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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMER 1960 — VOL. 20, No. 1

(ALL UNSIGNED ARTICLES ARE BY MANLY P. HALL)

EDITORIAL	Page
RELEASE FROM PREJUDICE .....	1
FEATURE ARTICLES	
ART AS IMPULSE AND IMPACT—Part 4	
Religious Art .....	12
BOETHIUS ON "THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY" .....	27
PLANETS AND EARTHQUAKES—Part 1 .....	35
IN REPLY	
THE URGE TO IRRESPONSIBILITY .....	47
CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER	
TEMPLE SOUVENIRS .....	56
HAPPENINGS AT HEADQUARTERS .....	61
LOCAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES .....	65
SHORT STORY	
THE "UNWORTHY" ONE—A Ghost Story .....	67
LIBRARY NOTES—By A. J. HOWIE	
THE DAIBUTSU OF KAMAKURA .....	74

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SUMMER  
1960

PHILOSOPHY  
RELIGION — SCIENCE  
**PRS JOURNAL**

ISSUED  
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## THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

### RELEASE FROM PREJUDICE



OUR word *prejudice* is derived from an older form which means *prejudgment*. Actually, it is a hasty conclusion, a decision made before all the facts are known, or based on opinion rather than facts. By virtue of the very faculties of thought, reason, and imagination with which man has been endowed, the tendency to prejudice is strong, and must be curbed or censored by constant watchfulness. We are all inclined to interpret the happenings around us in terms of our own likes and dislikes, and we cannot entirely escape from the traditional pressures which develop within the structures of races and cultures. Release from prejudice, therefore, implies release from negatively conditioned instincts and impulses. Such liberation depends upon the conscious disciplining of the mind, and the enlargement of understanding. Philosophy is a most useful instrument in the development of an honorable point of view, or a broader perspective strengthened by patience, tolerance, and a natural kindness.

The older forms of education were intensely nationalistic, and the growing child was taught that he must be loyal to the fetishes and taboos of his own culture group. It is instructive to compare



historical books dealing with subjects of common interest. National histories compiled by the French, Germans, Italians, and the English, are frequently at variance on basic facts. The English reader, for example, receives a totally different perspective on the American Revolution than that absorbed by students in the public schools of the United States. German and French renditions of the Franco-Prussian War are sometimes completely irreconcilable, but they are devoutly believed by large groups of persons, who derive from such reading prejudices which have affected the relationships of nations for many years. Deep-seated misunderstandings of this kind are difficult to correct because they involve collective loyalty and fundamental patriotism.

Even within a social structure, allegiances are often conditioned by propaganda which may relate to religion, philosophy, or science, but in commercial advertising, this goes so far as to encourage loyalty to products, corporate bodies, industrial groups, and labor movements. This type of loyalty is closely associated with a consistent program of disparaging or belittling competitors, their policies, and their wares. It is now assumed that the public mind can be controlled through advertising promotion and public relations. That corporation will be best known and most successful which spends the greatest amount of money and skill in its sales campaigns, and the actual value of the product and its basic difference from other products of a similar nature are of secondary interest.

We may say that the average person should not be influenced in his private judgments by propaganda policies or high-pressure advertising, but we know from experience that most folks are strongly affected by repetitious indoctrination. Hitler made the point that if you scream loud enough and long enough, the majority will finally believe you. He was able to prove this in a nation normally thoughtful and conservative, and well trained in philosophic procedures. Mental dishonesty is insidious and infectious. Once we tolerate it in any degree, we must live with its results every day of our lives.

The average person might survive these shocks and strains of mass policies, had he greater security in his own immediate environment. Unfortunately, however, most families are prejudiced.

Our friends have strong and often unfair attitudes, and our business associates subtly imply that we should share their feelings if we expect to succeed in the commercial world. There is some improvement noticeable in family relationships since psychology has pointed out the dangers of acquiring bad habits in childhood. There is a considerable literature available on the tragedies resulting from dogmatic and unreasonable family prejudices. Past generations, however, lacked this scientific insight, and those of advanced years are still victims of bad early conditioning.

Prejudices held for a lifetime are difficult to overcome, and much unhappiness can be traced directly to minds that have been closed by negative parental influence. The brothers Mills emphasized the mysterious workings of the association mechanism. If prejudices lurk in the subconscious background of our thinking, they can be brought into sharp and immediate focus by some trifling or inconsequential event. Unrelated and comparatively meaningless incidents can revive old doubts and uncertainties, and also remind us that there may be truths beneath concepts which we consciously reject as unworthy of our support.

