he must take a normal attitude toward the problem of his own normalcy. We do not consider the individual a neurotic because he takes proper care of himself. Under the stress of modern living, thoughtful persons arrange for periodic visits to their physician, their dentist, or their optometrist, simply to make certain that the body and its needs are receiving due consideration. Also, if unusual symptoms suddenly appear, these are promptly investigated, and the beneficial results of such regular procedures are reflected in the improving life-expectancy of the average American citizen.

Broadly speaking, we no longer consider it to be a disgrace to have physical symptoms, but regard it as unwise and impractical to ignore them. Actually, many of the health problems which afflict the average mortal bear witness to ignorance and intemperance. Such philosophical reflections, however, have slight interest for the majority of people. Yet, these people cheerfully spend their money to keep well or to get well, realizing that poor health is a heavy burden upon all the resources of the personality. We have also learned that next to the prevention of an ailment, an accurate early diagnosis offers the greatest assurance of maintained efficiency. The longer we wait, the

more it will cost, and the greater the misery. Few will argue with such reasoning, but when it comes to mental and emotional symptoms, there are many prejudices which must be overcome.

Many feel it to be a disgrace to admit that they are in psychological difficulties. A sick mind is regarded as a disgrace, and advanced symptoms of emotional unbalance receive slight sympathy from relatives and friends, who take the attitude that the victim is suffering from nothing worse than a nasty disposition. In all such cases, an early diagnosis is imperative, as the sufferer has only a limited time in which he can combat successfully the early stages of a neurosis or a fixation. If he waits too long, his own powers of discrimination and self-analysis are so undermined that he loses all perspective and can no longer think or feel honestly about himself. If early symptoms are ignored, a lifetime of misery may follow. The sufferer may never develop any serious mental disease, but there is little advantage in being uncomfortable or poorly adjusted to reality for twenty-five or thirty years.

Many self-help books are available to those who need assistance, but experience indicates that they often do more harm than good. This does not mean that the books are wrong, but rather that the reader is too far advanced in his negative thinking to make practical use of them. He becomes morbidly engrossed in the case histories of other unfortunates, grows more fearful with each page he reads, and recognizes in himself all the symptoms unfolded by the learned author. In such a mood, he valiantly resolves to follow instructions which he does not understand, and apply them to problems which he cannot properly diagnose. Under these conditions, he may become more neurotic, and add a variety of new complexes to those from which he already suffers.

Habits begin with a single action, and this forms a pattern only after frequent repetitions. Nearly all habits can be broken easily at the beginning, but become increasingly hard to break as they intensify. Most psychological problems are the result of bad mental and emotional habits which have been either tolerated or neglected for a considerable period of time. To keep himself mentally healthy, the private citizen must keep a constant guard over his thoughts and emotions. This does not mean a militant defensive attitude, but a quiet, relaxed, and to a degree detached attentiveness. He should accept such a procedure as being just as normal, natural, and proper, as his occasional conferences with his family physician. The Chinese learned long ago that it is wiser to keep well than to get well, and it

was a custom in China to discontinue payment to the doctor when the patient became sick.

The early signs and symbols of psychological trouble are so apparently harmless and negligible that we even enjoy them. They seem to add color and vitality to our conduct, and are wonderful conversation-pieces. Perhaps we observe symptoms of impatience. We have lost a little of that tolerance and kindness of spirit which has distinguished our previous deportment. Or, again, we note the habit of worry enlarging, deepening, and broadening. We can conclude that this is not more than should be expected because of the increasing responsibilities with which we are burdened. We are reminded of the words of the old minister: "When the Lord sends tribulations, he expects us to tribulate." If we gained a reputation for never worrying, folks would think that we are superficial and lack depth of character. It is also possible that we sense that our ambitions are getting out of hand. Our desires are increasing more rapidly than our financial situation justifies. We are striving desperately to climb the ladder of success, and one by one our old friends are turning from us and our new acquaintances are more self-seeking than sincere.

A very common indication of coming trouble is the loss of what the French have so well called *elan vital*, which can be broadly translated as "eagerness for life," "ardor," or "vital impulse." When simple, kindly, friendly surroundings begin to bore us, and we are forced to seek excitement to maintain function, we are becoming addicted to the most dangerous form of stimulant. Excitement, like alcohol, merely obscures symptoms and solves nothing. It is only a step from boredom to disillusionment, which leads naturally to self-pity, which in turn ends in chaos. When an individual tells us that he must be busy at something every moment, that he cannot relax, that leisure is an affliction to the spirit, and that recreation is a waste of time, he is telling us that something is wrong in his psychic nature. If he continues to substitute activity for the vital spark of life, he will discover that these are not the same things. His tensions will increase, his need for stimulation will grow, and he is preparing the way for a nervous or physical breakdown.

Tense people nearly always blame their tension upon the importance of the things they are doing. The business would go to pieces if they relaxed; the home will fall apart if they let down; and the world will be the poorer if they do not drive themselves to the bitter end. No matter how vital and urgent an enterprise may be, it is best advanced by composure. Tension creates more obstacles than it can ever overcome. Relentless activity in the service of God or our neighbor must end in sickness and the frustration of projects.

Excessive grief, like worry, indicates a lack of internal poise. Certainly there are occasions in which we will be sad, and no life is without its tragedies, but fortunately Nature has equipped us to face all probable emergencies and survive them. If, however, we continually revitalize old memories, or re-live past disasters, we finally establish a morbid mechanism, and a bad habit is born.

The average person has developed a complex of habit-patterns. His very life is made up of repetitional procedures. He eats, sleeps, and works, within patterns which are seldom broken. Because he has many habits, he is to a measure protected by diversity. But he is also endangered by the fact that he has the habit of habits. It is not difficult, therefore, for him to intensify some part of this habit-complex. When this occurs, he becomes a slave to a dominant pattern of reaction. Gradually, his interests narrow until perspective is lost. The moment the individual builds walls around his thinking, and becomes defensive, he loses orientation. This sometimes manifests early as a critical attitude or a tendency to depreciate the abilities and achievements of others. It is never healthy to stand in judgment over the lives and characters of our contemporaries. The usual basis for criticism is egotism. We have learned to believe that we build our own importance by belittling those around us. Yet the very fact that we are addicted to the belief that our importance is important is a bad sign. The critic takes the attitude that he is qualified to criticize, but unless he is exceptionally endowed with outstanding abilities, this is simply arrogance, and the truly great are seldom arrogant.

Many other symptoms should be included in a broad survey, but those we have mentioned are indicative of the general trend. It cannot be said that we can live in a condition of perpetual hilarity, nor can everything and everyone contribute to our happiness. It is important, however, that we build our lives upon a solid foundation of comparative or relative contentment. We may wish that we could do better and be finer persons, but this natural desire should move us quietly and gently along the road of personal growth. Contentment really means that we can remember the past without regrets, meet the present with a degree of serenity, and face the future without excessive fears. It helps a great deal to sense inwardly that we are part of a great pattern which is moving us all to the fulfillment of a good and purposeful destiny.

By this time, some readers may come to the conclusion that we have confused normalcy with sanctification. Under existing conditions, how can anyone "flow" tranquilly down the path of years? A prominent writer not long ago insisted that to be contemporary, we

must exist precariously on the verge of mental collapse. He viewed it as sheer insanity to be contented in a troubled world. We beg to differ. The world's troubles, like our own, are largely due to psychological abnormalities. As long as we attempt to justify sickness on the grounds that it is prevalent, little of permanent good can be attained. Most of the sickness of the world is not due to inevitable circumstances or the insufficiency of the universal plan. It is due to selfishness, fear, self-centeredness, and general ignorance. These abnormalities will never become virtues, regardless of their popularity or their prevalence. The individual who tries to adjust himself to a false code will not find happiness where others have never been able to discover it.

If we are really dedicated to a job, or to the service of great ideals, or to the common good of man, it is especially important to realize that dedication implies a determination to fit ourselves for our work intelligently and honestly. We can never afford to excuse a fault, try to explain away an unreasonable attitude, ignore a character liability, or defend unreasonable pressures in ourselves. The moment we become aware that we are forming a mental, emotional, or physical habit that is not conducive to our own peace of mind and the contentment of our associates, we must break that habit before it breaks us. It is quite possible to resolve the difficulty in a few weeks if we will pause, reflect, and consider. The simple act of recognizing and accepting the fact that we can be wrong will accomplish much. Few people really want to be wrong; most have convinced themselves that their wrong is right or inevitable. If we delay, however, and allow wrong attitudes to gain dominance, it may take many years of help and counseling to repair a damage. Worse than this, if we are wrong long enough, we will finally come to a state of disorientation in which we will fight desperately to perpetuate our own troubles. We then turn from those who try to help us, reject assistance, insist that everyone else is wrong, and lock our own personality to such an extent that about all we can do is suffer silently and alone.

It is important to remember that nothing in this world stands still. Virtues grow and unfold with time — and so do vices. We must be prepared for the inevitable intensification of our dominant attitudes toward life. With advancing years, these will become more tyrannical, destroying both health and peace of mind, and depriving us of what might otherwise be the rich harvest of the years. With the proper blend of humor, sincerity, and seriousness, and a constructively critical approach to our own idiosyncracies, we can prevent the hardening of attitudes and achieve a serenity of spirit which will sustain us throughout life.



LUTHER BURBANK

Burbank's "Training the Human Plant"

AS a small lad, I lived for a time in Santa Rosa, California, and remember clearly watching a sprightly little man, with a shock of gray hair, working in his nursery garden with his plants and flowers. The name of Luther Burbank was known even then throughout the world, and was associated with extraordinary experimentation with fruits and flowers. Burbank settled in California in 1875, and his researches continued without interruption for fifty years. It is interesting that his program was not created for the purpose of testing scientific theory or for making scientific discoveries. Burbank's great purpose was to help his beloved shrubs and weeds and bushes to grow, to improve, and to fulfill their full measure of usefulness to themselves and mankind.

It was my privilege to visit in the home of Luther Burbank a few years before his death in 1936. The famous American plant-breeder was then in his seventies, and his career was nearing its end. He was a small elderly man with white bushy hair and a youthful radiant face. His native kindness was apparent in every word and gesture, and his enthusiasm for his plants had not diminished. He worked each day in his garden, kneeling on the dark earth, and his hands were rough and stained from the soil. Although he had been inspired to his career largely by early reading of the books of Charles Darwin, he had long before outgrown the academic approach to the study of living organisms. Strangely and wonderfully, Burbank had discovered a philosophy for living derived from constant association with the basic laws governing the unfoldment of plant life. He had already gained the name of "the sage of Santa Rosa," a reputation which he richly deserved.

In 1907, about the time I had been peering over the fence which protected his garden, Luther Burbank had published a little book "The Training of the Human Plant," and by a happy coincidence he proudly presented me a Japanese translation of the essay while we were sitting together in the little study of his home in 1925. He said the work had been translated into many languages, and while perhaps the least of his writings horticulturally speaking, he valued it because he hoped that it would contribute to the well-being of his fellow men. To Burbank, the secret of plant breeding was summarized in a single word: love. This power, greater than any other,

was a subtle kind of nourishment that made everything grow better and bear fruit more abundantly. He explained to me that in all his experimentation he took plants into his confidence, he knelt beside them, talked to them, asked them to help, and assured them that he held their small lives in the deepest regard and affection. He insisted that this was the secret of his green thumb. With a knowing smile, Burbank said that it was quite customary for students in various colleges to come to him for special training. They would watch everything that he did, and carefully copy his methods. It was quite a disappointment to them when they failed to get similar results. "They did everything but love the plants," Burbank explained. He then told me about a Chinese gardener who had been with him for many years. This Oriental was a natural mystic, and because of his sensitivity, the plants responded very well to him.

In the introduction to his little book above mentioned, Burbank writes: "During the course of many years of investigation into the plant life of the world, creating new forms, modifying old ones, adapting others to new conditions, and blending still others, I have constantly been impressed with the similarity between the organization and development of plant and human life." He goes on to explain that from the perspective of plant culture, the United States is one of the world's most fortunate countries. He believed that the finest race of human beings in the world could be developed here if men would observe in their human relationships the laws regulating plants and flowers. In 1904, immigrants from fifty different nationalities journeyed to the United States and made this rich land of opportunity their home and country. Burbank writes, "In my work with plants and flowers, I introduce color here, shape there, size or perfume, according to the product desired. In such processes, the teachings of nature are found. Its great forces only are employed. All that has been done for plants and flowers by crossing, nature has already accomplished for the American people. By the crossings of types, strength has in one instance been secured; in another, intellectuality; in still another, moral force. Nature alone has done this But when nature has already done its duty, and the crossing leaves a product which in the rough displays the best human attributes, all that is left to be done falls to selective environment."

Burbank goes on to say that all life is sensitive to environment, but of all living things, the human child is the most sensitive. The child absorbs environment, and when this force is applied rightly, constantly, and consistently, the effect will be pronounced, immediate, and permanent. At this point, Burbank makes one of his most radical recommendations. He insists that no human child should be

permitted to see the inside of the schoolroom until he is at least ten years old. According to him, if it is at all possible or feasible, the young boy or girl should be reared in a small town or in the country upon a farm. This is not because it protects the child from bad associations or the contaminating influence of crowds, but because the first schooling of every human being should be gained directly from observation of and participation in natural processes. If the child lives always in a man-made world, it can never have proper appreciation for those universal laws which are greater and wiser than any that man can make. From contact with nature, a wonderful sense of the impersonality of realities is derived. The growing child developing in a growing world learns respect for growth, and comes to realize that growth itself is the most wonderful thing which can be experienced.

After expressing his conviction that the curse of modern child-life in America is over-education, Burbank goes on to unfold his basic concept. As the first ten years of human life are the most sensitive, delicate, and pliable, it is at this time that the great values of living should be emphasized. The young person should already know how to live with himself before he mingles in social contact with the life of his community. He would be naturally sensitive and thoughtful if these qualities were the first to be impressed upon his consciousness. Burbank was certain that even though this meant that the young person would enter school later than is the present program, he would probably graduate at about the same age because of the improved state of his own innate knowledge. The plant-breeder does not expect a normal plant to begin bearing fruit a few weeks after it is born; it must have time—ample time—to be prepared for the work for which it was created.

First and foremost, according to Burbank, the child must be a healthy animal. It is useless to work with diseased plants; they do not cure themselves, and they spread the disease among their fellows. No two children are alike, nor can they be expected to develop their temperaments, tastes, dispositions, and capacities, simply by running them through an education-mill. Here they are forced, regardless of their aptitudes, into a common pattern, beneficial to a few, detrimental to many, and of slight value to others. "Can anyone," Burbank writes, "by any possible cultivation and selection and crossing compel figs to grow on thistles or apples on a banana tree?"

To Burbank, the perfect answer was that the first ten years of the child's life should be close to the earth and in an atmosphere of love and affection. Here his experience with the responsiveness of

plants to human regard developed into a basic tenet of philosophy. He writes, "Love must be at the basis of all our work for the race; not gush, not mere sentimentality, but abiding love, that which outlasts death. A man who hates plants, or is neglectful of them, or who has other interests beyond them, could no more be a successful plant-cultivator than he could turn back the tide to the ocean with his fingertips. The thing is utterly impossible. You can never bring up a child to its best estate without love."

Burbank also had something to say about honesty, when he insisted that you could never deceive nature, thwart her, or dishonor her in any way, without her knowing it and without consequences coming back upon your own head. He seemed to be writing for 1956 when he pointed out that the wave of public dishonesty sweeping over the country is chiefly due to a lack of proper training in the formative years of life. Be dishonest with a child, your own or another person's child, be dishonest in word, look, or deed, and you have started a career of delinquency. Men are much less likely to be dishonest if their formative years have been spent in an atmosphere of absolute honesty. Where, then, can such an atmosphere be found more readily, and be more universally accessible than in the forest or by the running stream, or in the broad meadow where cattle graze? Burbank makes a further suggestion, "Make the boy understand what money means, too, what is its value and its importance. Do not deal it out to him lavishly, but teach him to account for it. Instil better things into him, just as a plant-breeder puts better characteristics into a plant. Above all, bear in mind repetition, repetition, the use of an influence over and over again. Keeping everlastingly at it, this is what fixes traits in plants—the constant repetition of an influence until at last it is irrevocably fixed and will not change. You cannot afford to get discouraged. You are dealing with something far more precious than any plant—the priceless soul of a child."

The last years of the life of Luther Burbank were saddened by a religious controversy of which he was the innocent victim. Every effort was made to brand him an atheist, which all who knew him realized to be a complete injustice. As Burbank explained it, he could not accept the primary importance of a man-made theology in a divinely created universe. He believed that the laws of Nature were the most sacred of sacred writings, and that to the degree men understood these, they had a deep and wonderful faith. If, however, they departed from the laws of Nature—the very laws that worked in his experimental farms and gardens—they departed from truth and reality. He summarizes his feeling in the following paragraph:

"I believe emphatically in religion. God made religion, and man made theology, just as God made the country, and man made the town. I have the largest sympathy for religion, and the largest contempt I am capable of for a misleading theology. Do not feed children on maudlin sentimentalism or dogmatic religion; give them Nature. Let their souls drink in all that is pure and deep. Rear them, if possible, amidst pleasant surroundings. If they come into the world with souls groping in darkness, let them see and feel the light."

Successful plant-breeding requires three other absolutely essential things—sunshine, good air, and nourishing food. In the case of the human plant, there are two kinds of sunshine. That which comes from the physical sun strengthens and sustains the body, and that which comes from the soul builds and preserves the mind and emotions. For the child, cheerfulness is a kind of sunshine. Cross, tired, selfish, self-centered, or even over-indulgent parents, do not radiate the proper kind of sunshine. In these first important ten years of life, "Let the children have music, let them have pictures, let them have laughter, let them have a good time; not an idle time, but one full of cheerful occupation. Surround them with all the beautiful things you can. Plants should be given sun and air, blue sky; give them to your boys and girls. I do not mean for a day or a month, but for all the year. We cannot treat a plant tenderly one day and harshly the next; they cannot stand it. Remember that you are training not only for today, but for all the future, for all posterity."

Under the heading of "fresh air," Burbank doubts the adequate ventilation of our public schools. There is not enough sunshine, too many hours behind little desks, drawing and painting and thumbing juvenile textbooks. Never forget that the most dangerous kind of atmospheric pollution is found in many homes when an air of sullen despondency, selfish self-centeredness, or brittle impatience fills the atmosphere with psychic toxins. Teach the child to seek fresh air as a solution to its ills, for in the great outdoors human problems seem small, but in the house, they grow heavy and take on false importance.

Nourishing food means simple natural diet. Good food prepares the boy or girl for a life free of those debilities which may result from faulty nutrition. If the digestion is good, and the blood is pure, the nervous system has a better chance of maintaining its integration. Guard most of all the nervous system, for success in life depends upon it. When the nerves break, what else can be useful? "Nothing else is doing so much to break down the nervous systems of Americans, not even the insane rushing of maturer years, as this over-crowding and cramming of child-life before the age of ten. And the mad haste of maturer years is the legitimate result of the earlier strain."

Under the heading of "environment," Burbank points out that there is not a single desirable attribute which, lacking in a plant, may not be bred into it. By perseverance, you can instill into the human plant honesty, fairness, purity, loveliness, industry, thrift, and many other virtues. In the green world of fruits and vegetables, there is also a lesson relating to the physically handicapped. Burbank tells us that he has seen many possibilities, wonderful and beautiful, in a little shrub that was weak. He was never impelled to destroy such a plant. It was far wiser to aid it by a proper program so that it could make its useful contribution. We should ever remember that many of the world's noblest human beings have not had robust constitutions. Yet, in music, art, science, statesmanship, religion and philosophy, they have given rich blessings to mankind.

Near the end of his little book, Burbank defines his concept of growth. "Growth is a vital process—an evolution—a marshalling of vagrant unorganized forces into definite forms of beauty, harmony, and utility. Growth in some form is about all that we ever take any interest in; it expresses about everything of value to us. Growth in its more simple or most marvellously complicated form is the architect of beauty, the inspiration of poetry, the builder and sustainer of life, for life itself is only growth, an ever-changing movement toward some object or ideal. Wherever life is found, there, also, is growth in some direction. The end of growth is the beginning of decay."

There are a few very wise words on heredity and environment. To Burbank, environment was the architect of heredity, for what we call hereditary tendencies are merely the result of reaction to environment over countless ages or vast periods of time. Heredity, on the other hand, is not that merciless and unchangeable fatality which pessimists have pictured. Heredity is the sum of past environments, the transmission of previously acquired characteristics. They have become fixed by long-continued natural or artificial repetitions until they have become inherited. When we are worried about heredity, let us view it more fairly. Burbank writes, "Stored within heredity are all joys, sorrows, loves, hates, music, art, temples, palaces, pyramids, hovels, kings, queens, paupers, bards, prophets and philosophers, oceans, caves, volcanos, floods, earthquakes, wars, triumphs, defeats, reverence, courage, wisdom, virtue, love and beauty, time, space, and all the mysteries of the universe. The appropriate environments will bring out and intensify all these general human hereditary experiences and quicken them again into life and action, thus modifying for good or evil character—heredity—destiny."

Education of the intellect is important, but it cannot be said that the mind is simply a faculty of memory. Some things must be re-

membered, but the heart as well as the head should enjoy the benefits of a balanced cultural program. Burbank did not believe that a perfect system of education can ever be attained, because education is preparation for adjustment to a certain environment. As environments themselves are constantly changing, an educational system, especially if it is reactionary, does not bestow the ingenuity necessary to adapt the person to the unknown future which he must face. Burbank felt that it is more important to be right than to be consistent. A proper understanding of health, peace, happiness and contentment is far more valuable in terms of practical living than a general knowledge of geography, mathematics, chemistry, and so forth. Burbank writes, "Any form of education which leaves one less able to meet every-day emergencies and occurrences, is unbalanced and vicious, and will lead any people to destruction. Every child should have mudpies, grasshoppers, waterbugs, tadpoles, frogs, mud-turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, water-lilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hay-fields, pine cones, rocks to roll, sand, snakes, huckleberries and hornets; and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best part of his education."

In further mention of education derived from natural experience, the author adds "A fragrant beehive or a plump, healthy hornet's nest in good running order, often become object lessons of some importance. The inhabitants can give the child pointed lessons in punctuation as well as caution and some of the limitations as well as the grand possibilities of life; and by even a brief experience with a good patch of healthy nettles, the same lesson will be still further impressed upon them. And thus by each new experience with homely natural objects the child learns self-respect and also to respect the objects and forces which must be met."

Burbank closes his little book with a summary of fundamental principles. He points out that education does not make available any new force in the character of the individual. It can only discipline nature's energies, giving them natural and useful directions, so that the voyage of life may be a happy and constructive one. Each of us must cultivate the still, small voice within. Burbank calls this "intuitive consciousness," and when such consciousness is combined with extensive practical knowledge, man fulfills his true purpose and leaves a rich and useful legacy to his race. The world stands on the threshold of eternal change. If we meet the challenge of the future with the simple wisdom bestowed by nature and exemplified through cooperation and brotherly love, we can build a strong new people in

America, and the children of the future will have a better chance to fulfill the destiny which nature and nature's God have decreed.

This is only a small part of Luther Burbank's little book, but we bring it to your attention in gentle memory of a kindly friend of man. Although *The Training of the Human Plant* is now out of print, it can be consulted in many public libraries, or ordered through the second-hand book trade. It is unusual and worthwhile, rich with that kind of wisdom which comes from the earth and the air and the sunshine.



They will come back, come back again
As long as the red earth rolls.
God never wasted a leaf or a tree.
Do you think He would squander souls?

RUDYARD KIPLING

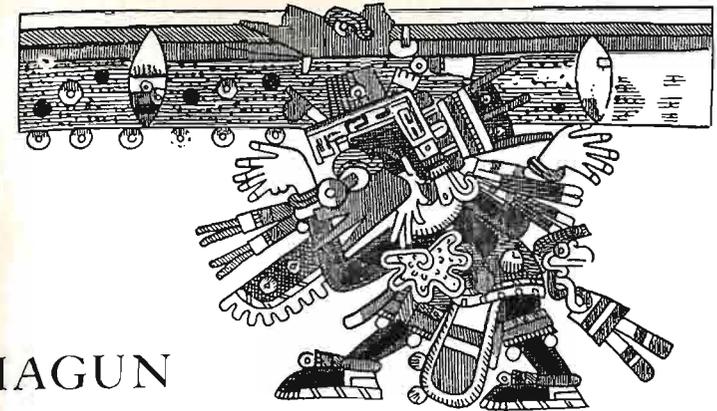
From the press

Man may be nature's noblest creation—but man is the only one who ever said so.

Few things are needed to make a wise man happy; nothing can make a fool content; that is why most men are miserable.

Literary Note

Lord Bulwer-Lytton wrote his first novels attired in full dress, plentifully sprinkled with perfume, and although alone while writing, worked with the formality of a man in court.



SAHAGUN

ON the 13th of August, in the year of our Lord 1521, Hernando Cortez became the undisputed master of the city of Mexico. The flag of Spain flew over those broad lands once ruled by the proud and haughty Montezuma. A far-flung complex of native tribes was placed in vassalage to the holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, by the grace of God, Charles I of Spain. In those critical years immediately following the conquest of Mexico by swashbuckling Spanish adventurers, two powerful cultural patterns came into dramatic conflict in the New World. The Aztec Empire was crumbling under the pressure of Spanish ambition, but it was still a living institution, with a rich heritage of arts and sciences. These Indians had developed many branches of learning and, in some respects at least, equaled or even surpassed their conquerors. When Cortez saw for the first time the magnificent city of Mexico, he declared it to be the most glorious city of the whole world.

We now realize that far greater care should have been taken to preserve the religious, historical, and social records of the Aztec Empire. Had these subjects been approached in due time and with proper diligence, we would not now be burdened with the innumerable uncertainties which perplex the conscientious ethnologist of Amerindian culture. It is therefore of the greatest importance that at least one sincere and indefatigable worker lived in those strange and confused days and made a valiant effort to leave to posterity a comprehensive account of the Aztec civilization of New Spain.

In 1529, Hernando Cortez was made governor of Mexico, and was created Marquis of Oaxaca. In the same year, Fray Antonio de Ciudad Rodrigo, a Franciscan Father, was entrusted by his Catholic Majesty of Spain with the important and delicate mission of escorting

back to their homes the prominent Aztec dignitaries whom Cortez had brought to Spain to be presented to the king. It should be noted that Charles was by nature of kindly disposition, and did not authorize the cruel practices of his soldiers in foreign fields. He entertained his Aztec guests with honors befitting their rank, and provided them with a guard of honor when they left his court. Throughout Spain, these Aztecs were treated as persons of the highest distinction. With Fray Antonio on the long journey to New Spain were nineteen young Franciscan monks who had resolved to accept missions in Mexico. Among these was a handsome and gifted young man, Fray Bernardino de Sahagun. During the long journey by sea, Fray Bernardino made the acquaintance of the Aztec nobles, and obviously enjoyed their friendship, for they began to teach him their language. He was an apt student, with a marked affinity for Nahua, and before his career closed, he was one of the outstanding authorities in this strange and difficult tongue. This not only endeared him to the Aztecs, but fitted him for the arduous labors which he was later destined to undertake.

Fray Bernardino de Sahagun was born about 1499 in the little Spanish town of Sahagun, located in the Province of Leon. As the name of his family was Ribeira, it is probable that he was of Portuguese ancestry. He attended the University of Salamanca, but for some reason not specified by the historians, he discontinued his studies and joined the Order of St. Francis. As was customary under such circumstances, he took as an appellation the name of the town where he was born. It would seem reasonable in the light of his later career that Fray Bernardino was unable to accept the concept of education that dominated the universities of his time. He is described as a most personable young man, and after he had taken Holy Orders, the elder among his brother monks were so fearful that he would succumb to the enticements of the outer world that they offered prayers for his preservation. Such concern, however, was without foundation. The young Fray had a serious, modest, and humble nature, and through a long and difficult life was always obedient to the will of his superiors. It is possible that he was encouraged to accept a mission in the New World because it would take him far from the temptations of Spanish life.

Dr. Edgar L. Hewett describes Fray Bernardino de Sahagun as the first capable ethnologist of America. Not only was this gentle Franciscan an able student, but he advanced his labors by methods both orderly and scientific, and if he lived today, he would attain pre-eminence in his field. He arrived in Mexico only eight years after the conquest, and available to him were many learned men of the Aztec nation whose skill in the Nahua language, and knowledge of the religion,

sciences, arts, crafts, and customs of their people, were profound. Of course Fray Bernardino came to America, like most of the missionary fathers of his time, to convert heathen Indians to the Christian faith, and to bestow upon them the benefit of European culture. By nature, however, he was evidently a man of broad and tolerant mind, who realized that scholars of future ages would want to know the true story of the rise and decline of the Aztec civilization. In some of his writings, Sahagun indicates clearly that he was not in sympathy with the policies of the Spanish conquerors and their total disregard for the natural human decencies in their treatment of a highly cultivated group of socialized Indians.

After his arrival in New Spain, Fray Bernardino lived for a time in a convent of his Order at Tlalmanalco, not far from the foot of the great volcano Mount Popocatepetl. Later he was appointed teacher of Latin at the college of Santa Cruz, where he remained until 1540. These seem to have been happy and pleasant years for the kindly monk. He was working with the young Indians, teaching them to read and write in order that they might read the Holy Scriptures and participate in the glories of the Mass. Even as he taught, Sahagun also learned. His respect and admiration for the basic values of the Aztec people increased with the years. Although he was disturbed by their strange wild practices, he grew to love and understand these people, and became conversant with their legendry and lore.

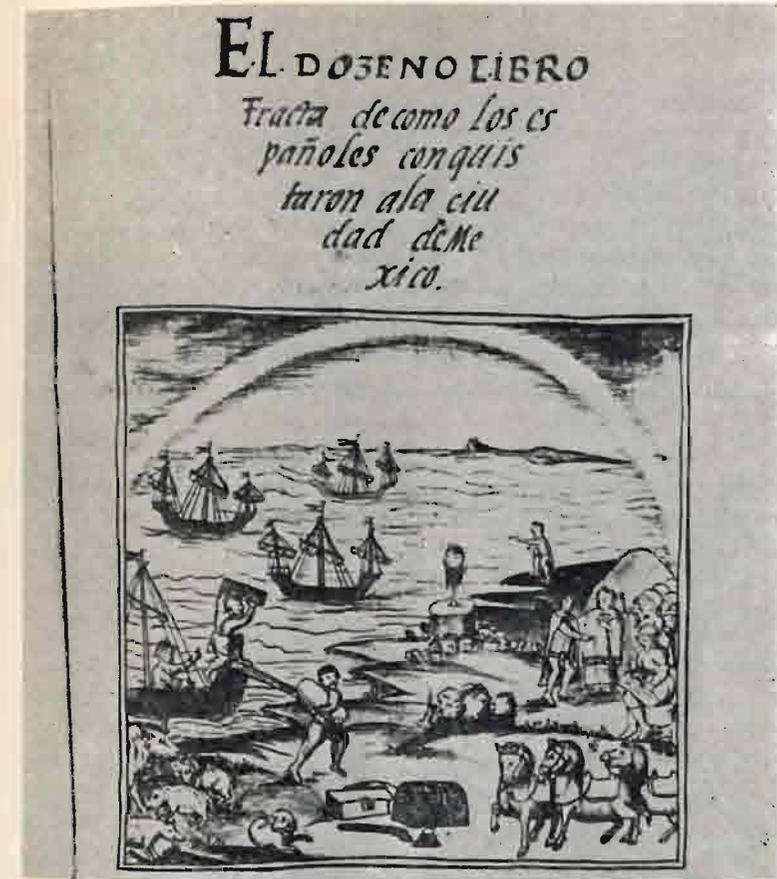
Later Sahagun traveled considerably among the missions and mission schools springing up in the region. He received some ecclesiastical distinctions, but found these responsibilities unsuited to his temperament. Several times he asked to be excused from official duties, so that he could devote his entire life to the production of an historical work which would set forth with all thoroughness the records of New Spain prior to and including the Spanish conquest. Already he had amassed a quantity of information, and because of the unique opportunity at his disposal, he was able to convince his superiors of the usefulness of his endeavors. He did not hasten his work, nor did he neglect the regular duties to which he was obligated.

While laboring with his young Mexican-Indian charges, he encouraged them to record all possible details of their customs, and especially of their language with its pictographic and hieroglyphical devices. It is said of Sahagun that he instinctively approached every problem with the attitude of a trained historian. Unlike most of his brothers, he also took a deep interest in the obscure phases of Aztec religion and ritual. His usual method was to assemble data from various accessible sources and then to verify his accumulated notes by

holding long sessions with distinguished elders of the Aztec nation. Thus, by degrees, the grand scheme of Sahagun's endeavor took form, under the broad title "Historia de las Cosas de Nueva España" (The History of the Annals of New Spain), which was ultimately to consist of twelve books, each dealing with a distinct phase of the culture-history of ancient Mexico. The first book, for example, deals with the gods of the Aztecs; the second with their calendar, festivals, temples, and ceremonies; the third with their theogony; the fourth with their divinatory arts and so forth.

It is believed that Book VI, which outlines the rhetoric, moral philosophy, and theology, of the Mexicans, was in fair order as early as 1547. It was not, however, until 1557 that Sahagun received official permission from the leaders of his Order in New Spain to arrange his information in the form of a comprehensive work. At this time, Sahagun had many friends among the leaders of the Franciscan mission in America. They were fascinated by the scope of Fray Bernardino's undertaking, and under the encouragement of their enthusiasm, his labors advanced rapidly. It was therefore with positive orders from his superiors that he was sent to the Pueblo of Tepeapulco, where he was able to gain the assistance of about a dozen Indians who were acknowledged authorities on the ancient learning of their people. Most of these Indians had lived during the closing years of the Aztec Empire, and were therefore able to reconstruct from memory the whole panorama of their life-way. Younger Indians were also useful because of their increasing proficiency in the Spanish language. From the elders of Tepeapulco, Sahagun secured drawings of many of the ancient gods, and also copies of hieroglyphical documents, the originals of which had been destroyed, but which could still be restored from memory.

The Franciscan hierarchy in New Spain was subject to numerous internal changes. Older men died; younger brothers were transferred to other regions; and a stream of missionary monks continued to pour in from Spain. In the midst of Sahagun's labors, Fray Francisco Bustamante became the superior of the Franciscan order in Mexico. Again Fray Bernardino was fortunate. The general program was not changed, and his work was permitted to continue. Sahagun, with the assistance of friendly Indians expert in various branches of their tradition and language, went on revising, polishing and perfecting his History. In 1561, he retired to the main Franciscan convent in Mexico, where he made what he undoubtedly assumed to be a final revision, and arranged his manuscript in twelve books, each with appropriate chapters and paragraphs. We are told that this revision was written by Sahagun entirely in Aztec, and was finished in 1566, after



TITLE-PAGE OF BOOK XII OF THE FLORENTINE CODEX

This drawing represents the landing of the Spaniards on the coast of Mexico.

more than fifteen years of labor. Soon afterwards, this entire work was copied with some corrections.