Western religion, because of its unrelenting emphasis upon sectarianism, has certainly prejudiced judgment on the level of spiritual conviction. We have today countless persons who believe in the Golden Rule, and who wish to live constructive, idealistic lives, who do not even consider it necessary to discover the brotherhood of man in the faiths of their neighbors. Thus, religion can cause us to love the beautiful and serve the Good, and at the same time belittle the aspirations of other worthy persons divided from us only by creedal abstractions. Here, again, we may say that we should rise above such inconsistencies, but we cannot resist entirely these deeply established habits of measuring people not by their conduct, but by some national, racial, or theological yardstick. Common prejudices are not regarded as defects, but rather as necessary exceptions to a general tolerance.

Assuming, therefore, that we are born with the capacity for prejudgment, we must finally come to know that it is a form of narrow-mindedness which usually deprives us of a good part of our happiness and peace of mind. In practical usage, narrow-mindedness signifies a degree of ignorance, and wherever there is

prejudice, there is a lack of true knowing. This is why the prejudiced person usually does not have as rich a life as one who has overcome this defect.

I have personally noticed the constructive results of broadening the field of human experience in the maturing of individual character. One man of my acquaintance, who suffered from narrow-mindedness, was completely altered in his disposition when his business caused him to reside for some time in a foreign country. Travel helps us to become aware of the fundamental humanity of mankind. We learn that languages and customs, colors of skin, and modes of architecture, constitute superficial differences. Hundreds of millions of human beings, strangers to us, are as sincere and industrious as ourselves, and if we have difficulty in understanding them, their predicament is remarkably similar. Will Rogers pointed out that to know people, is usually to like them. We must also remember that not all of our own kind are likeable, but we like to assume that the majority is well intentioned. We must give the same credit to others.

Even when, through our addiction to noble sentiments and high principles, we feel that we have overcome broad and unreasonable prejudices, we may still be burdened with innumerable small antagonisms and dislikes which disturb peace of mind and lead to unfortunate incidents in our everyday existence. One writer has pointed out that allegiances are very often based upon prejudices. It is easier to gather the discontented around some cause. Union of dissatisfaction results in astonishing dedication. When we are not willing to stand *for* anything, we are ever ready to throw our weight and influence *against* something. There is always a considerable group of persons whose major occupation is to send out circulars trying to convince others that they should be violently unhappy about something. Such agitational literature frightens, or at least bewilders, the uninformed recipient, who reacts from the level of his primordial fears, with little regard for common sense.

There is an interesting observation that can be made at this point. Throughout the history of man, he has existed in an almost continuous state of insecurity. His larger hopes are seldom fully realized, and his most cherished plans and purposes seem to be opposed by chains of vicious circumstances. It is natural to feel that

we are entitled to success, and to a reasonable degree of distinction. We feel that our purposes are right and our abilities are equal to our needs. We pride ourselves upon good judgment, and if emergency arises, we solicit the assistance of experts. It is hard for us to accept that we can be wrong, or that we are deficient in such knowledge or skill as is necessary to our happiness and peace of mind.

It is only human, therefore, to seek for a scapegoat, to blame others for the failure of our own projects. We are no longer inclined to assume that there is an evil principle in the universe, seeking our destruction or frustration. The devil, as a splendid cavalier, with horns and forked tail, has gone out of style. We are more concerned with the devilishness in our immediate associates, or the perversity of their attitudes. Such ideas open us to numerous prejudices. Is it possible that there are actually organizations or persons bent upon destroying our way of life? Do we live in a world in which there are innumerable enemies who hate us without knowing us, and who are resolved to hurt us simply because we belong to some other religious, cultural, or industrial group? The obvious intensity of competition seems to support this kind of thinking, and so we gradually develop an obsession. When such deep-laid resentments are fanned to fury by a fanatic, we may not be strong enough to resist this insidious pressure.