In 1570, Father Navarro, then Commissary of the Order, took a digest of Sahagun's History with him to Spain. This simple and apparently perfectly proper procedure set in motion the difficulties which plagued Fray Bernardino for the rest of his days. It was quite inevitable and reasonable that those pioneer missionaries who lived long and closely with the Aztecs should have developed strong sympathies for the natives, and a considerable understanding of the tragedies through which the Indians had passed. The early monks were rugged pioneers, and their love of humanity was real and deep, even though perhaps narrowed by the restrictions of their faith. They were

also far from the political atmosphere in Spain, and developed useful qualities of character which would not have been tolerated at home.

In his monumental work, "Antiquities of Mexico," Lord Kingsborough, basing his remarks upon Sahagun's own words and other early sources, unfolds a sad story. The progress of Fray Bernardino's great literary work was seriously impeded by the general resistance he encountered among those who should have especially favored his undertaking. Although he had received much commendation from the Chapter of his Order, which met in 1569, persons in high places must have secretly opposed the completion and publication of the History. The excuse was pious and hypocritical. The Chapter took the attitude that the expenditure of considerable sums of money on the writing of such histories was contrary to the Franciscan vow of poverty. Such a statement was little less than ridiculous when we realize that all necessary facilities could have been provided without cost by the brothers themselves, who received no remuneration for their labor. In any event, Sahagun was obliged to discharge his *amenensis*, or secretary, and to write with his own hand whatever he thought proper.

It was a clever move, calculated to frustrate Fray Bernardino's life-work without actually revealing the desire to prevent the perpetuation of the true chronicle of the Aztec people. Sahagun at that time was more than seventy years old, and was afflicted with a palsy, or trembling, of his hand, so that he could no longer write. As he was unable to procure any further dispensation from his Order, his manuscripts remained for more than five years without further work. In the meantime, the Provincial deprived Sahagun of his various originals and copies, and scattered them over the entire province among the various missions.

After the lapse of several years, Sahagun found a friend in Brother Miguel Navarro, who became the Commissioner in the area. At the earnest request of Sahagun, Brother Navarro recovered, by ecclesiastical sanctions, the books and manuscripts and returned them to their aged author and compiler. Nothing further was done at that time, however, to aid Fray Bernardino. In due course, Commissioner-General Brother Rodrigo de Sequera arrived in New Spain. He saw the manuscripts, and was so pleased with them that he desired the author to translate them into Spanish and promptly provided him with everything necessary for the task. Sahagun notes that "the encouragement which he received from the Commissioner-General was owing to the anxious desire which Don Juan de Ovando, President of the Council of the Indies, felt to see the work." In gratitude, Sahagun dedicated the work to him, overwhelming him with eulogies

for having redeemed it, as he declares, from beneath the earth and even from under the ashes.

The manuscript of "The Universal History of the Annals of New Spain," prepared under the kindly protection of Brother Sequera, contained, according to the author's testimony, three columns to each page. In the first column was written the Spanish translation; in the second, the same history was set forth in the Mexican language; and in the third, certain unusual Mexican words and terms were explained and defined in Spanish. Sahagun was nearly eighty years of age when he began the final phase of his task, and it is assumed, on what ground we do not know, that his memory had become impaired. This thinking has led to the belief that some chapters have not been properly preserved.

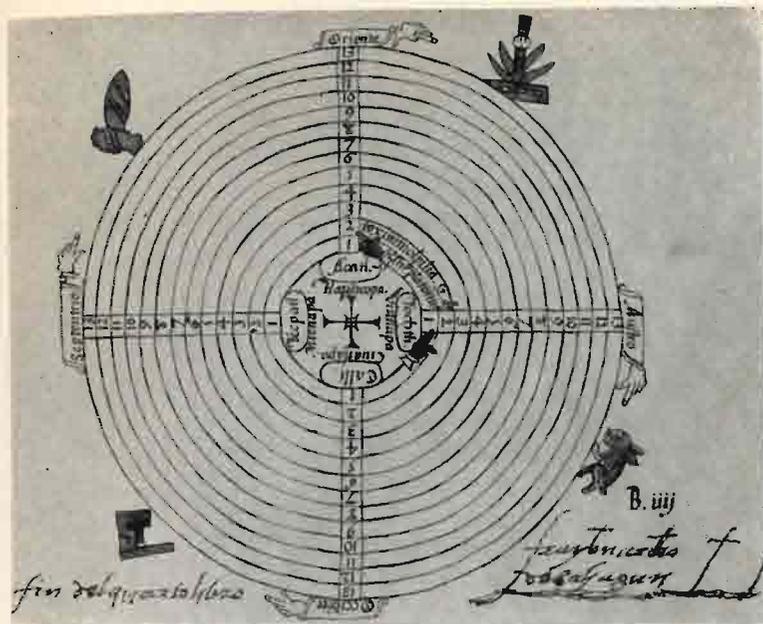
We must pause for a moment and try to fit together the fragments of several insufficient and even conflicting accounts. Sahagun was essentially an historian without a biographer. When he tells us that he sent a synopsis of his manuscript to Spain in the keeping of his devoted friend Fray Miguel Navarro, it is evident that this synopsis must have been in Spanish from the Aztec original, or it could not have excited the interest of Don Juan de Ovando. It was this outline that undoubtedly caused the order from the Council of the Indies in Spain that the entire work of Sahagun, in all twelve books, should be sent to them. The work was completed in 1578, and the twelve books were bound into four large volumes and shipped to Europe. Incidentally, this was the eighth time that the manuscript had been copied.

The twelfth book of Sahagun's History contains his account of the conquest of Mexico by Cortez, and of the extreme cruelties of the early Spanish regime. This seems to have caused further complication, because Sahagun's version of this fragment of history offended high dignitaries of both the church and state. It is said that they obliged Fray Bernardino to alter his original report to justify the conduct of the conquistadors. Perhaps, fortunately enough, the tempest had moved to Spain, and only faint echoes reached America. Having done the best that he could, and with the future of his work completely out of his own hands, the old scholar returned to his simple labors of teaching and ministering to the needs of the new generation of young Indian boys in the mission school. In spite of what must have been the bitterest of disappointments, Sahagun retained his kindly nature and his sincere desire to be of service to his fellow men. It is obvious that Sahagun, like many scholars, was too mild and patient. He should certainly have pressed his case with the highest authorities of

the Franciscan Order. This is especially true when we realize that the animosities and personal antagonisms against him appear to have been comparatively trivial. Of course, had he been more aggressive, ecclesiastical objections might also have crystallized. About these things, we shall never know. Fray Bernardino de Sahagun passed out of this life in 1590, in his ninety-first year. He was probably a victim of a serious epidemic of influenza which broke out in the area of Mexico City. It is believed that he devoted all available time to the perfection of his History for nearly sixty years.

In estimating the writings of Sahagun, several points must be considered in a kindly and honest manner. First of all, this devout Fray was by nature and circumstance an historian, and not a student of comparative religion. He could not accept the theology of the Aztecs because his very mission in Mexico was to convert them to what he devoutly believed to be the true religion. Secondly, his researches were limited to the area around Mexico City, and he was not informed on the beliefs and customs of the more distant culture-groups. There were vast stores of legendry and belief which he never contacted and therefore could not include in his History. Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all in terms of philosophy, it is extremely doubtful if the Aztecs whom he contacted, even though friendly, would have revealed to him or to any other Spaniard the deeper mysteries of their sciences, philosophy, and religion. Like most other Indians of the Americas, these natives were most secretive on all matters pertaining to their initiatory rites. In fact, probably only a few of the Aztecs themselves were qualified to interpret their secret arts. These and other considerations leave much to be desired, but do not detract from the pioneer work which Sahagun accomplished.

In the third book of his History, Fray Bernardino declares that the Aztecs had no systematic or profound doctrine concerning the origin of their deities. From what follows it is evident that he was not acquainted with the deeper implications of their calendar and its cosmological symbolism. Actually, these Indians possessed an elaborate pantheon of deities consisting of an abstract monotheistic concept unfolding through a complicated pantheon of divinities, similar in theological structure to the religio-philosophical systems of Egypt and Greece. Due to the unfortunate attitude of the Spanish conquistadors, everything possible was done to discredit the indigenous beliefs of the Indians. The missionaries found the Aztecs practicing their own baptismal rites, teaching consubstantiation, and employing the confessional. Such parallels were immediately condemned, however, as the works of a diabolic agency striving to discredit the Christian faith.



CIRCLE OF THE YEARS

This occurs in Book VII of the Florentine Codex, but we have chosen the example found in the Codices Matritenses, Book IV, because the drawing is clearer and better made, and also because at the lower right appears the signature of Fray Bernardino de Sahagun. The description in the Florentine Codex explains that the diagram is an account of the arrangement of the years, and is a thing of utmost antiquity. The Aztecs said that its inventor was Quetzalcoatl. It starts in the east (oriente), where the sign of the "cane" is found. The calendar follows the direction of the pointing fingers, and results in thirteen cycles associated with each of the four parts of the world. These parts are represented by the rabbit (lower right), the house (lower left), the flint knife (upper left), and the cane (upper right). These four complete cycles equal 52 years, which period was called the "bundle" or "tying up" of the years. At this time, a jubilee was celebrated, and it was supposed that at the time of the "bundle," Quetzalcoatl would return to rule over his people. The fact that Cortez arrived in Mexico at one of these climactic periods, caused him to be regarded as a god, and contributed to the fall of the Aztec Empire. Sahagun tells us that in the study of the calendar, he gathered many old men, the most adroit that could be found, and together with the most capable of the Spanish students, the calendar was discussed for several days, and it was concluded that the Aztec year started on the second day of February.

Writing of the religion of the Aztecs from the broader perspective of the 20th century, Lewis Spence remarks, "As a matter of fact, the Nahua displayed a theological advancement greatly superior to that of the Greeks or Romans, and quite on a level with that expressed by the Egyptians and Syrians." (See *Mexico and Peru*) Spence also points out that in the period immediately prior to the Spanish occupation, the Aztec priesthood was advancing naturally and inevitably to the contemplation of the exaltation of one God, and that the moral and ethical doctrines of these natives were on a genuinely sincere level, even though many of their practices remained barbaric. Briefly summarized, Aztec cosmology was founded upon the concept of an eternal or everlasting state of being. Within this eternity were epochs or measurable periods. The world emerged, existed for a certain length of time, and then faded back into space. Each of these cycles of manifestation was terminated by a disaster, which dissolved the creation and returned the elements thereof to the original unconditioned substance.

There is now an extensive literature dealing with all phases of Mexican culture prior to the Spanish conquest. Nearly every writer quotes Sahagun or material derived from his History. The great wave of interest in pre-Columbian and pre-Cortezian records in America seems to have been motivated in good part by the discovery of Sahagun's lost manuscripts. These remained comparatively unknown to the world for nearly three hundred years. It remained for men with the enthusiasm of Bustamante and the physical means of Lord Kingsborough to bring the work of Fray Bernardino to the attention of modern students. We know now that the old Franciscan monk did not labor in vain, for all that he hoped for his manuscript has come to pass.

While we realize that bibliographical details are not exactly exciting reading, it seems necessary to include within this tribute to the memory of a sincere and wonderful person a brief summarization of the editions and versions of his work. We should bear in mind that fragments, copies, copies of copies, revisions, deletions, digests, and synopses, of the History came to be scattered far and wide. Later editors seeking to restore the text had to work with a number of different imperfect versions. The great manuscript in parallel Aztec and Spanish, bound in its four volumes and sent to the king, seems to have been the first transcript of the entire work in both languages. It finally came to rest with the Franciscans of Tolosa. Its present whereabouts, if it still exists, is unknown; it seems to have vanished during the numerous religious and political upheavals in Spain. The monks of Tolosa copied the work in abridged form, and this copy was made available about 1790 or 1795 to a Spanish librarian by the name



LEAF OF BOOK VII OF THE FLORENTINE CODEX

This example shows how the manuscript was prepared in parallel columns, the left in Spanish, the right in Aztec written in Spanish characters. The figure represents the rabbit in the moon, and Sahagun explains that according to a fable, the gods ridiculed the moon and struck her face with a rabbit, and that the imprint of the rabbit remained and could be seen as a dark area on the full moon. In many Aztec picture-writings, the moon is represented as a rabbit seated within an olla (a bowl to hold rainwater). See, for example, the Codex Borgia. In Buddhist fables, a hare transmigrated to the moon as a reward for virtuous action, and the Chinese represent the moon as inhabited by a hare which spent its time compounding the drugs of immortality.

This symbol seems to connect the Aztecs with the religions of Asia.

of Don Juan Bautista Muñoz. Kingsborough says that he was fortunate enough to procure a copy of the Muñoz manuscript. Mrs. Bandelier feels that there must be some error in this statement, as Muñoz did not complete his copy of the Sahagun History before his own death and therefore it was not likely that he could have supplied it to another person.

A Colonel Diego Garcia Panes also made a copy of the Muñoz copy, which had now in some mysterious way become complete. The Colonel brought this manuscript to Mexico, where it was ultimately purchased for 100 Mexican pesos by Carlos Maria de Bustamante. To quote from Mrs. Bandelier: "On May 15th, 1830, Bustamante announced that 'after eleven months of untold hardship and considerable expenditure the edition of the eleven books was finished and would be on sale early in June at the price of 9 pesos.' Bustamante deserves great credit for his efforts, for despite the fact that he had no money, no credit, and was forced to go around soliciting donations, he succeeded in publishing the great work in eleven months, while Kingsborough, who had obtained the original long before and was not hampered by any lack of funds, took much longer to get his edition out. It is to be deplored that the Mexican editor should have given to the world an even more incorrect edition than the English by Kingsborough, omitting such parts as to him appeared 'indecent,' for by so doing he lost some of the credit due him." (See, *A History of Ancient Mexico*.)

Published versions of Sahagun's History after Bustamante include the English and Spanish versions which appear in Lord Kingsborough's work (1830-48), a French translation by Jourdanet (1880), and a Mexican version by Robredo (1938). Under the patronage of Fisk University, Mrs. Fanny Bandelier, working largely from the faulty versions of Bustamante, made a translation of the first four books of the History, and this was published in 1932 by the Fisk University Press, under the title "A History of Ancient Mexico." A second volume of her translation has not been published, although she completed the work before her decease. Facsimiles of the Codex Florentino and the Codices Matr'enses (Aztec version signed by Sahagun) were prepared by Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, Director of the National Museum, and were dedicated to General Porfirio Diaz, President of Mexico. These works were published in Madrid, 1905-07. Unfortunately, they are without introductions or commentaries.

To date, printed versions and translations of Sahagun's monumental History have been from imperfect and incomplete manuscripts or from dubious transcriptions and translations from the same. The

present summary of Sahagun's life and the fate of his writings is based upon a digest of the biographical and bibliographical notes in Mrs. Bandelier's book, and the brief paper by Dr. Edgar L. Hewett titled, "Fray Bernardino de Sahagun and The Great Florentine Codex," Santa Fe, 1944. Dr. Hewett in turn, derived most of his material from the Bandelier book. He adds, however, certain material which brings the subject into contemporary focus. The most valuable and important of the surviving manuscripts of Sahagun's History is the Great Codex of Florence in the Lorenzana Library. Mrs. Bandelier describes this as: "Complete in both languages and enhanced by many illustrations The description tallies with the well-illustrated copy of Fray Francisco de Sequera, notwithstanding the fact that the latter is divided into four volumes while the Codex consists of only three." The difference is probably due to rebinding.

Referring to this priceless historical document, Dr. Hewett writes, "After long study of the problem, the specialists in the history and ethnology of Ancient America, at the School of American Research and the University of New Mexico, became convinced that little was to be gained by further work on the scattered sources and incomplete published versions of Sahagun's 'Historia,' while the one complete, unpublished manuscript, the Great Florentine Codex, awaited the archivist in the Lorenzana Library. Accordingly, the two institutions joined in sending Professor Lansing Bloom, associate professor of history in the University; editor of the *New Mexico Historical Review*; formerly on the staff of the School of American Research, to Europe."

Among Professor Bloom's objectives was to secure, if possible, a complete photographic transcription of the great Florentine Codex. His mission was especially important as it took place in 1938-39, just preceding World War II. It was felt that the precarious situation of the Lorenzana Library might result in the complete destruction of the priceless original.

In order to advance our general knowledge of the religions, philosophies, and cultures, of the ancient Aztecs, a very limited number—less than twenty we are informed—of the complete photostatic copies of the Florentine Codex were made available to the great universities of America. Due to a rather happy circumstance, one of these universities failed to take advantage of this unusual opportunity, and the copy intended for it now reposes in the Library of The Philosophical Research Society. Some may question the value of such works in terms of modern utility. We must all admit, however, that a great civilization, about which we know comparatively little, flourished on

our continent before the coming of the Spanish conquistadors. The records of all civilizations are important, for the progress of the world is hastened and sustained by the streams of knowledge which, flowing from many sources, have converged to create the present focus in world culture.

The School of American Research has recently announced the publication of six sections of the Florentine Codex translated into English and edited by Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble. Interested persons are invited to communicate with the School of American Research, Dept. E. P., Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Great Florentine Sahagun, as it is usually described, contains all twelve books. We have already mentioned the contents of the first four. Book V relates to omens and divinations; Book VI, philosophy and theology; Book VII, astrology and natural philosophy; Book VIII, rulers and governors; Book IX, trades, crafts, and merchandising; Book X, morality, physiology, and medicine; Book XI, natural history, geography, roads and architecture; Book XII, the Aztec version of the Spanish conquest. We have selected several illustrations from the Florentine Codex as typical of the work in general. These include the title-page of Book XII, a leaf from Book VII showing the three columns of text, and a figure from the Codices Matritenses, another version of the same writing, because it is clearer than the Florentine diagram and also because it includes the autograph of Sahagun.

In order to give some indication of the manner in which Fray Bernardino presented his material, we have also selected four full-page illustrations which are inserted at the beginning of Book I, before the text, and represent the natives' concept of certain deities involved in their worship. As in the case of Tibetan religion, the Aztec deities were identified by their attributes; that is, the colors of their robes, headdresses; shields, scepters, staffs, and certain markings on their faces and bodies. We have compared those in the Florentine Codex with their equivalents in the Codices Matritenses, which is completely in the Aztec language, and while there are some differences, the drawings are essentially the same. The approach to the definitions of these divinities and the activities with which they are associated, is reminiscent of that which must be employed in studying the civilized tribes of the Southwest Amerinds of the United States. An identification of these divinities and some of their attributes may be of interest to the present reader.



—From Book I of the Great Florentine Codex

PLATE I

Upper left. Vitzilpochtlī. Sahagun identifies this deity with Hercules, but it is more usual to consider him as the equivalent of the Roman god Mars. This deity was born of an immaculate conception and was referred to as "serpent-born." He is an ancient deity and his worship included a very curious rite. On the day of his festival, the Aztecs made a flour of wild amaranth-seeds, which they mixed into a dough from which they formed a figure of the god.

This figure was symbolically killed with an arrow shot through its heart. The devotees then ate the body of the god, distributing some parts of it as relics to special persons. Penances were required of those who received portions of this dough.

Upper right, Tezcatlipoca. This deity was the tribal god of the Tezcucans, and corresponds roughly to the Latin god Jupiter. He was a deity of the air, and was the adversary of Quetzalcoatl. This animosity probably symbolizes the rivalry between the barbarian Nahuatl of that time and the highly civilized Toltecs, whose god-king was Quetzalcoatl. The gradual ascendancy of the Nahuatl elevated the power of Tezcatlipoca, until he became the central figure in the tendency toward monotheism. This evolution was more or less accelerated by the fact that Tezcatlipoca, as a spirit of breath or air, suggested the universality of this element. He became the source of the breath of life and also of the tempest, and he led his people into a land of promise and sustained them in their long program of conquest and expansion. Sahagun says that this deity was held to be the true and invisible God who walked all over the heavens and the earth and hell, and they called him the only being who ruled over the whole world.

Lower left, Paynal. Sahagun describes the god Paynal as the vicar of Vitzilopochtli. His name means "the one who hastens," and in the festivities of this deity, a richly decorated image was carried by runners as a symbol of the rapidity by which the nation could be warned of the approach of enemies, and its own armies gathered to resist invaders. It seems that representations of this deity were kept in the temple of Vitzilopochtli, and on regular occasions were brought out as the personal representatives of the older god. He was accompanied by a guard of honor, and was richly adorned with bright colored ornaments made of paper.

Lower right, Tlaloc. The god Tlaloc is described in the Codex as presiding over rain, and reference is also made to a class of deities called *Tlaloques*. The figure in the Codex does not correspond with the traditional appearance of this deity, who is usually portrayed with a row of tusks and accompanied by serpents. Some believe that he is traceable to the Quiche god Hurekan. Tlaloc was believed to live in the mountains surrounding the plateau of Mexico. Many figures of him were carved from jadeite because this green stone signified the color of moisture. He was the father of numerous progeny, probably representing the clouds that precede the storm. Offerings of maize porridge and pulque were made to him, and when rainfall was especially necessary, the people gathered around the image of Tlaloc, dancing, shouting, crying, and shrieking, for the purpose of waking Tlaloc from his sleep. It was believed that whenever he rested, there was a drought.



—From Book I of the Great Florentine Codex

PLATE II

Upper left, Quetzalcoatl. Although, as Sahagun notes, Quetzalcoatl was originally a mortal man, he had been deified by the Aztecs and received a special veneration as god of the winds. This was because the coming of rain, the giver of life, was usually heralded by a brisk breeze, which was said to sweep the roads for the coming of the gods of rain. Quetzalcoatl was anciently worshipped in Tulla. His face

was said to have been homely, and he wore a very long beard. His companions and servants were workmen skilled in the mechanic arts, in the cutting of jadeite, and in the smelting of silver. Kingsborough was convinced that this deity was an importation and was in all probability a traveler or missionary from another country. According to the best authorities, Quetzalcoatl wore a mitre, spotted to resemble a tigerskin, an embroidered surplice, turquoise earrings, and a gold necklace. He carried in his left hand a shield with a device called the "wind-rose." In his right hand, he held a scepter in the shape of a bishop's staff, adorned with precious stones. He was a High Priest of the temple, a benevolent being who brought culture and enlightenment. He came from across the sea on a raft of serpents and established the line of sovereignty. When he returned back again to the sea, he promised the Aztecs that in due time he would return to them. He brought with him the golden age, and when he departed, many joys went with him and hardships afflicted the people. His name means "the feathered serpent," and he is identified with the god Kukulcan of the more southerly Mayas.

Upper right, Chicomecohuatl. Sahagun identifies Chicomecohuatl as the goddess of food, and she was honored by her people as the first woman who made bread, sweetmeats, and stews. She was also associated with beverages. She wore a crown and carried in her right hand a goblet. In her left hand she held a shield on which a large flower was painted, and she wore vermilion-colored sandals. She was also an earth-goddess, and is considered a variant of Coatlicue, the Earth-Mother. Sacred dances were included in the worship. Red and yellow were her colors because they were associated with the maize plant. The records involving Chicomecohuatl are similar to those of fertility rites of most ancient peoples. Sacrifices were offered to her in order that the earth might be fruitful. Many of the Aztec deities are supposed to have become weary supplying the needs of mankind. It was therefore necessary to refresh them with offerings and sacrifices.

Lower left, Ciuacoatl. Sahagun says of this deity, who was one of the principal goddesses of the Mexicans, "that she granted adverse things, such as poverty, mental depression, and sorrow." It was supposed that she visited the earth disguising herself as a woman of nobility. Her name means the "serpent woman," and in the native art she wore a headdress ornamented with sacrificial flint knives. She also wandered howling and screaming in the night. Sometimes she was represented carrying a cradle in which she hid stolen infants. It seems that this deity may have been of Asiatic origin, and she certainly belongs in the magic and witchcraft lore of the Aztecs.

Lower right, Teteoinnan, or Toci. The first of these names means "the mother of the gods," and the second "our female ancestor." This divinity was an earth-goddess, and her symbol was a broom of grass with which she swept the earth. According to Spinden, she also exercised an influence over the arts of the hearth, such as weaving. She is usually represented in the Codices carrying a broom in one hand and a shield in the other. Around her head is wrapped a band of unspun cotton into which spindles wrapped with thread are stuck like pins. The eleventh feast of the Aztec year was called the "feast of the broom," and was in honor of this deity.

PLATE III

Upper left, Yxcocauhqui. Sahagun identifies him as the god of fire and warmth. As a flaming divinity, he caused fear, but he had other attributes which were regarded with universal esteem. He supplied warmth for those who were cold, fire to cook food. By stimulating evaporation, he produced salt. He also heated water for bathing and for washing of clothes, so that they were clean and new again. On the occasion of his feast, parents selected godfathers and godmothers for their children. On his head, Yxcocauhqui wore a crown of paper from which extended tufts of green feathers to represent flames. On his back, he wore a large adornment made to resemble the head of a dragon, and fashioned of yellow feathers and small seashells. He wore jingles or bells around his ankles. In his left hand, he carried a shield of gold, ornamented with five pieces of jadeite. In his right hand, he bore a scepter consisting of a round gold plate with a hole in the center. It was believed that he hid his face behind the gold plate, looking out through the central opening.

Upper right, Omacatl. This deity has been called the "Mexican Dionysius, or Bacchus." He was the deity presiding over festivities and banquets. He was worshipped especially by the rich, who gave feasts in his honor. It was regarded as a most serious offense to slight the honors due to Omacatl. If he was offended, the deity might appear in person, scolding both the hosts and the guests, and afflicting them with gastric disturbances. Idols of Omacatl were provided with an opening in the body in which food could be placed. The deity was usually pictured seated on a bundle of cypress, wearing a tight paper crown and a mantle resembling a net, with flowers woven into the fringe. Like the previous god, his scepter had a "spy-hole" in the center. His shield usually stood near him, and heavy tassels hung from the rim.



—From Book I of the Great Florentine Codex

PLATE III

Lower left, Macuilxochitl. This deity, who is also called Xochipilli was the patron of luck and gaming. He seems to have originated among the Zapotecs. He was represented with a design resembling a butterfly painted around his mouth, his face stained with many colors, and a high feathered crest. Sahagun says that a feast was held in his honor, but the rites were preceded by a rigorous fasting. Those who broke their obligations to him suffered from fearful diseases.

His devotees wounded themselves before his image during their religious rites. In the Codices it was usual to represent Macuilxochitl with his body painted vermillion. He wore a device on his back resembling a flag or banner standing on a hill. In his left hand, he held a shield which was white and was ornamented with four stones. His scepter was shaped like a heart, from the top of which burst a tuft of green feathers. His ceremonies were attended by dancing, and he was often personified by one of his priests or some selected person.

Lower right, Ixtlilton. The name of this deity signifies "a dark man," and he seems to have been associated with the cult of healing and was sometimes referred to as the Aztec Asclepius. This deity was also known as the brother of Macuilxochitl, who presided over good luck. His temple appears to have developed from the older lodge or tent of the medicine priests, or Siberian shaman. He was surrounded with large jars filled with "black water," and he was especially concerned with restoring health to small children. When a family benefited from his aid, the image of Ixtlilton was carried to the house which had been helped, and a feast was prepared. This deity was always displeased when the jars or containers for liquids were not kept clean and sanitary. He may, therefore, be associated with the concept of the dangers resulting from polluted water. The image of the deity was usually ornamented with various containers to hold the medications which he dispensed.

PLATE IV

Upper left, Opuchtlí. Sahagun tells us that this deity was a deified mortal who had benefited the Aztecs by inventing fishing nets, fishspears, and harpoons. He is also accredited with making snares to capture birds, and inventing oars to propel boats. His name means "left-handed." His importance was increased because the Aztecs were marsh dwellers, and depended upon the lakes for a great part of their food. He was worshipped especially by the aged, who supplicated him for the necessities of living. He was represented as dark-skinned and wearing a paper coronet in the shape of a rose ornamented with the plumage of wild birds. His image was clad in green paper, worn like a kilt. His shield had a white flower in the center, and his scepter was in the form of a highly stylized cup.

Upper right, Yacatecutli, or Yiacatecutli. This was the god of merchants, and was the one who taught trading among people. The merchants guilds therefore adopted him as their patron. Traders, when traveling, all carried a certain kind of cane or walking stick as



—From Book I of the Great Florentine Codex

PLATE IV

a symbol of this deity. Sahagun explains that these canes protected them when they traveled even to the most distant parts of the empire. He then gives a discussion of the various goods carried by these merchants. Among the usual transactions of merchants were dealings in the slave trade. Slaves were often purchased for their skill in trades, thus escaping sacrifice. The image of Yiacatecutli had Quetz-

zal plumes attached to its hair. The deity wore a blue mantle over which was thrown a black net. Around its ankles were yellow leather straps from which hung tiny seashells. He carried a yellow shield with a light-blue center, and in his right hand was the cane or staff which was his peculiar symbol.

Lower left, Xipe. Xipe means "the flayed one," and he was certainly the deity presiding over human sacrifice. In the last period of the Aztec monarchy, kings and important leaders of Mexico assumed the vestments associated with Xipe. The image of this deity was represented as lightly clad, and on his head he wore a tight cap of many colors with tassels hanging down the back. His hair was parted into two braids, and he wore a short green skirt or kilt as far as the knees, with small seashells around the bottom. He carried a yellow shield with red edge. He held his scepter with both hands, and it was in the shape of the heart of the poppy. He also sometimes wore a rope twisted about his body.

Lower right, Napatecutli. This deity was the patron of those who make cypress mats, weave seats for stools, and prepare fabrics woven from reeds. Those who served him were responsible for the cleanliness of his temple, and their ritual included preparing and placing fresh mats and stools before his altar. He, too, was probably a deified mortal. He is represented with a dark body, with white specks around the face. He wore a paper crown with three brilliant green plumes, and a short skirt painted black and white, also ornamented with seashells. In his left hand he held a shield fashioned like a water-lily, and in his right hand he grasped a flowering stalk or cane, the flowers being made of paper. Sahagun also mentions that Napatecutli wore a wide band, like a stole, from the right shoulder across the chest, crossing under the left arm. The stole was white, ornamented with black flowers.

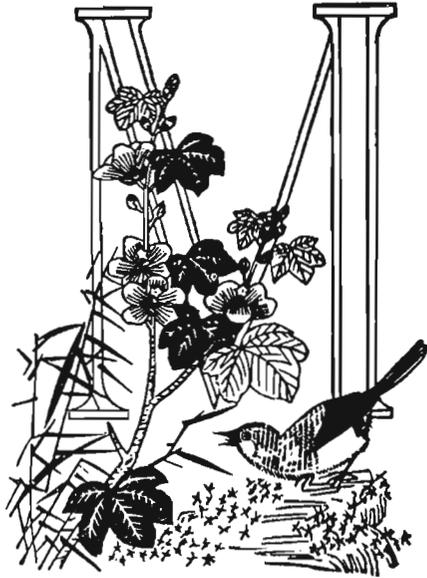
An executive is one who makes an immediate decision and is sometimes right. — *Elbert Hubbard*

Victoria Regina

In a letter to the Duke of Cambridge, Commander of the Army, Queen Victoria noted that when reviewing troops, she observed that some of the officers and men wore mustaches and others did not. It was her opinion that mustaches should no longer be optional, but should be worn by all soldiers. Her Majesty noted: "The effect in the ranks altogether is bad, when you see some with and some without them."

The Unworthy One

The Connoisseurs



R. NAKAMURA suggested that I visit his store the following afternoon, and it was evident from the tone of his voice that he really desired my presence. Selecting what seemed an appropriate hour, therefore, I hastened to his establishment. There were six young Japanese—three boys and three girls, accompanied by an older woman—standing about the shop as I entered. The kindly proprietor advanced with a happy smile to greet me, placed a finger to his lips, and motioned me to a chair.

The elderly Japanese lady tapped lightly on the showcase with the tip of her black fan. The group instantly became silent and attentive. The lady stepped forward and read slowly from a small piece of paper she held in her hand. Later, Mr. Nakamura translated the brief address for my benefit.

The young people belonged to the Association of the Blind for the Appreciation of Art. They all wished to express their profound gratitude for the privilege of meeting once each month at the store of their highly esteemed teacher, Mr. K. Nakamura. At this point in the speech, all the visitors bowed deeply. As conductor of the group, Mrs. Moto added her own felicitations.

Mr. Nakamura then introduced me as an American gentleman who had a deep understanding of artistic matters. The young men smiled politely, and the girls giggled softly. It would also be a fine opportunity, Mr. Nakamura explained, for the members of the Association to show their proficiency in the English language.

Led by Mrs. Moto, who directed her companions by striking her wrist with her fan, the assemblage entered the private room behind the

screen and was soon comfortably seated. Realizing that I knew nothing about the Association, Mr. Nakamura explained the procedure and circumstance of the meeting.

Many years before, there had lived a great Japanese painter and monk who had lost his sight but continued to practice his artistry with consummate skill. He had been honored by the Emperor, and in his memory, the Association of the Blind for the Appreciation of Art had been formed. Mrs. Moto, the wife of a prominent businessman had dedicated her life to this project, and had patiently taught many boys and girls to see with their hands, hearts, and minds. She had succeeded so well that she had received the Order of the Rising Sun from the Imperial hand, bestowed with the beautiful words that through her love and devotion she had brought sunrise into the souls darkened by blindness.

Mr. Nakamura then continued: "Considering the peculiar merit and distinction of these meetings, it is my custom to exhibit to these wonderfully skillful critics, certain of the most precious treasures of my house and family, otherwise reserved for only the most discriminating masters of artistic knowledge."

He turned to the table, on which lay a long slender box of unpainted wood. He took from the box an ancient kakemono bordered with rich brocade, and the roller ornamented with jade knobs. He carefully unrolled the painting and hung it from a hook provided for this purpose high on the wall.

Mr. Nakamura had chosen a religious subject, and the kakemono was one of the most remarkable I had ever seen. The painting was upon silk, and the work itself without the border was about four feet high, and half as wide. The background, which suggested a heavy curtain, was in a shade of blue approaching indigo. A deep vertical line of shadow seemed to divide the curtain. The fingers of a golden hand parted the drape ever so slightly, revealing the left side of a radiant gilded face of the Buddha, surrounded by streamers of light. The face shone with infinite compassion and was obviously the work of a great master. The painting was indescribably beautiful and strangely moving.

Guided by Mrs. Moto, the six young Japanese gathered around the painting, holding white silk handkerchiefs with which to wipe their hands before touching the picture. Mrs. Moto placed the hand of one of the young men on the brocade border of the kakemono, saying softly, "Tell us the colors which you feel."

Sensitive fingers moved as lightly as a feather across the painted silk, pausing briefly at the golden face and hand. The youth replied

with a quiet air of certainty. "The larger part is a deep antique blue, there is some black and two areas of gold, also radiating lines of gold and silver. There is no seal or signature of an artist."

Mrs. Moto next invited one of the girls to describe the subject of the painting. Gently her eager fingers explored the design, lingering over the central section. She then bowed to Mrs. Moto. "If you please, this is a religious work, but most unusual. It is a head of the Buddha with one side of the face hidden by the folds of a curtain. There is also part of his head showing, and his head is ornamented with a radiant halo."

The remaining members of the group each examined the *kake-mono* in the same way. One estimated the age of the painting, another sought to identify the artist, and still another analyzed the pigments which had been used. The last, a little girl of thirteen, was so small that Mr. Nakamura lifted her onto a chair so that she could reach the upper parts of the painting. Her assignment was to describe in detail the features of the Buddha—which she did with deep emotional reverence.

While Mrs. Moto was passing around pads of paper and drawing pencils, Mr. Nakamura remarked proudly, "Is it not true, Haru Sen, that these experts have seen more with their fingers than most would see with their eyes?"