How can we tell whether our pet notions are real and valid, or whether they merely arise from the discontent and ineffectiveness lurking within ourselves? One simple way is to become increasingly observant of the results of our own attitudes. Suppose we take a violent dislike to someone for no real reason, but as the result of some subjective psychological pressure. We conclude that this person is entirely objectionable, and worthy only of our dislike. As time goes by, we begin to notice that we have made a mistake. The individual whom we have rejected performs some useful service in our behalf, or exhibits a largeness of mind which shames us into grudging approval. I have noticed that persons with prejudices are nearly always confronted with the opportunity to correct their attitude. Frequently, however, the mind has become so set that it rejects the favorable evidence, or ignores it completely. If philosophy can do anything for a person, it should help him to



estimate his own opinions. If he finds that he is consistently wrong, he should change his ways before he is defeated by his own errors.

Experiments have shown that toxin in the human body can cause temporary stimulation, but it always ends in functional or structural damage. Some folks feel that prejudice is a necessary stimulation; that it makes us fight harder against the competitive circumstances around us. Without prejudice, we might settle back into inertia, for growth is a challenge to overcome obstacles, or correct conditions we regard as wrong. This assumes, however, that our judgments are essentially valid; that the things we want to accomplish are right; that our adversary is real; and that the solution we have envisioned is correct. In most cases, this is assuming too much. Often, we are struggling against facts, which is most debilitating. If a thing is true, no denial on the part of man can alter the reality; if it is not true, it cannot be defended, and we labor in vain when we try to support it.

As prejudice begins with an excess of opinion, or an arbitrary attitude, the area of this kind of fixation should be thoroughly investigated. This suggests adequate study and familiarity with expert findings in this special field. More information than we ordinarily possess is always available to us, but real familiarity requires study and research. The impulsive mind, eager to jump to conclusions, is seldom studious by inclination. Thus, prejudice is used as a substitute for knowledge. We feel that if we gain a reputation for strong and aggressive opinions, we shall be considered as experts on the subject. Actually, the moment we open our mouths, we demonstrate beyond doubt the full measure of our ignorance. There is a great deal of difference between snap judgment and mature reflection. Adequate knowledge will reveal both the strength and weakness of persons and situations. This knowledge, in turn, will equip us to make a valuable remedial contribution. Prejudice is so obvious, however, that even when we try to help, our ineffectiveness is all too evident. It is hard to convince anyone that our advice is good if we are fanatical or bigoted. Advice is most respected when it comes from liberal, thoughtful persons, who have examined fairly all the elements of a problem.

Philosophers have been accused of becoming absorbed in their thoughts and therefore deficient in aggressiveness. It is true that

when we see many sides of a problem, the course of action is not nearly as clear as when we reject most of the evidence and magnify some detail. Wisdom takes the edge off hatred and antagonism. As we explore human nature, we discover its essential integrity, and that most of the difficulties arise from the same types of pressure which have distorted our own lives. The prejudices of others are no more valid than our own, but the circumstances of life may have brought to us special advantages. It is therefore our privilege to understand, and to be more gracious and generous than those of lesser insight.

A certain type of prejudice arises from blind fear. Whatever frightens us seems to be an enemy. Fear, in turn, is related to the unknown, and is deeply involved in mystery. If we are in full possession of the facts, we are invited to make use of our own resources, for the truth about things is nearly always smaller than our misgivings. The unknown always appears vast and unconquerable. Knowledge gives us a better perspective, and a certain self-assurance. It becomes obvious that our personal strength bestows a measure of protection. Once we clearly see the problem, we can prepare ourselves to meet it with all of our resources. When our only available emotion is fear, we not only scatter our strength, but create imaginary adversaries. Prejudice, by blocking our natural tendency to learn, or to be thoughtful, or to be fair and honorable, deprives us of the power to analyze unusual situations. Without knowledge, we must battle the unknown. No condition could be more desperate, or produce more detrimental results.

Nature, in its own way, has provided us with adequate means of analyzing the results of our own decisions. Any unhealthy or unreasonable attitude has its effect upon our total pattern of living. The unreasonable person experiences loneliness and the resentment of his associates. He is not happy in his work, nor congenial in his home. Others are advanced above him in his profession; another will succeed where he will fail. With these inevitable penalties, no one can afford to be prejudiced or opinionated, any more than he can afford to be conceited or belligerent. The good things of life are reserved for those who deserve them. They may not achieve all of their outward ambitions, but they

will experience that kind of contentment which makes a friendly, normal adjustment with the world.

The prejudiced person must come to the healthy realization that the world is not perfect; that his friends and relatives are burdened with imperfections; and that he himself is not by any means a finished product in terms of attainment. We do not have to be intolerant because we observe that other people have faults; but we must learn never to generalize upon the particulars of our own experience. There are many reasons why certain things happen to us, and most of these reasons lie within our own nature. There are psychic chemistries which may not be congenial, but it is good to remember that our own personalities cause distinct reactions from those around us. If we are suspicious of others, this suspicion will return to us again. If we doubt the sincerity of others, we will seldom enjoy their sincerity; they sense our instinctive criticism and set up their own defense mechanisms.

Thus, the prejudiced person must live in a world of prejudices. The thing that he fears, will come upon him, as the Bible says. Our faculties are such that we always find some evidence of what we look for and expect. If we expect trouble, it will never be far away. If we are certain that conspiracies exist, we will be constantly confronted with subtle signs and symbols which will appear to support our opinions. Conversely, if we look for good, we will find it; if we believe in principles that are right, we shall discover them everywhere, and quickly convince ourselves that they are real and powerful.

Prejudice is simply one of the bad habits tolerated by our mental-emotional structure. It may be regarded as a form of sickness, difficult to cure because it is not immediately visible in the corporeal structure. If man could see his own psychic life, as he sees his body, there would be a rapid increase in virtue. We like to look well, but may neglect to act well; yet our actions are as visible as any other part of our physical makeup. Ultimately, we are judged by our actions, and when these are inconsistent with our pretensions, we lose the respect of our associates.

Many times, we are asked to advise individuals wishing to join religious or philosophical organizations. We have made it a policy not to recommend one group over another, but to point out prin-

ciples by which integrities can be estimated. It has always seemed to me that we should be extremely cautious in affiliating ourselves with any group which demands that we restrict our loyalty to some one organization. Any religious group which seeks to attain success by depreciating the values and merits of other beliefs, or which advocates any form of religious or cultural intolerance, should be avoided. The joiner will find that a bigoted organization will never rest until it has reduced its members to its own level of policy.

We have many serious problems today in our desperate struggle to achieve a one-world political entity. We know that we cannot live together in a state of mutual fears and continuing distrust. We do not have to agree on everything, or submerge our own individualities, but we must realize that survival depends upon the discovery of those larger truths which we all share in common. Our needs are universal, and our philosophy to meet these needs, must also be universal. As long as we keep on talking about brotherhood while we continue to belittle the faiths of our fellow men, or disparage their contributions to our common good, we shall have wars and rumors of wars. The attitude of pitying indulgence is worse than useless. It does no good to pat the stranger on the head and say condescendingly, "You are a nice fellow, and one day you will grow up and be smart enough to agree with me." Just as intolerance has divided our world in the last ten thousand years, so it has divided our families and prevented cooperation between man and man in every department of human endeavor. If we are not wise enough to solve this personally, here and now, we cannot expect our legislators to solve the confusion of nations.

In working on our own prejudices, mysticism contributes a valuable basic overtone. It recommends that we make all decisions while in a gentle and rather introspective mood. Our basic solutions come from the level of internal peace, in the deepest parts of our selves. When we must decide on the virtues of another person, or think through the injuries which we feel we have suffered, we should be very quiet. We should seek the consolation of the spirit in ourselves, and we should ask our conscience, "Is this the kindly thing to do?" "Is this the way I would have others do unto me?" "Do I really know that the situation is as I think it to be?"

If each of us seeking orientation would enter into the sanctuary of our own hearts, and there seek the spirit of God, our decisions would certainly be more just and more kind. Prejudices are often merely acute nervousness, or passing exasperation, or even excessive fatigue. We have lost our optimism; we have forgotten to be kind; we are angry or jealous. In these bad moments, we say things and do things that are hurtful and unfair. We can never be really right until we can think and feel without ulterior motive, or without the instinct to defend self, whether we are right or wrong.

If you are prejudiced against a religion, go to the church several times where this religion is taught. Do not boastfully say you have never darkened its doors, and then expect others to take you seriously. If you have national antagonisms, meet persons belonging to that nation; break bread with them; meet their children; and see whether your suspicions were just, or merely the natural uncertainty of a stranger. If you have racial prejudices, study the arts, the music, and the drama of other races; read about their heroes; consider their contributions to progress; think how they have enriched the whole world in some way—perhaps in many ways. Learn to be grateful for beauty, for truth, regardless of its source, and it will not be easy to hold bitterness or suspicion. If you instinctively resent the actions of your friends, remember always one thing: it is not his religion or his philosophy or his moral code that makes him unpleasant. It is because, like yourself, he cannot or will not really live his principles. He is trying, as you are trying, and mutual support will advance a cause far more than mutual antagonism.