It was now time for each one in the group to draw an impression of the painting in the form of a quick sketch. I was invited to walk about and watch the work. In a few moments, five of the drawings were finished, and all were amazingly accurate. It seemed impossible that such skillful copies could be made by persons who were blind.

Something seemed to be wrong with little Tomi, the thirteen-year-old girl. She was holding her pad of paper against her breast and crying softly. Mrs. Moto was about to rap with her fan, but Mr. Nakamura shook his head and, stepping over, seated himself beside Tomi.

"What is it little daughter?" he asked with deep concern. "Are you sad because you cannot see the picture?"

She continued to sob, but shook her head and tried to smile. "I am afraid, illustrious teacher, that I have not done well. You will think that I have disgraced the Association."

"It is all right Tomi. You are like my own child; show me your drawing." Slowly her hands relaxed, and Mr. Nakamura took the

sketch from her and studied it carefully. He then beckoned to me and held the drawing so that I could see it.

Tomi had reproduced the original exactly, except that the curtain had been removed from the Buddha's face, and the radiant head was complete. Mrs. Moto hovered near, but said nothing.

"Very, very interesting," murmured Mr. Nakamura. "Do not fear, Tomi, your sketch is a credit to the Association." He rose and walked over to the original painting, which he studied intently. Suddenly he turned, exclaiming "Excuse please," and stepped out of the room.

A moment later he returned, carrying a small electric lamp which he plugged into a nearby socket. "Sometimes infra-red light is helpful in my business," he said. Closing the curtains of his room, Mr. Nakamura turned the lamp upon the painting. Instantly the dim outline of the right side of the Buddha's face appeared.

Mr. Nakamura inhaled softly through his teeth. "See, the artist had faintly sketched in the part of the face which he later covered with the drape. Little Tomi alone discovered the truth." He turned to the little girl. "You deserve special distinction for your exceptional skill."

Mrs. Moto rapped with her fan and the entire group rose and bowed deeply to Tomi.

"Let it be remembered by the Association," announced Mr. Nakamura, "that Tomi, with her fingers, has seen what I, with two eyes and a lifetime of experience, had not been able to observe."



Of Interest to Students

An Icelandic friend sends us a refined translation of the old Norse word *Ragnarok*. He points out that this has been translated by the Germans as *Gottterdammerung*, or *the twilight of the gods*. Actually, it is from two words: *Ragna*, meaning a *god*, and *rok* meaning *destiny* or *fate*. The proper translation should therefore be *the destiny or fate of the gods*. *Rokhr* means *twilight*, and this is the reason for the loose translation which has gained almost universal acceptance.

The Cheerful Giver

Cecil Rhodes, the South African statesman, is accredited with the following observation: "Pure philanthropy is all very good, but philanthropy at five per cent interest is a good deal better."

Research on Reincarnation

OCCASIONALLY someone will say: "I want definite scientific proof of the immortality of the human soul." Almost immediately someone else will say: "Why quibble about proof? Everyone in his right mind knows that immortality is fact." Such statements are stimulating, but not especially informative or solutional. First of all, much depends upon the kind of proof an individual is willing to accept, and also, to a degree, upon what constitutes a fact. Experience reveals that both *truth* and *fact* are terms about which there is little agreement on a critical level. There are still serious and sober persons in this world who believe that the earth is hollow, and that we live on the inside. They are in a position to prove this to anyone who will accept their proof as factual.

We must also bear in mind that factuality is rather intimately associated with physical phenomena. From tradition supported by observation and sustained by experimentation, we can approach the objective universe with a fair degree of certainty. If, however, our researches lead into the sphere of intangibles where we cannot weigh, measure, and estimate with the scientific instruments at our disposal, we must either admit that facts are not available or else create a new definition for the term. Many things are true about which no absolute proof is available. We accept the words of our neighbors without proof, never doubting that they are honest persons. Life would become hopelessly overburdened with statistics if we actually demanded adequate substantiating evidence for even the most commonplace of our attitudes and opinions.

In all honesty, we cannot as yet demonstrate to the skeptic, the doubter, the unbeliever, or the disbeliever, that reincarnation is a proven fact. In the first place, we have no common agreement as to the kind of evidence which would be acceptable to those of various minds and temperaments. A thing, to be actually known, must be experienced, for even the sworn testimony of our nearest and dearest friend will not overcome our doubts or objections. The doctrine of rebirth is actually a concept relating to the state of the human being after death. This concept is acceptable to, and has been accepted by, countless human beings from time immemorial. To be quite factual, however, the concept would not be proved if every human being accepted it, nor would it be disproved if no one accepted it.

Testimony supporting the belief in rebirth is of such a kind that it may be called "highly persuasive"; that is, it is likely to gain the sympathy and support of many persons. Under the heading of "persuasive factors" are references to the doctrine in the sacred literature of the world and its commentaries; statements thereon by famous philosophers, scholars, mystics, and poets; statistics regarding the vast number of adherents of all races and classes throughout human society; and accounts relating thereto and advanced as personal experiences by mystics, seers, and persons claiming psychic or extra-sensory powers. These altogether can persuade us that the belief in rebirth is honorable, consistent with reason, acceptable to religion, and suitable to those living constructive and useful lives. To some, such a group of testimonies constitutes proof and bestows a conviction of certainty. To others, a doctrine so widely diffused and ably sustained is obviously factual. The scoffer, the unbeliever, or the cynic, however, simply smiles and declares himself completely unconvinced. He insists that nothing has been demonstrated beyond doubt, other than the obvious fact that a belief has many believers.

Psychology, in its process of probing the mental-emotional substratum of human nature, is making the average person more aware of his own psychic content. It is becoming acceptable to most normal persons that the psychic entity within man is a reality and, as such, is responsible for behavior patterns on the objective level of living. Many psychological concepts are slowly being transformed by research and experimentation into scientific fact, and there is every reason to hope that this process will continue until many of Nature's deeper mysteries have been solved. Psychologists are now beginning to consider the problem of reincarnation, and this circumstance in itself is exercising a new and forceful persuasion upon the public mind. The term *hypnotic regression* sounds much more impressive than a mystical trance or the musings of some medieval seer; but this only means that persuasiveness has become more persuasive. If a million persons under scientific control were able to remember, under hypnotic tension, previous lives, the unbeliever would still remain an unbeliever. He would insist that some subtle subterfuge had been employed, or that a common delusion was spreading, or that evidence had been incorrectly estimated. In the presence of superphysical phenomena, the person lacking powers of verification within himself can accept or reject, but he can never know.

What we call *knowing* simply means complete and unconditioned acceptance. We are wholly convinced or entirely satisfied, or are no longer troubled with doubts or uncertainties relating to a subject. We instinctively assume, therefore, that others should be of the same mind,

and it is inconceivable to us that our belief should be doubted or questioned. We can only assume that the unbeliever is inadequately informed, prejudiced, stubborn, or simply unpleasant. Like as not, he feels the same about us.

Even with the introduction of the hypnotic regression technique, the doctrine of rebirth is still on an essentially philosophic level, which means that it must be analyzed by the reason, always with the assumption that the reasoning power itself has been adequately unfolded and disciplined. The history of knowledge is worth examining. How have the facts which we now generally accept come into existence? We may say that the philosophies, sciences, and arts of mankind began in the temple under the broad term *religion*. Broadly speaking, all learning, especially that relating to essentials, originated in revelation, which is a release of intuitively apperceived realities from within man himself and, more remotely, from universal consciousness. Such revelations brought with them a sense of absolute authority. There was slight inclination to doubt or question, and the seer and prophet assumed that his illumination came directly from divinity, and was therefore infallible. Even then, however, men doubted the prophet and questioned his right to teach, preach, or disseminate his revelation.

Gradually, the human search for eternal truth resulted in the development of philosophical institutions. The words of the saint and mystic were subjected to rationalization, a process of proving or disproving through the use of a philosophic method. Proof then became the conviction of a trained mind. The individual persuaded himself by his thinking, which ultimately convinced him of the rightness or wrongness of ideas. Philosophy thus set up its censorship over religious beliefs, and rationalization tested revelation. Many beliefs faded away, and others survived because that which was mystically affirmed was rationally sustained.

With the dawn of the modern scientific attitude, ideas which had been strengthened and defined by rationalization were further subjected to verification. Obviously, only certain types of ideas were suitable to the scientific method. That which remained unsolvable or unsuitable to verification by the techniques available to science, continued to be in the provinces of religion or philosophy. The law of rebirth is outside the field of scientific concentration, which actually means that it must be approached theologically or rationally. Like most problems of this kind, there has been little integration of the numerous beliefs and ideas relating to rebirth. The doctrine has descended to us on several levels, and has been subjected to numerous revisions and interpretations.

Like most subjects which have intrigued the human mind, the concept of rebirth has two aspects: one profound and little known, the other popular and broadly discussed. The popular belief has been adulterated with a quantity of irrelevancies, and also considerably distorted in an effort to reconcile the basic concept with the teachings of numerous sects not natively inclined to acknowledge the belief. In the course of time, these constant compromises have led to confusion, especially in the West.

The study of reincarnation involves three distinct aspects of the problem. The first of these, of course, is the machinery of re-embodiment, in the terms of our present knowledge of natural universal law. It is obvious that our knowledge of the world and its processes has increased greatly through the ages. So we ask ourselves, what do we *know* to be true—what do we sincerely feel to be factual—that might conflict with the doctrine of successive lives on earth? It seems to me that we have nothing which we can truthfully and honestly say disproves the probability of rebirth. Actually, very little research carried on scientifically in the last three hundred years has any real bearing upon this concept. If anything, we have become aware of a purposeful pattern of existence which almost requires a broad reformation in our attitudes toward the survival of consciousness after death.

The second point to be covered deals with the state or condition of the psychic entity in the interval between embodiments. To solve this, means a profound examination of dimensions of existence about which we have no scientific certainty, but a number of philosophical rationalizations. If man retains a conscious identity after death, he must preserve some part of his individuality, and this implies a continuance in time and place. This equation is very difficult for the materialist to accept, presents no serious obstacle to the idealistic philosopher, and is a foregone conclusion to the theologian. A new dimension is contributed by the psychologist, who is beginning to realize that it would be conceivable that the objective consciousness of man might retire at death into a subjective state, and there remain until re-embodiment. Thus comes the question: Is man's after-death condition an internal experience alone, or does it have some kind of external connotations?

The third basic consideration is the ethical or moral phase of reincarnation. If an individual is born again into this world, is his appearance the result of a pattern of laws and processes which can be considered as rewards or punishments for previous actions? Does the re-embodied person bring back with him the assets and liabilities of previous existences? Is there any essential reason why he is reborn at a certain time or in a particular place? This can be extended to

inquire if other kingdoms of Nature, such as plants and animals, are also re-embodied; if so, why and how? The *how* is not so difficult, but the *why* takes on moral coloring almost immediately.

Within the structure of the concept of rebirth there are numerous divisions of belief, and each of these must be examined separately in terms of its probability. Some opinions about reincarnation are obviously immature; others conflict with demonstrable fact; and still others are mutually inconsistent. We cannot say, therefore, that the innumerable questions and doubts about man's after-death state are solved merely by the acceptance or rejection of the concept of metempsychosis.

The most complete and systematic exposition of the doctrine of rebirth is to be found in Buddhist philosophy. Fortunately, the essential principles of Buddhism are within the comprehension of Western minds. The teachings of Buddha parallel closely many of the findings of modern psychological research. Even though the Buddhist faith has become a highly involved religious system with several major branches and countless smaller divisions, its basic approach to the laws governing the evolutionary processes of Nature has remained substantially unchanged for more than twenty-five hundred years. From even a superficial consideration of Buddhist psychophysics, we realize that we are dealing with a highly integrated system, and that the doctrine of rebirth is the essential foundation of the entire structure. The belief in reincarnation cannot simply be added to some system which did not previously include this concept. Many attempts have been made to do this, but the results have been a general confusion.

In the West, Platonism and Neoplatonism developed upon the assumption that man lived more than once in the physical world. The Greek approach emphasized the value of the belief in reincarnation in rationalizing the place of man in the universal scheme. Rationalization must courageously assail a primary uncertainty. That man is important to himself, to others, or to the universe, has not been factually established. We like to assume that we are the noblest works of God, but there are certainly times when this assumption appears most unreasonable. It is also apparent that the human being is an incomplete creature. A survey of the background of the human race reveals a slow and often painful course of growth—a gradual improvement over a very long period of time. Rationalization inclines us to contemplate the probability that this tendency to progress will continue in the future, and that man may, and almost certainly will, exceed his present state. As primitive man had no concept of modern man, it is almost a certainty that modern man, in turn, can have no concept

of ultimate man. The majority of moderns accept the law of evolution as a fact too well established to be a further subject of debate. Obviously, evolution bears witness to an inherent urge in things to improve or increase in terms of quality or ability. We admit that such a law almost certainly exists. We know how it operates, but we do not know why.

It is difficult to accept a concept of growth in which all things in general evolve, but nothing in particular evolves. Can mankind grow, without man growing? And in what way is the growth of mankind serviceable to the individual? It may be true that a thousand years from now we may outgrow war, and ten thousand years from now we may produce an utopian civilization. According to popular belief, we are all born too late or too soon. We missed the original golden age, and cannot survive until its return. If evolution is a motion only of species or of types, the individualization of the human mind was more of a liability than an asset. We know that man is more than body, and that as surely as his physical parts show the influence of evolutionary processes, his mind and his emotions also appear to have gradually unfolded and matured, and can certainly bear further refinement.

The human being as a complete individual either advances toward a destiny worthy of the long path along which he has traveled, or else existence is an illusion and a delusion. There are moments in which we fear the worst, but in general our natural instincts—perhaps more reliable than our educated faculties—refuse to accept a concept of total futility. If there is no purpose in the universe, then all human purposes are uncertain, if not invalid. So we begin by examining the integrity of the concept of purpose. We observe that on the cultural level of society, purpose is essential to achievement. Things done without reason are unreasonable, and to the degree that incentives weaken, progress is impaired. We may not be fully competent to estimate the details of universal purpose, but the most sensible of men have assumed that existence is meaningful and purposeful. All incomplete things move toward completeness; imperfect things toward perfection; and all unordered patterns toward a state of order.

If we are willing to acknowledge any purpose worthy of, and consistent with, the infinite machinery of space, we must also admit that in terms of man and the other natural kingdoms, this perfection, this fulfillment of purpose, has not yet been achieved. In the popular mind, man stands as a finite being in the midst of an infinite process. Assuming him to be far wiser and better than he is, what part of infinite motion or infinite purpose can man comprehend in the seventy or eighty years which constitute his reasonable life-expectancy?

The majority of human beings live and die in a state of inadequacy. Their experiences are limited to the immediate and the commonplace. Such contributions as they make to the purposeful motion of the ages are involuntary. *Past* and *future* are words used to symbolize unexperienced dimensions of time, and the present is experienced only in a superficial way.

If this is the whole story of man—if he comes from nothing, abides for a time in uncertainty, and returns to nothing—he stands as a purposeless unit in the midst of a purposeful universal program. So ridiculous is this concept that it is accepted only by those deficient in reflective abilities or inclinations. Take, for example, the contemporary generation. This is a tiny focal point in an incredible and almost inconceivable cycle of time. Prior to the present, there were vast patterns of experience which modern man cannot know. He may read about them, or examine ancient artifacts, but he has no adequate comprehension of the long road he has traveled. After contemporary man departs from this theatre of confusion, the road will continue. New generations will have experiences. There will be discoveries and great changes, and wonderful lessons, but the man of today will be asleep in the dust and the place will know him no more.

When we think this way—and such thinking is as factual as our abilities make possible—we have reason to doubt that an all-wise and provident Nature would sanction so disorderly a procedure. The one direct means of growth for man is experience. To experience all things is to know all things, and growth must be the result of this increase of knowledge through experience. It seems reasonable, therefore, that life, seeking perfection through total experience, must live at all times and under all circumstances, whether it is aware of such an existence or not. The doctrine of rebirth is the only hypothesis which meets this requirement, for not only does growth require a continuity of consciousness, but the unfoldment of experience requires that this consciousness should develop from its least to its greatest state without serious interruption or without the introduction of unstable factors. By this we mean that man's growth in the physical universe, as we know it, must all take place here, or else there could be no orderly advancement from one state of knowing to another, with each step properly supported from the past and adequately supporting the future. The growth of man must be synchronized with the progress of his environment, for this environment presses him on and he, in turn, reacts upon his environment, creating modifications consistent with his own understanding and ability.

Our first argument, therefore, is primarily a defense of the integrity of the universal archetype. Whether we call this the will of God, the laws of the universe, or the workings of Infinite Mind, is of secondary significance. If we assume that this universal fabric is ensouled with a rational principle, and therefore that it is a lawful structure, we must also accept the challenge that confronts us every day, and the existence of which we cannot doubt or question. If we wish to honestly say to ourselves that God is wise, or God is good, we must also accept the responsibility of this conviction. It means that the creation sustained by God must also be wise and good, or else it is unworthy of its own creator. We cannot doubt the inherent integrity of the total universe and the forces that sustain us. Man is a manifestation of these forces, an integral part of totality, and there seems no good reason why he should be deprived of full participation in a program which seems to be appropriately geared to his requirements.

If, as the theologian insists, there is a divine spark in every human creature, then this spark is itself timeless and indestructible, and there is no reason to assume that God in Nature lives forever, but God in man is forever dying. Even to suggest that man may survive but exist in some other distant or different state, defeats the concept of purpose. If man is here today and gone tomorrow, we have an illogical situation, regardless of where he goes. When a man in college or in university takes a specialized course in journalism, we do not expect him to select plumbing as a profession. Why should we say, then, that the human being receives a specialized education in the problems of this world, and then passes to some sphere where the things he has learned have no value or utility? It might be different if we could honestly say that departure from this vale of uncertainty is equivalent to a diploma; that if we learn all there is to learn, we might graduate with honors. But this is not the case. Even the greatest genius departs from this life with more ignorance than knowledge. He has mastered a science or an art, but more than seventy other arts and sciences still challenge his ability. He has lived in one time, and in a few places, but there are countless times and innumerable places. He has loved a few, respected some, and feared or hated others, but he has not understood his brother man or bridged the intervals that artificially divide humanity. During his years of physical living, he has broadened and deepened certain parts of himself, and these are foundations which invite future building. If, after death, he reposes in some hyper-dimensional paradise, or is wafted to some star or constellation, it immediately becomes necessary to think in terms of science-fiction. Explanation must be added to explanation, and this pyramiding of opinions inevitably ends in the loss of

perspective. The unreasonable takes over, and the universe loses all its useful landmarks.

The modern scientist likes to take the attitude that the most simple explanations are likely to be the most factual. The mind, afraid of simplicity and untrained in direct action, escapes from the control of common sense and soars into the rarified atmosphere of romantic speculation. The most simple and direct answer to man's association with Nature is that he is part of it, grows with it, suffers through it, gains dominion over it, and finally, through experience, achieves the fullness of himself. In this way, everything is used, and nothing is wasted. Perhaps most important of all, man emerges as a self-responsible being, and not a plaything of mysterious and intangible celestial politics. He was not born to suffer, nor was he conceived in sin, nor is he burdened with iniquity to the end. He was born to grow and to unfold through himself his own part of a universal program.

The least we can say, therefore, is that man is geared to the universal purpose, and wherever that is going, he is also going. This presents him also with reasonable motives for self-improvement. It becomes increasingly vital to him that he come to understand all that he can possibly comprehend of universal purpose. Actually, this is the generally forgotten reason for education. A being with an individual intellect capable of self-will and a degree of self-determinism, can make a conscious and voluntary statement of allegiance to the true purpose for his own existence. In this way, he cooperates with growth, becoming more observant and more willing to face and bear those experiences which constitute the dynamics of progress. Materially, we have made a virtue of efficiency, and are not inclined to tolerate non-productive activity. We have every reason and right to assume that the universe is an efficient and productive structure. If we relax our emotional tensions, subdue our prejudices, and restrict our day-dreams, we will begin to experience the reality of the magnificent organization of energies and powers in which we exist and to which we are inevitably bound. Reason, therefore, removes anxiety and undue fears. All that really remains is for the person to be honest, both with himself and with his world. When he rejoices in honesty, and accepts the doctrine of equal opportunities for all and special privileges for none, he begins to discern the importance of the law of rebirth. Ethically speaking, it is the most honest answer which we have for life's most perplexing questions.

When man develops a purpose within himself, he inevitably sets to work to equip himself to attain that purpose. Between desire and fulfillment many elements and factors are introduced. The concept

of a purposed universe implies an intricate structure of laws, energies, principles, and forces, not only to sustain purpose, but to fulfill it and bring a plan to its complete perfection. In the second part of this article, we will consider those universal laws which bear upon the concept of rebirth, and how these laws, through natural and consistent procedure, work together to release the universal potential in the human being.

(To be continued)



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In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: It has been said that if half the people of the earth can be induced to meditate for three minutes once weekly (Thursday noon, for example), a lasting world peace may be achieved. Do you think that this is feasible as an answer to the problem of peace, and are you in sympathy with such organized movements?

ANSWER: Several notes and memos have come to me in recent years bearing upon this subject. It would seem that persons of good intention in many parts of the world have more or less simultaneously advanced this solution to international conflict, and organizations have been formed largely, if not exclusively, for this purpose. Certainly the cause is worthy, and most of the programs offered are in conformity with the spiritual idealism of sincere and devout men and women. We may, therefore, conclude that such endeavors are idealistic and well intentioned, and, theoretically at least, should do more good than harm. We qualify this statement, however, because it would seem to me that we should not depend upon prayer as a substitute for other activities suitable to advance the security of mankind. To assume, for example, that three minutes a week of prayerful meditation is man's total solution to his present dilemma, might lead to a broad misunderstanding of human responsibility for human conduct.

The setting aside of special times and occasions for the practices of special virtues has never impressed me too favorably. Mothers Day is certainly a pleasant thought, but our parents might be happier if they were given the proper respect and appropriate symbols of our

appreciation every day. The same may be said of patriotism, religious feast-days and fast-days, and the like. The complete streamlining of our moods and attitudes and the regimentation of our natural human instincts certainly leave something to be desired. If all religious-minded persons included a prayer for world peace in daily devotions, and various sects and creeds incorporated such sentiments into their regular services, it might well be that our spiritual inclinations would have greater and more consistent force.

If fifty per cent of the population of the earth devoutly and sincerely believed in peace, and practiced honest and genuine cooperation, the probabilities of a world war would become negligible. This would assume, however, that prayers were sustained by the total conviction of the devotee. It would mean that he was resolved beyond all doubt or compromise to "keep the peace" in his dealings with his family, his neighbors, his community, his nation, and his world. In other words, he must substantiate his meditation or his prayer by the simple and direct offering of his own life and character to the preservation of human society. The apostle said, "Words without works are dead," and the spiritual power of prayer is sustained by a deep and true believing. All debate to the contrary notwithstanding, there can be no true believers apart from or contrary to the basic character of the individual. If the concept of world prayer carries the full implication of the seriousness and genuineness of sincere worship, then I would say without hesitation that the program is most important and valuable. If, however, persons remain as they are, perpetuating the small bickerings which make up the average life, nursing private feuds and public disputes, then three minutes of contrite aspiration once a week will certainly prove ineffective.

World wars arise not among nations primarily, but within the psychic organism of private citizens. We do not like to face this fact, but it is nevertheless true. As long as there is intolerance in the human mind, there will be dictators and conquerors. Prejudice also plays a prominent role, with egocentricity contributing to the calamity. On the business level, competition is a form of war, and all efforts to interpret it as good sportsmanship are unrealistic. The struggle to succeed at the expense of others, is the determination to dominate and control, and the broad scheme of monopolies which have developed on all levels of our alleged culture, contributes to those frustrations and insecurities which lead to war and civil strife.

Most folks are well intentioned, but it is an undeniable fact that if ten, not fifty, per cent of our more prominent citizens were resolutely determined to prevent war, we would have peace. It has been demon-

strated repeatedly that an organized minority can control any situation. The reason that this has not yet happened is that world peace, as we understand the term today, is economically unprofitable. It would interfere with various private projects and purposes, and would require a deep and broad reorganization in our way of life. We would be forced to a new standard of ethics which would be essentially cooperative, elevating the common good above private advantage. We would have to learn a considerable measure of unselfishness, and find new and better ways of enjoying ourselves. We could no longer consider that man successful who had outwitted his associates, nor could we live in a state of eternal compromise where principles are involved. We would be forced to defend right and truth, and respect the inalienable privileges of others as well as their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. We would have to recover from the hypnosis of exploitation as the fulfillment of the mortal dream. In dealing with foreign nations, we would have to have honest and enlightened consideration for the smaller powers and lesser states, viewing leadership as opportunity to serve and assist rather than the right to exploit and control.

Such modifications as these could theoretically result in a moderation of the excessive instinct in human beings to build careers at the expense of each other. This would probably require broad reforms on the educational level. Children would have to be taught the meaning of world citizenship, fair play, and universal tolerance. They would have to recover from their various prejudices relating to the racial and religious backgrounds of their schoolmates and play-fellows. They would have to recognize the dignity of innate ability, and regard that person as most honorable who conducts himself in a creditable manner. This can come only when the children are not subjected to prejudices in their own homes, their churches, or among their elders. In other words, we must build a generation that is comparatively free of those attitudes and instincts which many persons now regard as normal and proper. We take some consolation in the thought that our present behavior has always brought with it war and disaster. Unless the behavior changes, peace will not come to this troubled sphere.

Prayer and meditation are presumably most significant to those who are by inclination religious or given to a spiritual outlet. Here again, however, let us face realities, even though they are disturbing. We have in the world today at least five major and hundreds of minor religions and sects. These have nominal followings, and the total religious population will approach two billion human beings. We may also assume that, for the most part, religion was more vital and was held more dogmatically in past centuries than in the present day.

Thus far, more than fifty per cent of the earth's population is addicted to one faith or another, and all these denominations are built essentially upon principles of brotherly love. All this religion, however, flourishing for several thousands of years and claiming membership from all strata of human society, has not up to the present time been able to prevent war. In the last fifty years, two of the most terrible wars of all time have been possible in what we like to term an enlightened society. Prayers for world peace have ascended to the Eternal Throne almost incessantly for the last 5 milleniums. At the same time, neither divine intervention nor human resourcefulness have been able to terminate military bloodshed. It would appear, therefore, that prayer as we have practiced it for ages, is not a panacea for the world's woe.

It does not require a genius to understand this situation. Religion is a *nominal* experience in the lives of the majority of alleged believers. Not many years ago, a non-Christian nation announced its intention of becoming nominally Christian in order to advance its commerce with other countries. This type of nominalism is deadly on a spiritual plane of action. It simply means that we hold a general allegiance to a doctrine, but seldom feel impelled to permit our spiritual convictions to interfere with our thoughts, emotions, or actions. Every sincere religious leader fully appreciates the truth of these remarks. He knows that it is not difficult to build a church in his community. Outstanding citizens will find the money. It is far more of a task to build a dynamic Christianity into the lives of the church members. When they have given their dollar or paid their pew rent, they consider themselves among God's elect. An inspired leader may attain some degree of penetration, and occasionally one of his followers will prove the sincerity of his devotion. For the most part, however, in the shadow of the church, business will go on as usual, and the district court house will still be burdened with litigations which bear witness to selfishness and outright dishonesty. It may be said of prayer, as of charity, that the gift without the giver is bare.

It might not be too difficult to create a powerful league of prayer. In fact, such a program might sweep a country and also reach deep into the international scene. After the excitement of organization has subsided, however, what will happen? Once a week, men and women may pause and recite the words which have been recommended. The question is, what will they do after the pause? Will they return to the same way of life that has never solved anything? Will they keep on driving shrewd bargains and pushing forward toward those selfish ends which have always dominated their activities? If so, they are asking for peace with their lips and asking for war with their conduct.

To what degree, then, should we allow ourselves to salve our consciences with some little ritual which will free us from a dynamic realization of man's responsibility to heaven? Should we be content to ask God for peace, or should we earn this peace by lives dedicated to righteousness? I suspect that peace is like happiness. It is a by-product. Everyone who has tried to be happy, is miserable. But those who live constructive lives, experience a happiness which they have not actually sought, but which rewards honorable endeavors. We cannot legislate for peace, nor can we plead for it before the throne of heaven. We can, however, roll up our sleeves and work for it, and there is no prayer that is as eloquent or acceptable as dedicated service.

When the time comes and some arrogant fellow resolves to have a war, he immediately floods his nation with propaganda. This is easy, for all he has to do is to tell his people that they have been desperately and horribly abused; that the prosperity they deserve has been falsely taken from them by another; and that their nation is surrounded by a ring of wolves, eager to devour it and to reduce its people to slavery. By carefully catering to the selfishness and intolerance of his followers, the dictator gains control of the minds and bodies of persons normally goodnatured and well intentioned, but inwardly and deeply selfish, self-centered, and opinionated. The dictator well knows that these weaknesses have not been corrected and therefore are available to be used or abused to accomplish his ends. He would fail completely if the average man and woman were personally above the level of such stupid methods of corruption. If the citizen said quietly, "I do not expect what I have not earned, and I will not deprive others of what is justly theirs, and I refuse to condemn the peoples of other nations for their nationality, their religion, or their beliefs," there would certainly be no war. A leader must have followers, or he is powerless. And if the right leaders had followers, there would be peace.

It may justly be said that a world-wide campaign of prayer for peace and brotherly love would strengthen the human religious instinct, and by repetition produce a lasting effect, not only upon participants, but upon society in general. There is certainly a measure of validity in thinking of this kind, but we should not become too optimistic. Those who are convinced that such a program is worthy of their support have every right to this expression of their good incentives. Regardless of the kind of prayer or meditation used, however, a broad plan of religious education should be encouraged. Devout persons must be taught that devotion is a constant practicing of principles in conduct. If prayer helps one to live better and to

strengthen his own virtues because of his dedication to God and his fellow men, it is most commendable. If, on the other hand, we exhaust our spiritual vitality in words, and fail to improve our daily conduct, we have seriously misunderstood the relationship between God and man. It is one thing to seek internal guidance in order to serve the common need wisely and unselfishly, and quite another thing merely to cast our burdens on the Lord and expect heaven to provide miraculously that which we are unwilling to earn through honest labor. It is a matter of the quality of understanding, and groups promoting the idea of world prayer should never lose sight of that streak of perversity in human nature which is forever misinterpreting, misapplying, and misunderstanding the noblest dreams of the race. Never provide anyone with an excuse or an evasion; rather, help him to realize the pressing need for his own regeneration.

For example, millions will gather together and pray that other folks should change their ways. How many, on the other hand, will sincerely ask for spiritual strength to correct their own faults? When a man meditates on world peace, will he apply this meditation to himself, or will he feel quite justified in ignoring the weaknesses of his own character because he is enthusiastically involved in what he may sincerely believe to be a grand program of collective salvation? Most people that I know are too busy trying to change the course of history to integrate their own lives and restore beauty and harmony in their own homes. For each of us, the regeneration of society begins when we correct one of our own faults. There is also a certain satisfaction in remembering that although we cannot force friends or even strangers to change their patterns of living, we can correct our own mistakes and cultivate our own inherent virtues. It has been estimated that when a private citizen learns to control his own temper, the results of his accomplishment will affect the lives of not less than two hundred persons, and will react to some measure upon eight generations of his descendants. We cannot be sure that we can reform those around us, but we can reform ourselves, and when we do so, this simple and intimate achievement will make a powerful contribution to world peace.

QUESTION: *Would you please explain the place of the angels in the universal plan?*

ANSWER: It is not surprising that this question should come to mind when we realize the frequent use of angelic figures in religious art. At the same time, those religions in which such figures usually occur have no exact concept or definition relating thereto. Winged

creatures combining divine and human attributes abound in Christian, Moslem, Jewish, and Zoroastrian lore, and beings reminiscent of angels occur also in Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist symbolism. Strictly speaking, the term *angel* describes a personal being intermediate in nature, status, and powers, between God and man. This concept is most commonly found in monotheistic religious systems, which substitute angelic creatures for the tutelary gods of classical paganism.

It is noted that angelic beings are not prominent in the earliest phases of Christian and Judaistic thinking. It is assumed that primitive Judaism still held certain polytheistic convictions, and therefore did not require a unique order of celestial messengers. In the case of Christianity, the ante-Nicene fathers were opposed to the artistic concept of angels on the ground that they resembled too closely the winged genii or geniuses of Greek and Roman paganism. Winged youths, as heavenly attendants, appeared frequently in Greek and Roman art, and it was not until the Christian Church felt itself to be entirely secure from pagan association that it permitted the introduction of similar figures in its own religious artistry.

In Christianity, the angel is usually depicted in human form, robed in tunic and pallium, and androgynous. Although there were frequent references to winged angels in the scriptural writings, depictions of such beings are not recorded prior to the reign of Constantine. When such representations began to gain favor, they were obviously patterned after the winged victories of classical symbolism. A figure of St. Michael on ivory, and the bas-reliefs of Carthage, all dating from the 4th century A. D., are the oldest known examples of winged angels. Our word *angels* is derived from the Greek *angelos*, meaning "a messenger." In the Apocalypse, St. John is bidden to write to the angels of the seven churches. Origen considered these to be the Guardian Angels of the Christian communities. Even in that time, the subject was controversial, for St. Epiphanius completely rejected this explanation, insisting that in this case the term *angel* meant "the bishop," or "head of the communion." It seems remarkable that issues of this kind were never clarified.

Webster's Dictionary describes the angel as "a spiritual celestial being, superior to man in power and intelligence." Even this rather simple statement cannot be considered authoritative. The Jewish philosophers of the middle ages insisted that man is higher than the angels because the destiny of man was the main object of the creation of the world. Rationalists like Maimonides, strongly influenced by Aristotelian philosophy, were inclined to view the angels as subordinate forms of pure intellect responsible for those cosmic activities beyond

the control of man but inferior to the primary activities of God. This seemed to be merely a refined statement of the concept of hierarchies, also referred to by St. Paul, who spoke of invisible beings which he called thrones, powers, dominions, principalities, angels, and arch-angels.

In the Cabalistic speculations which influenced both Jewish and Christian thinking during the middle ages, the interval between God and man was bridged by invisible orders of life ascending in dignity and considered together as a vast hierarchy attendant upon the will of God. As great princes and emperors held court in splendor, surrounded by their nobles, courtiers, and liegemen, it was only proper that God, the King of kings and Emperor of all things, should likewise have a splendid retinue to do his bidding and pay him homage. Obviously, modern democratic inclinations have a tendency to undermine this concept.

Ancient Hinduism recognized orders of spirits, both good and bad, populating the invisible atmosphere of the world, and exercising subtle influence over the lives and characters of human beings. The Cabalists and the Gnostics compiled elaborate lists of such creatures, bestowing upon them various powers and attributes, and organizing and tabulating the innumerable qualities of the divine consciousness and the universal mind. Modern mystical sects have suggested that angels are creations of the divine thought by means of which the will of God is brought to the immediate apprehension of mortals. In medieval times, angels were regarded as responsible for the upheavals in man's psychological life. His virtues were supported by good spirits, and his vices were the result of the temptations inflicted upon him by evil spirits. Over the good angels ruled the Archangel Michael, and the evil or demon spirits were the servants of Satan or Lucifer. There are elaborate books on demons, containing exorcisms, conjurations, seals, pentacles, and signatures of angels and demons. Fear of such spirits became an obsession during the dark ages, and has survived in the trials of witches and sorcerers as recorded in old works on ecclesiastical jurisprudence.