Think of the members of your family. They have made mistakes; perhaps they have been cruel, certainly thoughtless. Consider the pressure under which they live. It is not that they really meant to injure; in most cases, it was because they, also, had fallen under bad habits and lacked the courage or insight to meet the challenge of self-analysis. Are we more desirable to know, or happier to live with, if we make precisely the same mistakes that have brought suffering to ourselves? Are we merely perpetuating the old feud, or are we bestowing all that we have of strength and understanding to terminate the difficulty? I have met many embittered people who give as their excuse that their parents were

embittered, or this bitterness has been a heritage through several generations. They lost faith in their families because of ill treatment; yet they are practicing the same faults and expect to be loved, honored, and understood.

If our studies and our contemplations do not inspire us to become well-adjusted persons, our intellectual and spiritual labors are in vain. The end of all religion is that men shall live well and establish harmonious patterns of collective conduct. Civilization is built upon mutual understanding. When this fails, we fall into barbarianism. The person who is not basically friendly and quick to appreciate the kindness and privileges which he enjoys, is falling back into personal barbarianism. Like the savage, he lives and dies alone, because he has never experienced the benevolent results of faith and comradeship.

We have a list of sins, and we are supposed to avoid all evil works. It would seem to me that prejudice is just as dangerous a sin as thievery, or even murder. Prejudice in high places can destroy a whole nation and bring a world to war. Prejudice in our own hearts can blight us, like a heavy frost. It detracts from all the goodness and joy of our lives, leaving us bitter, frightened, and sick.

There is no royal road to virtue. Each person must discover his own faults and correct them as quickly as he can. Discovery is two thirds of the battle. Once we know the nature of our adversary, we can transmute negative forces into positive virtues. Prejudice only remains while we allow it to affect our lives. Once we recognize that it is wrong, and devote a little thought and effort to its correction, the rewards will become obvious. We will see a better world around us.

Excessive opinionism is a kind of blindness, not due to a defect of the sight, but to a habit of wandering about with our eyes tightly closed in the presence of light. Understanding helps us to wake up. The blind live in a world of their own, and when we are mentally blind, this is not a good world. To recover from prejudice simply means to open the eyes, and really see the universe in which we exist. We shall observe its lights and shadows, but we shall estimate them correctly. Then, for us, there shall be no more night.



## ART AS IMPULSE AND IMPACT

### PART 4

#### RELIGIOUS ART

The great art of the ancient and medieval worlds was dominantly religious. This is true not only in the rise of Western culture, but also throughout Asia. Exceptions were principally in the field of portraiture and in the depiction of important historical events. Even when secular subjects were represented, the manner of representation was influenced by religious considerations. Art generally rejected trivia, and homely themes were left to the ingenuity of lesser artisans, whose productions come under the general heading of folk art. The result was, to a large degree, a monotonous repetition of theological themes, which satisfied the public taste and contributed to an atmosphere of piety and devotion.

In Christendom, the medieval church not only inspired, but patronized art, and the wealthy of all classes engaged famous painters and sculptors to ornament sacred edifices. This led to a broad acceptance of the artistic concept of meaningful art. The picture was expected to inspire, preach, and teach. The prevailing illiteracy contributed to the need for the visual representation of holy events, festivals, and persons. There was very little art in private homes, except of a religious nature, and the sanctified atmosphere was unsuitable for the inclusion of profane subject matter.

In India, China, Japan, and other Eastern regions, the ancient frescoes, carvings, and architectural adornments were nearly always either directly religious or included symbols of spiritual significance. Although some of this work might seem offensive to the morality of modern man, this in no way alters the basic fact that art was dedicated to the glory of God. The Greeks were more naturalistic, but if religion be broadened to include the Grecian cult of heroes, the same principle dominated the esthetic endeavors. The Greeks borrowed many of their themes from the old legends of their regions, and these legends, in turn, originated in

the ritualism and pageantry of old cults and doctrines. The Romans were inclined to dramatic portraiture, and we have some excellent statues of their rulers and statesmen. As we admire some figure of Octavian, Septimius Severus, or Vespasian, we should remember, however, that the Romans regarded their Caesars as divine persons, and emperor worship was considered proper and orthodox.