Regardless of how we may interpret the numerous accounts of angelic beings and their visitations, it becomes evident that the over-concept originated in the pagan world. The forthright men of old could not conceive of a universe consisting only of God, man, and matter. Even on the physical earth, there are several kingdoms of living things, unfolding according to the laws governing their kinds. When a temporal king establishes a government, or men unite to form a corporation, or a church is established, there must always be a concatenation of workmen. We could not imagine a great industrial

enterprise consisting only of the president of the firm and office boys. The presiding officer has a board of trustees, or a directorate, and each department of the business has its manager, and over the groups of workmen are duly appointed foremen and overseers. The universe is a vaster enterprise than anything which man could undertake, and it seemed to classical thinking that the project should be efficiently managed. Thus, inferior to the Supreme Power itself, was an order of secondary gods—powers over particulars, and themselves regents or governors controlling lesser beings. The classical hierarchy usually consisted of twelve levels or degrees of authority. Man was the lowest level; directly above him was the angelic order, and above that, the order of the archangels.

Let us assume, for a moment, that space, as we know it, is many-dimensioned. We inhabit one of these dimensions, and there is nothing unreasonable in the assumption that all space is filled with growing and evolving life. The mere fact that this life is beyond the range of our sensory perceptions is of slight meaning, for we have already established the inadequacy of our own faculties. Thoughts are things, but we cannot see them, nor can we see energy or force except through its consequences. Socrates believed firmly that there were creatures who lived along the shores of the air, and also that there were daemons who could be known through internal powers of the soul, but could not be seen by the corporeal senses. The Greeks and Romans believed that such principles as beauty, harmony, order, law, and faith, had forms and natures, and were creatures even though to us they are merely qualities or conditions of consciousness. Man also had an invisible but very real nature, and was therefore part of the hierarchy which ascended in waves of glory to the footstool of the Eternal. The visions of Dante and Milton are filled with such speculations.

It has been customary to regard angels as inferior to mankind because the human being has been subjected to the experience of embodiment in Nature, and has developed an individual intelligence capable of moral decisions between right and wrong. The angels were supposed to think only the thoughts of God; therefore, they could not sin, nor could they possess any virtue of their own. Virtue is the state of triumph in which right is victorious over wrong by a sovereign decision of the will. That which is not capable of sin is therefore not capable of virtue. The angel has a lucidity and a volatility beyond that of man, and because it is the extension of the divine intellect, it seems to possess greater knowledge and larger power. Actually, however, this knowledge and power is not its own, and for this reason, it is promised that in the fulness of time, man shall be greater than the angels. The ancient schools of the Mysteries tell us that the angels

were qualitative beings and that the traditional symbolic forms under which they are said to appear are purely imaginary. Man experiences them in these forms only because he creates these appearances in his own psychic nature.

There is one school of thought that associates the angels with the life-waves of the moon. In other words, these creatures belong to a previous cycle of growth, which did not descend into matter further than the etheric field. Their lowest bodies, therefore, are composed of etheric substances, and they live in an etheric region which is as real to them as the material world is to us. Yet, Paracelsus clearly pointed out that angelic beings are not elementals or elementaries, because they have composite natures, as man has, whereas the creatures of the elements are composed of a single substance and possess no immortal attributes. Under such conditions, the angels would have ghostly bodies which might be seen by certain sensitive persons, and it has always been assumed that they did at times communicate with human beings. A fine problem presents itself, however, for if the angelic order is actually an evolving level of living creatures, then it is no longer merely a core of messengers serving directly and solely the purposes of the Divine Will.

Following the rationalizing tendency, it may be said that a belief in angels is no longer an essential element of doctrine. In ancient Christian liturgies, the Archangels Michael and Gabriel were invoked after the person of the Trinity and before the Blessed Virgin. The close association between Michael and the sun, and Gabriel and the moon, may indicate vestiges of astro-theology. The spirits controlling planets are sometimes referred to as planetary angels, but this concept would give to the angelic order a far greater authority than is usually conferred. In most modern religions, references to angels are retained, but interpreted as symbolical. In other words, the search for the angel parallels the search for the immortal part of man himself. If man survives death, he passes into another place and has a body other than the physical one with which he functions in the material world. Assuming such a place to exist, it would be perfectly consistent to conclude that it is inhabited with beings unfamiliar to man, but in no way mysterious in Nature. The veil which divides the human consciousness from the sidereal diffusion conceals this mystery from all except seers and mystics. These, like Swedenborg, have reported strange things beyond the normal ken.

For practical purposes, let us assume that the belief in angels is founded in some ancient kind of internal knowledge, which man possessed before his spiritual sight was darkened by his descent into a physical body. It would seem, under such conditions, that beneath

the symbolism of the angels is concealed a vast speculation about the superphysical inhabitants of the universe; an incredible pageantry of life energies, intelligences, powers, and principles has been combined in one comparatively meaningless term. There were spirits that guarded Troy and fought in the skies above the besieged city. There were spirits guarding the sanctuaries of healing, and altars were built to the patrons and patronesses of the harvests, of generation, and of peace and war. There were godlings who preserved the hearth, and others who prevented evil from entering the doors to a house. There were mighty beings who rumbled in the thunder and loosed the bolts of their lightnings. To ancient man, the universe was full of intelligent life. He prayed for protection, and made offerings to the fire and the earth. He feared the evil spirits of the dead, but he also honored the ghosts of heroes. He seemed to know that among the ghosts were those who had never actually lived on earth—other kinds of creatures, greater and lesser than man. He saw them in his dreams and visions, and he perpetuated accounts of them in his legendry and folklore.

Primitive Alaskan Indians have the simple conviction that there is a sovereign intelligence guiding beasts and birds. They cannot conceive that one lonely God, seated above the firmament, could actually and personally watch each sparrow's fall, or reward and punish each trivial action of man. God, therefore, fashioned other creatures and gave them powers to guard and guide each other. As man can control animals and plants, so man himself may be affected, and to a degree dominated, by other creations greater than his own. It is proper that there should be visible and invisible chieftains ruling the tribes of mortals. The invisible chieftains instructed, guided, and even punished. It was the law of tribal life, and each living member was surrounded by influences, both from the seen and the unseen sides of life.

Psychologically, the mysterious unconscious determinative at the source of man operates through a variety of agencies. Man thinks, man feels, and man acts, and therefore there must be units of intelligent energy governing and directing the manifestations of the human psyche. As energy moves from its hidden sources, it is richly diversified, and manifests as a variety of energies capable of analysis and definition. These diversified energies in the human being are analogous with the hierarchy in the universal being. Each fragment of diversity has a nature of its own, is obedient to its superiors, and compels obedience from its inferiors. We may call these intermediaries, governors, or by whatever name we will—but they exist and, named or nameless, their influences are recognizable.

In time, the concept of hierarchy must be restored in some form or other. We will not go back to the pantheons of our ancestors. But we will recognize that universal mind, in the process of specialization, breaks up into many minds—aspects of one mind—and that these many minds, in turn, are variously embodied in suitable substances, and constitute levels or orders of creatures. These levels always dominate other levels below themselves, and in the process of evolution, life ascends from one level to another, like the angels on Jacob's ladder.

Thus, our term *angel* may have many meanings. It may imply our own soul with which we must strive as Jacob wrestled with the angel. It may also be associated with inspiration, illumination, even as it was with the Enunciation. To experience the will of God has been said to result from a communication given by an angel, but this may imply a revelation from some submerged part of our own consciousness. The angel should have great meaning for the modern psychologist, and may reveal to him an angelic part of man himself between his inner and outer constitutions. The messengers of soul-energies must cross the interval from man's internal unconscious to his objective embodied consciousness.

We cannot say that we have completely answered this question, because answers depend upon the mood of the questioner. Perhaps, however, we have summarized certain doctrines relating to the subject. In any case, we hope that our remarks will be helpful.



We may forgive those who bore us; we cannot forgive those whom we bore.

A house that has a library in it has a soul.

Anger, like fever, is a symptom which shows that something has gone wrong in the inner mechanism.

When one reaches the so-called jumping-off place, he discovers that by God's gracious goodness the world is round.
—ELBERT HUBBARD

Classic repartee

Thales used to say that life and death were one and the same. A critic suggested sarcastically, "If this is so, why do you not die?" "Because," replied Thales, "what is the use—they are both the same."



Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

The Evil Eye

The belief that certain persons can injure or destroy others with a glance was widely held throughout the ancient world, and is still accepted by a large number of persons. Records relating to the evil eye have been found among the Egyptians, Persians, and the peoples of the Far East. There are references to it in the Talmud, where it is mentioned as one of the principal causes of death. It was known to the Greeks, and the Romans enacted laws to protect not only individuals, but animals and even crops. As might be expected, the belief still flourishes among less literate groups in southern and eastern Europe, where it is accepted together with many other ancient superstitions.

It naturally follows that remedies of many kinds have been advanced as protective or curative. The most common are counter-charms intended to neutralize the malicious influence. These may consist of verses from the Scriptures, small talismans and relics carried upon the person, magical devices and figures, and short poems or quotations accumulated from folklore. Among the modern Turks and Arabs, there is great concern over the effect of the evil eye on horses and camels, and this is spread through all regions where these animals are essential to life and survival. It is of importance to note that the belief in the evil eye is unknown among the indigenous peoples of the Western hemisphere. It is not found until the advent of European

settlement in America. It was then introduced and disseminated, however, and has lingered in several areas.

One explanation of the phenomenon is that a subtle magnetic force is emanated from the eye, and this concept can be traced to ancient researches in optics. Sight was once believed to result from the extension of an optical energy which enfolded the object of attention. If this energy was laden with negative psychic overtones, the result could be an evil eye. Some persons were believed to be born with this extraordinary affliction, but it could also be transferred. It was often involuntary, and the sufferer afflicted others without malicious intent on his own part. Anyone suspected of having the evil eye was shunned and even cast from the community. All doors were closed to him, and houses were protected with appropriate charms and inscriptions placed on the doors or walls.

Innocent men and women sometimes took tragic means of freeing themselves from this curse. There are accounts of individuals committing suicide or blinding themselves to protect their loved ones from this evil. The medieval church was confronted with this problem and made use of exorcism and sacred relics to combat the baleful practice. It is also interesting that the influence of the evil eye was most feared by the rich and prosperous—perhaps because they knew that they had many enemies who coveted their worldly goods. Gypsies were feared for this reason, but it is only fair to point out that the gypsies themselves were tormented by the same superstition. Small children and young animals were regarded as especially susceptible, and infirmities developing in later life were blamed upon the perfidious glances of relative, friend, or stranger. No one was immune, either to the affliction itself or its consequences.

Common sense tells us that behind nearly all superstitions there is some content of truth, even though it may be distorted and exaggerated. Men have always realized that they were subject to the ill-feelings of their associates, and they have also known that such emotions were often cunningly concealed. In an unguarded moment, however, the facial expression, especially around the eyes, could reveal hate, fear, suspicion, and cruelty. The evil eye has been called "the eye of covetousness." The selfish glance, or the expression of avariciousness disturbs us and causes us to wonder what evil strategy is developing in the mind of our neighbor. Once this negative seed is planted in us, it detracts from our sense of security. It troubles our rest, burdens our heart, and, in turn, intensifies our suspicions of others. These things may all be grouped together under the general heading of psychology. When we become fearful, it frequently occurs that the things we fear come upon us. Primitive man was fearful of the un-

known, and there is nothing more unknown or unknowable than the secret thoughts and emotions of our companions. Once we have seemed to note hidden malicious intentions on the parts of others, our own positive attitudes are weakened and we become highly defensive. Such defensiveness leads to tension, and we experience a serious and growing disturbance.

There are persons in every community whose basic influence upon those around them is negative. Such individuals may be near and dear to us and bound to us by strong ties of relationship or association. When we weigh such temperament with some knowledge of the workings of human thought and emotion, we arrive at sensible conclusions. If, on the other hand, we lacked instruments of judgment, and could react only instinctively to the presence of a corrosive force, we might well assume the presence of a negative magical agent, insidious and destructive. Under such conditions, we would fight magic with magic, and seek to restore our own confidence by recourse to appropriate rites and ceremonies. These remedies were intended to revive courage, and to assure the individual that he could combat successfully the morbid forces which threatened his peace of mind.

All forms of witchcraft now flourish only in isolated areas or among groups comparatively uneducated. These groups are under strong traditional pressure, and find it both natural and convenient to revert to old beliefs when attempting to cope with the unknown. Those on advanced cultural platforms are not disconcerted by the eye of envy or by the covetous glances of their neighbors; nor do they bestow supernatural attributes upon their own instinctive expressions of selfishness. We all know that cupidity is a fault and that it is wrong to envy our neighbor's goods, and we are beginning to realize that if we hold these negative emotions with sufficient intensity, we will be sick. Nature certainly reserves its larger benefits for those with kindness in their eyes.



Philosophy does not regard pedigree: she did not receive Plato as a noble, but she made him so.

Stock markets are like weak stomachs—easily upset.

—Guy A. Robinson



Happenings at Headquarters



We regretfully announce the passing of Miss Katherine Schroeder, a devoted friend of our Society, and a very outstanding person. She was killed in an automobile accident on February 1st, as the result of a heavy snowstorm near the area of her home in Kansas. Miss Schroeder was the moving spirit behind the program of tape recordings of Mr. Hall's lectures as a means of bringing his talks to persons living in other communities through our Local Study Groups. She was the first of our students to earn a Certificate of Fellowship. Her many friends here will long remember her gracious personality and her wonderful spirit of public service.

* * * * *

The Spring program of lectures and classes began on April 16 and will continue through June 24. The Society was pleased to introduce two new guest instructors: Dr. Alfred Schuhmann, who chose "Marriage in the Modern World" as the subject for his five class lectures; and Mr. Harry R. Smith, who gave a survey course entitled "Anthropological Studies." Mr. Ernest Burmester presented several modern schools of psychology from the viewpoint of Eastern philosophy, in his series, "Western Concepts of Personality in the Light of Eastern Philosophy." Mr. Hall gave two seminars: "Studies in Comparative Mythology," and "Psychological Research on Rebirth." Mr. Byron Pumphrey took up the subject of "The Unfoldment of Psychological Insight in Shakespeare." This course was a discussion class based on specific reading assignments, and the group studied The Sonnets as well as several of the Shakespearean plays.

* * * * *

Our Vice-president Mr. Henry L. Drake is back from his extensive Eastern wanderings. On his 11,000-mile flight home, he stopped briefly at Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Honolulu. In addition to his research studies in Calcutta, he had the opportunity of witnessing the currents of unrest surging in many parts of the world. We will hear

more about his adventures in due time. Mr. Drake had the opportunity of discussing vital and immediate problems confronting the Republic of India with Dr. Radhakrishnan, Vice-president of India, and was deeply impressed with the spirit of integrity and dedication which is inspiring the leaders of modern India. He feels that these men are carrying the heaviest responsibility that the executives of a nation can possibly bear. They are sustained by the wonderful philosophical background and religious faith of Indian tradition, and they are attempting to build their nation on a solid foundation of idealistic principles. Mr. Drake feels that it is an attempt, founded upon the highest motives, to protect freedom of action, speech, and assembly, and refrain in every way possible from the use of force or autocratic measures in the directing of the program. If this succeeds, India will again show the way to the constructive solution of the basic problems of human relationships. It was a long and difficult trip, and friend Drake says that it was a marvelous adventure, but that it is also wonderful to be home.

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The Society acknowledges with deep gratitude the presentation of a Minshall Electric Organ given by Mrs. Ollie M. Zimmer, for many years a friend of the Society. The organ will be placed in our new auditorium when the building is completed. It is a beautiful instrument, and will bring pleasure and inspiration to many.

* * * * *

On April 29th, there was a special gathering at the Headquarters of the Society for the awarding of Certificates to those who have satisfactorily completed programs of study in our School. Mr. Hall opened the ceremony with a brief talk, unfolding certain of his basic convictions concerning the importance of idealistic education in the modern world. Mr. Drake then addressed the group on "The Place of Our School in a New Concept of Education." This was followed by the presentation of the Certificates by Dr. Harris, the School's Registrar, and Mr. Hall. As a large number of our students reside in other communities, and therefore could not be present, their names were read by the Registrar, and their Certificates forwarded to them with appropriate messages of congratulation. The "graduating class" consisted of 79 students, and the awards presented were the Certificate of Fellowship (12), Certificate of Proficiency (13), and Certificate of Accomplishment (54). At the conclusion of the program, refresh-



AWARDING OF CERTIFICATES

Left to right: Henry L. Drake, Vice-president; Manly P. Hall, President; William D. Wilson, Assistant Registrar, Mrs. Elaine DeVore; Dr. Chetwyn Harris, Registrar.

ments were provided by the Friends Committee of the Society, and the Library and building were open to visitors. We plan to make this an annual event, and hope that next year the "alumni" will be present.

* * * * *

During his recent San Francisco lecture program, Mr. Hall spoke for his own Masonic Lodge on Monday evening, April 9th. He discussed the religious and philosophical ideals underlying the rituals and symbols of the Craft. On his return, he stopped off at Santa Barbara and gave a lecture for Dr. Donald Curtis at the Church of Religious Science. The subject of his talk was "The Theatre of the Gods - Self-Unfoldment Through Drama, Music, Poetry, and Art."

* * * * *

There has just come to hand a new and unusual book, "The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche," by C. G. Jung and W. Pauli. In this work, Dr. Jung says by way of opening, "In writing this paper I have, so to speak, made good a promise which for many years I lacked the courage to fulfill." He seems to be referring to Chapter II, which is entitled, "An Astrological Experiment." In this, Dr. Jung approaches, in a simple and direct manner, astrological data relating to marriage, and establishes a precedent on the scientific level for a

liberal-minded attitude on a most controversial issue. Dr. Pauli adds material relating to the scientific theories of Kepler, and there are illustrations derived from the writings of the English physician and mystic, Robert Fludd, who has long been associated with the Rosicrucian controversy. There are notes on Dr. Rhine's researches on E. S. P., and much unusual information. This most stimulating book can be ordered directly from the Society. (Price \$3.00, plus tax in California.)