There was a gradual trend from the directly religious theme toward the morality picture. This was less obviously doctrinal, but was still essentially dominated by theology. Meaning still remained as the primary motivation behind the picture. It was only after the Renaissance that the depiction of secular splendor became fashionable. Artists also began to seek inspiration from the everyday affairs of living. The character study gained interest, but it was comparatively late that landscape painting became more than a fragment in more serious artistic work. Throughout the world, eternal verity alone justified the time and expense devoted to the arts. Probably there was no market for less significant material. The patrons of art were exalted persons with very definite opinions and prejudices. They determined subject matter, and in many instances regulated the mode of its presentation. In the end, they paid the bill, and rebellion led only to impoverishment and disgrace.

After the Reformation, man became more acutely aware of the natural world in which he lived. Pioneers of science were exploring the wonders of the created universe. From their contemplation of the stars, these pioneering spirits turned to the contemplation of each other. The dignity of man, as a wonderfully endowed creature, intrigued the awaking intellect of scholars and philosophers. As man became universally interesting, it seemed the proper procedure to represent him as a simple human being. Rembrandt chose his models from the most obscure and least privileged levels of society. He sought for, and found, lineaments of character, in themselves of lasting art value.

The breaking down of the feudal system contributed to the economic prosperity of the newborn middle class. There were rich merchants and traders, and these stolid burghers instinctively demanded art forms within the area of their immediate comprehension. They went to church regularly, and profoundly admired



the sacred pictures and sculptures, but they also had comfortable homes which they desired to adorn for pleasure as well as inspiration. As this type of market enlarged, there was a corresponding shrinkage of aristocratic influence. The great families lost their leadership, and even the rich and the powerful found it advisable to enter into more realistic relationships with the merchants and craftsmen. In time, the middle class became the proprietor of styles and fashions, and with the exception of a brief period of extreme puritanism, it took a lively, if unorganized, interest in esthetics.

By the 17th century, humanism had become a fact in the European mind, and the art world was moving relentlessly toward "Pinky" and "The Blue Boy." As significance vanished in favor of technique, the psychological value of art as a directive of public opinion virtually disappeared. It is often impossible to decide why a picture was painted, and we may even doubt if the artist knew the answer. Perhaps profit was the main incentive, but we sincerely dislike to believe this, for artists, as a group, have a genuine dedication to their profession.

With the rising tide of materialism, men simply ceased to demand meaning, not only in art, but in literature, dance, and the theater. Materialism began to take on the proportions of a cult. Science became the new religion, and scientists were not exactly esthetes. By degrees, religion lost its battle against the rapidly increasing school of intellectual skepticism, and a cultural system which had once believed almost anything, gradually came to believe in nothing. Materialism led to an all-pervading disenchantment, and this, in turn, fell into morbid and negative speculations.

Always a creature of extremes, the human being went from idealism into realism with astonishing rapidity. According to realism, we must all face one common dilemma; namely, that the worst is true. Beauty is an illusion; ugliness is a fact. We should forget the advantages of living, and ponder continuously the inevitability of death. Crime, war, and poverty must be accepted not as passing dilemmas, but as eternal truths. The idealist inhabits a fool's paradise, and the only really normal person is the total neurotic.

With this perspective, eccentricity became the sure sign of genius. Novelty was progress, and the liberated artist must renounce technique, the canons of good taste, and the simple procedures of com-



SCREEN DESIGN FEATURING HORSES

This highly impressionistic treatment originated in China, and later found favor among contemplative Japanese artists who pioneered the concept of the majesty of line in motion.

mon sense. The end was what we like to call art freedom, or art for art's sake. This whole school defended itself with words, but not with works. It argued, complained, became the stout champion of the common man, dedicated its achievements to the proletariat, painted social significance, and, altogether, constituted a sound and fury meaning nothing.

Such a predicament eventually became unbearable. The desperate effort to sell the public mind these productions of artistic adolescence, or perhaps more correctly, decadence, was never really successful. The artists convinced each other, overwhelmed a few critics with the illogical splendor of dynamics, hoodwinked some curators into covering the walls of their museums with these curious designs, but the public market simply remained uninterested. The average person finds no advantage in surrounding himself with the most disquieting and unpleasant artistic furnishings. Perhaps his taste is not impeccable, but his common sense insists upon recognition. Secular art, as we know it, has never been accorded broad recognition. It has a place, and it can serve a useful purpose, but it can never replace what we term inspired art. It simply lacks

content. It does not find support from within our own psychic integration. It may, for a moment, intrigue the confused, but it does not help to clarify confusion.

We are now turning to a new interpretation of what constitutes sacred art. We do not believe that this means a continuing eruption of madonnas, bambinos, and portraits of sanctified persons of long ago. There is a new understanding of spiritual value, which is in some way related to the impact of pure design. The universe is not pretty, but it is beautiful. We may reach into the spiritual core of man with purity of line, with exquisite harmony of color, with simple forms, gracefully delineated. Our concept of spiritual art now includes the enriching of our emotional life with the sublimity of pure motion. There is a delight which reaches into our souls, bringing with it a message of joy and a subtle measure of understanding that is not dogmatic or morality-ridden. We begin to feel the ministry of spiritual grace, which comes not by abandoning technique, but by making it subservient to real inspiration.

It becomes expedient, therefore, to give more consideration to the artist, and no longer separate him completely from his work. What kind of a person is it whose presence enters our living room when we buy one of his pictures? Would we want the artist for a personal friend? Would we enjoy him and be proud to have him mingle with our family, or perhaps become an instructor of our children? It is not important what station of life he comes from, and, for that matter, what his religion may be. It is simply a question of his basic integrity. Is he a dedicated man; does he believe what he is doing; is he sincere and free of that false sophistication which we have come to regard as a natural appendage of artistry? Has he glorified the commonplace because he loved it and knew it, or has he desecrated things in themselves fine and worthy of our respect?

Psychology teaches us that the artist lives in his work. His picture, in some way, conveys the story of himself. All we ask is that this self be real and essentially honorable. We may give him certain liberty, but we will not bestow upon him complete license. After all, we are his patrons. To the degree that we support him, we enable him to continue his work, and perhaps to enjoy our applause and recognition. We have no right to dictate what he shall

paint, or what colors he should use, or, for that matter, what his philosophy may be. In his turn, however, he must give us the right to select what we find useful, support what we believe to be important, and reward those who bring comfort, consolation, or inspiration into our lives. We shall not be expected to support what injures us, or detracts from our peace of mind. Art affects directly our psychic lives, and these must be protected from evil, even as we protect the body from contamination.

In this emergency, Western man has suddenly become profoundly aware of Eastern art. This is interesting, inasmuch as it does not indicate a general acceptance of Eastern religion or philosophy. We are especially attracted by a certain sense of value and by a curious sincerity and purity of art motivation. It may well be that the Oriental artist was no better man, as an individual, than his Occidental contemporary. He was, however, a different kind of person, and unfamiliarity adds to the enchantment. No one has more greatly glorified the commonplace than the Asiatic painter. In his glorification, however, he is not crude. In his treatment of nature, he is gentle and acceptant. He passes his subject matter through the censorship of his own consciousness. He does not splash and daub, nor is he to be found forever wandering about with a portable easel under one arm and a box of paints in a small suitcase. He sees something that impresses him. He goes home and thinks about it. He allows his nature to relax. He seeks essential line, which is, to him, true meaning. Then, in a quietude approaching mystical reverie, he transfers his basic idea to silk or paper with a profound economy of color and structure. He can take a small weed growing by the roadside, and by suspending that weed in the pure air of colorless light, he can cause it to assume cosmic proportion. He can give us a fascinating and tremendously stimulating drawing or painting. We need no more than the simple line. By the same law, we need no more than simple truths, clearly traced for our understanding. There may be humor in his work, but it is a kind of loving humor. There is seldom anything bitter, nor is he trying to sell his disillusionment.

Much has been made of the point that the Oriental artist is seldom a portraiturist. He does not seek to carry his impression of a person by delineating the features with extraordinary or even





### BIRD IN THE RAIN

Kawanade Kyosai published a history of Japanese painting and art theory, under the title *Gyosai Gadan*, in 1887. Among the sketches included is this one of a pensive bird surviving the inclemency of the weather with Zen fortitude.

painful exactitude. He is not seeking for wrinkles, moles, and squints. To him, a portrait is a total person, and the hands and feet are just as important as the face. Even more significant is a subtle impression. He may capture this in the posture of the shoulders, the angle of the head, the way the person sits in a chair or ambles along some country road. If he can make us feel the whole being of that person, then he feels that he has accomplished something of importance or lasting value. We might not recognize the man if we saw him, but we would understand him if we knew him. He has come to us as a being; not as a suit of clothes surmounted by a face.