* * * * *

Friends and students of the Society are invited to send for our latest publication outlining the Academic Program of our School. It sets forth in considerable detail the curriculum and the requirements for earning the degrees of B. A., M. A., and Ph. D. on an academic level.

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Special activities at Headquarters included a meeting for the Women Librarians of the Public Libraries of the Los Angeles Area, which was held on March 11th. Mr. Hall exhibited many of the treasures of our collection, and discussed rare books and manuscripts and their importance to modern scholars. Refreshments were served by the Friends Committee.

* * * * *

On May 13th Mr. Hall appeared on the television program "Cavalcade of Books." Mr. Hall was interviewed by Georgiana Hardy and Turnley Walker, who also reviewed his book "Reincarnation." A new imprint of this book, including a digest index, is just off the press.

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A number of our out-of-town subscribers visit Los Angeles during the summer months, and we are always happy to see these friends and to have them participate in the Society's activities. The 1956 Summer quarter of lectures will begin on July 8. Mr. Hall will deliver eight Sunday morning lectures at the Campus Theatre in Los Angeles. He will also give a seminar of five classes on Wednesday evenings beginning on July 18th. Mr. Drake will conduct a seminar of five lectures from September 12th through October 10th. In addition, Mr. Byron Pumphrey will lead a discussion-group seminar on four Sunday afternoons from September 16th through October 7th. This class will be of special value to study group leaders and members.

Local Study Group Activities

We are happy to welcome a new Local Study Group in Fair Oaks, California. This group is under the leadership of Mr. Carl Wahlstrom, who will be happy to hear from all interested persons in the Sacramento area. Mr. Wahlstrom may be contacted at 9071 Folsom Blvd., Fair Oaks, California. We extend our sincere good wishes to this group.

Two new tape recordings of Mr. Hall's lectures are now available for Study Group rental: "Breaking the Pattern of Jealousy in Human Behavior," and "A Basic Explanation of Rebirth." A number of our study groups are taking advantage of this new service, and we suggest that you place your reservations at least a month in advance. Please write to the P. R. S. Study Group Department for further information about this phase of our study group program.

We have recently received the second issue of the "Alberta Horizon," the official publication of the Calgary P. R. S. Study Group in Alberta, Canada. The booklet contains news and notes about the group's activities, interesting quotations, excerpts from Mr. Hall's writings, and other announcements of general interest. Our congratulations to Mr. Carsen and his group for their splendid work!

The following questions derived from articles in this issue of HORIZON will be useful in P. R. S. Local Study Groups, and are also recommended to all readers as a guide to systematic study.

ARTICLE: RESEARCH ON REBIRTH - BY MANLY P. HALL

1. Give a little semantic thought to such terms as "scientific proof" and "obvious fact," when relating to such problems as the existence of the human soul, continuity of life after death, and the ultimate victory of good over evil.
2. Why do we say that all effort to convince another person of something which he has not personally experienced is persuasive-ness? To what degree can you be persuaded to modify your beliefs? What is the difference between an acceptance of an idea and the knowledge of a fact?
3. Explore the idea behind the statement, "Can mankind grow without man growing?". This can be approached in two ways: in

terms of tradition, or in terms of participation or sharing. How would you feel that this is involved in rebirth?

ARTICLE: SAHAGUN - BY MANLY P. HALL

1. Analyze the character of Fray Bernardino de Sahagun. Do you think, for example, that he should have exercised greater personal influence and been less obedient to his superiors?

2. What can the average person of today gain from the study of the cultures of ancient America? Is it important that we know these things; if so, why? if not, why not?

3. Do the deities described in the Great Florentine Codex suggest personification of universal laws and principles. If so, can you trace such associations, as these might have arisen on the level of Aztec consciousness?

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Library Notes

BY A. J. HOWIE

THE BULLETINS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY

There is a freedom and strength in the untrained and undisciplined searching mind, but it has no weapons of discrimination. The readers in the Library of the Philosophical Research Society are usually idealists searching for constructive formulas to solve the ever present problems of social existence. Such students come from all walks of life, often with only an average education, and rarely with a specialized background for their study. Frequently they are urged to their studies by the necessities of coping with personal limitations and maladjustments. Such minds are not hardened to patterns and molds; they are open to reshaping.

They reasonably expect to find answers somewhere in the accumulated learning from the past, especially among the accepted authorities in the fields of religion and philosophy. And only if there are answers in books is there any justification for the millions of them.

But there are pitfalls for this enthusiasm. The sources of information frequently approach a subject from viewpoints radically different from that of the researcher. And even the most honest and cautious authority on a subject may tinge his reports with strong opinion.

It is difficult to distinguish between the essential and unessential data in the voluminous researches published in the fields of archaeology, history, comparative religion, sociology. It seems inevitable to

question the value of an incalculable mass of noneventuating detailed notes on the various concepts of dead or declining races unless they can be organized to contribute to our living cultures. It would seem that the important and significant purpose of research into the customs of primitive people would be to determine the lessons that our own social order might derive, to reach conclusions in the shape of formulas for constructive living that might be a real contribution to the present.

Pure science seems interested only in data. Theologians usually are limited to the acceptance of statements favorable to their own hierarchy. And business-minded men are more concerned with the phenomena of industry, physical resources, and trade, than with the intangibles of spiritual impacts.

The *Bulletins of the Smithsonian Institution* are impressive volumes. The ethnological researches respecting the Red Man of America collected and prepared under the direction of Schoolcraft, who was appointed by Act of Congress "to collect and digest such statistics and materials as may illustrate the history, present condition and future prospects of the Indian tribes of the United States," about which we have commented in a previous article, have been supplemented and expanded in subsequent Bulletins. One hundred years later, 1946, the Smithsonian Institution published the *Handbook of South American Indians*, consisting of 5 volumes. The Library of the Philosophical Research Society has Volume I, *The Marginal Tribes*, and Volume II, *The Andean Civilizations*. The compilation is generously illustrated and presents a comprehensive bibliography. The researchers and facilities represent the best of everything that modern learning had to offer.

However, the editor, Julian H. Steward, stated his recognition of the problems of pleasing everybody. "The greatest difficulty was that of satisfying diversified modern interests with data that had been collected largely at random. Existing information comes primarily from missionaries and travelers, whose accounts are overloaded with descriptions of Indian dress, weapons, dances, and other readily observable items, but are almost wholly silent on social structure, religious patterns, land tenure, and other less conspicuous but extremely important aspects of native culture."

"As accounts of Indian tribes at the moment of the Conquest are nonexistent or are sketchy in the extreme, reconstruction of aboriginal ethnology must rely on documents ranging over the 400 years of the historic period The articles consequently reveal much post-Contact change, and show that new economic, social, and religious patterns followed the introduction of European crops, steel tools, new trade

relations, Christianity, and many other factors contingent on the arrival of the White man."

The Bulletins are silent as to the prejudices of the authorities quoted. Those who met the South American Indians and initiated the European influences were soldiers and priests, none of whom were interested in the natives as spiritual beings or men with their own culture and religion. The invaders were seeking to find new sources of wealth for their patrons. They came to take gold, jewels, any material wealth, with no recorded concern for the rights of the ones who had produced that wealth. The early priests may have been zealous in the propagation of their faith, but they cooperated fully with the military forces in the enslavement of the Indians.

The avowed general objective of the Handbook is thus stated: "To provide a concise summary of existing data that will serve as a standard reference work for the scholar, a textbook for the student, and a guide to the general reader" The value of the Bulletins in our Library will be realized only if we use them to observe the unmistakable evidences of universal impulses in all men and in all times. These volumes are a labyrinth of information, which includes the important data and references available on the religious customs and rites of the numerous tribes of the vast South American continent.

The ultimate problem of death has had to be met by all peoples in all ages irrespective of mental and emotional development, belief, faith, will to live, or any other factor. The emotional reaction to death very likely has varied with the level of mentation. But ranging from the unthinking savage who dully accepted the crisis of death to those who have speculated daringly on the transition, there is a recurrent common factor of a concept of life beyond the grave. The Bulletin records considerable archaeological evidence of such beliefs among the earliest South American Indians.

Even in simple interment, as among the primitives of the Pampa, care was taken to prevent the remains from being disturbed by men, animals, or nature. There have been excavations of burial remains where the skeleton obviously was cleaned of flesh before inhumation, and a few rather elaborately painted skulls have been noted, an indication of some ceremonial observance. Various burial habits, such as flexing postures, suggest primitive rituals.

The written records of the mourning habits of friends and relatives tell only of customs after the white man had begun to influence the natives. The early writers make no comment about traditional beliefs as compared with what they saw. Junius Bird, in his article on the Alacaluf, describes the death observances. The members of the com-

munity paint their faces black, the deceased's property is burned, except his canoe and canoe equipment and the skins for covering his hut. Disposal of the body depends on the situation, but wrapped in seal-skins it is placed in some protected place with meat and shellfish near the body, an indication of the belief that the dead spirit will need food.

Cooper cites Gusinde as authority that sacrifice was practiced among the Yahgans as a mourning observance; he also mentions that black was a color of mourning. Mourning was expressed by fasting, body painting, gashing of the breast with sharp stones, and a special mourning dirge accompanied by a mourning speech. Angry complaints were directed to Watauinewa, and a ceremonial mock battle was held, the men wielding clubs and the women paddles. This tribe disposed of the body by cremation—lest foxes, rats, or dogs should eat the body, so the natives said. The name of the dead was never spoken.

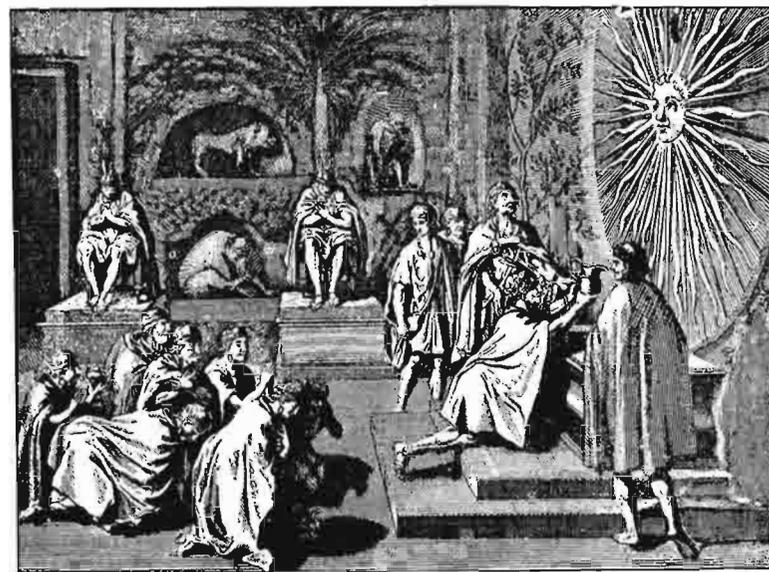
These people believed that at death the soul flew east, but exactly whither was not known. They had no conception of the happy or unhappy fate of the soul, not whether such fate was at all dependent on moral behavior on earth.

Similar fragments of information from the reports on the various tribes combine to testify that long before the advent of the white man, the natives believed in survival beyond the grave. The nomadic savage would have only a rudimentary and unformulated understanding of death. But all feared death in one way or another—they considered the place of death unclean, and it was usually consumed by fire; they shunned the place of burial, even while they protected the body from desecration; and the tendency seems to have been to grieve for the dead and to challenge the gods for permitting the death.

The native beliefs apparently grew more elaborate through the teachings of the missionaries and priests. An exception might be found in the highly developed religion of the Incas. But the observation that should be made is that apparently even the most primitive South American Indians held some intuitive belief in survival of a soul or spirit beyond the grave.

Associated with life and death is disease. Man, from the most primitive to the most highly intellectual, suffers from the gamut of maladies. A germ theory may be demonstrable; the affliction by evil forces may not be demonstrable. Regardless of theories, sickness incapacitates and kills. Nor is it demonstrable what makes one man susceptible while his neighbor is immune; nor what aids survival in the hazards of primitive battle and chase.

And those who ministered to the ancient Indians were their shamans or medicine men who were both priest and physician. A person



Inca priests worshipping the Supreme Deity in the form of the solar disc.

became a medicine man through an inner call manifested to him in dreams and visions. Spirits appeared to him from among which he learned the one that was to be his particular guardian spirit. From this spirit he received a song, his song.

The medicine men were not banded into organized societies. The individual was trained by an older medicine man in fasting, chanting, posturing, and healing with medications, laying on of hands, singing, praying, and various secret variations of the basic methods. While the chief function of the medicine man was the curing of the sick, he was expected to influence the weather, advise about the hunting and fishing season, prognosticate, and communicate with the spirits of the dead.

The widespread faith indicated in the medicine men to influence others for good or evil by the power of thought, prayer, incantation, magic; to invoke the spirits of the dead; to proclaim the tribal taboos—none of this can be attributed to the Christian influence. And here again we may have a primitive urge, that some can bridge the interval between the physical world of effects and a spiritual world of causes.

When we come to the reports on the belief in a Supreme Being and the religious rites and ceremonies, we enter a contentious sphere. The early conquerors made every effort to stamp out the native religions,

to destroy every temple and shrine, to kill or scatter the priestcraft, to cause the people to forget the gods of their ancestors. The church fathers were only too anxious to discredit the native priests when writing their reports; nor was there any hesitancy in admitting conversion by force. The most strongly entrenched native religion was that of the Incas; and even the essentials of this faith are difficult to authenticate because the Incas had no written language, and the hereditary keepers of the *quipus* were killed.

It seems, however, that from the simplest tribes to the complex Inca political system, there existed a belief in a Supreme Being, usually not named other than by attributes meaning "The Powerful One," "The Highest One," etc. The reports give a multitude of local names for a variety of lesser gods, spirits, forces. It is too late to inquire what the natives believed before the advent of the conquerors, but the indications are that under various names the tribes believed that life, food, health, and all good things were bestowed by the Supreme Being directly or through the lesser gods; and that disease, misfortune, and death were punishments sent for evildoing. When floods or drought afflicted the people, sacrifices and petitions were offered. The priestcraft of the Incas, local medicine men, officiated as intermediaries.

Cooper's article on the Chono refers to the descriptions of two early observers who described "a rite apparently religious, performed by men and women. Vocalizations began by deep groans and gradually rose to 'a hideous kind of singing.' The participants, in frenzy, snatched firebrands from the fire, put them in their mouths, and ran about burning everyone they came near; at other times they would cut one another with mussel shells until smeared with blood. And so the ceremony went on until exhaustion ensued. When the men stopped, the women began."

The Bulletins record many puberty rites or initiations. There were rites for both boys and girls. The general idea seems to have been that this ceremony was the formal acceptance of the youth into the tribe. The details varied, but by means of making an important religious event out of the recognition of the child's physical maturity, an opportunity was provided for the elders to give vocational and moral counsel, setting forth the tribal codes of social responsibility, respect for the aged, peaceableness, industry, obedience to the will of the Supreme Being who saw everything and punished wrongdoing.

The rite was made impressive in numerous ways. The day was not a regular religious occasion, but was selected as necessary, a time set apart. There was an initiating team to prepare the candidate and conduct the rites. A special building with appropriate decorations

was constructed. The candidate had to undergo a period of preparation during which he was permitted very little sleep, food, or drink; was forced to work hard to the limit of his endurance, which was followed by a daily bath in cold water; and there were long periods of meditation in a designated posture. The actual ritual consisted mostly of dances and songs, and the recital of the sacred myths.

There is much more than the foregoing to observe. But let us pause to observe what interval of progress there is between these primitive teachings and the equivalents in our own culture.

Physically and materially there is a wide difference on some levels. But all members of our society do not enjoy the benefits and advantages of those differences. Shelter, food, and what more do we enjoy? Have we a security comparable to the interval in culture?

Do we know more of death; or face it with any more understanding grace? The life span is longer, but what do we do with the years? The members of our culture still rebel against death and dare to question Deity for reasons when a loved one is snatched from the circle. Is our faith in survival after death essentially different from that of the earliest savage? Convictions we have, but not one whit more of proof.

We still require ministrations to health and spirit, but in our culture the functions have been separated. The one who ministers to our spirit is not skilled in medicines for the body. And in matters of health, we are losing the comfort of the family physician in favor of the impersonal services of the specialist. We read of the superstitious actions of the medicine man. The modern physician has a long way to go before he can control his healing prescriptions with exact science. In ancient times and now, right living is the best insurance for health.

Also, have we emancipated ourselves from appealing to those who profess to read the future? Do these modern-day seekers have more of science than the medicine men? Let the results speak for them. But right or wrong, men and women still consult the soothsayers.

The early South American Indians apparently accepted the fact of a Supreme Being without question. There was no possible theological dispute between tribes who refused to name the Deity, but reverently described him in terms of his powers and attributes that brought good to them. There were many lesser gods, spirits, sacred objects—but there could be no high or low church, no disputing sects, no proselytizing of faith against faith. The Supreme Being and the lesser gods were ever present factors in daily life. They worshiped the spirits in everything they did. With the Incas, their people worked as a religious

rite, a fact that created conflict when the conquerors demanded that they work six days—at labor only, and on the seventh perform their devotions as something separate from the rest of their lives.

In contrast, we profess to believe in a Supreme Being, but there is no agreement in details. And our religious life seems to be set apart from the activities of daily life. There is much conflict between profession and action. There is a Supreme Being, but we have yet to know The Law.

These questions should be a challenge to the student reading in the solitude of the Library, flanked on all sides by books representing efforts of other serious students to formulate the ways in which belief and action might strengthen each other.

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