For this type of art, there must be a deep, interior experience. The artist cannot represent just what he sees; but rather, something that he inwardly knows. The senses are supported by the intuition, which becomes the most powerful single factor in interpretive artistry. The same is also true of the representations of deities and sanctified persons. The Buddha, in Oriental art, is not a man, but an idea. No effort is made to conform with some historical account of his appearance or his dress. He is an impact of value. Rather than being the Buddha, he is Buddhism—the effect of a man's life upon hundreds of millions of men and women who never knew him personally, never saw him as a man, yet feel an immediate association with the qualities which he represents.

Oriental art ever attempts this total impact. Whether the artist is painting a pumpkin, a field of iris in bloom, a great priest or poet, or a lowly geisha, he is searching for soul. This soul he will present wherever he finds it. If it is a great soul, he will glorify it; if it is a humble soul, he will ennoble it; and if it is a pitiful soul, he will cause those who see the picture to feel a real compassion, free of censure and reproach. Some Oriental art is quite realistic, but never with the realism of Montparnasse or Monmartre.

Thus, the spiritual is not merely obvious preaching. We have outgrown the time when theology is synonymous with virtue or beauty. As the universe expands, it reveals ever more of the glory of the power which ensouls it. This power does not merely shine upon things; it shines within things. For this reason, perhaps, the Oriental artist seldom shades the forms which he depicts. We find no trailing shadow on the ground, where we might expect it to be.

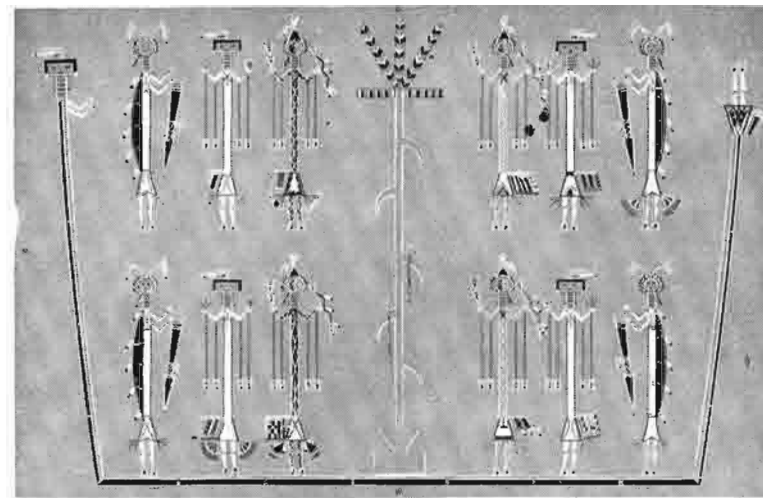


Doors and windows do not cast their shades, and the features of a person are not highlighted on one side and darkened on the other to create the illusion of three dimensions.

The technique of notan has a quality of subtle joy, which we are beginning to appreciate. Shadows are symbols of ever changing values. A man turns his head, and light plays differently on his features. In the morning, his face appears bright because of the light of the morning sun; in the evening, after the sun has set, his complexion slowly greys with the fall of night. Notan does not recognize these changes. These are external accidents. In morning and in evening, the human being remains himself, and the invisible, but ever real, luminosity of his character defines him. Nor is it necessary to support him with a mask or extraneous details. Something appropriate to his environment may be suggested, but he is not overwhelmed by his possessions or by the worldliness which surrounds him. The eye is not required to travel over many areas of subordinate interest before it can discover the dominant concern.

Man can never be measured against things which surround him. He is not short because a tree is taller; he is not tall because a weed is shorter. He is not great because he is placed in a palace, nor humble because he works in the fields. He is a being, dramatic and real in his own nature. Thus he shall be depicted only in the character native to himself. In this way, his internal values become apparent to us, and if we seek further, the God in him is indicated, if not delineated. Truly, this is a religious art, encouraging us constantly to understand each other better and to appreciate more fully the one life that flows out through infinite diversity, but never for a moment becomes broken or deformed.

Subjective art can be important. There is no reason to assume that forms must be completely delineated in order to be meaningful. My quarrel with the modern painters is not that I do not understand them, but that I gravely suspect, in many cases, there is nothing to understand. To me, religious painting must arise as psychic impulse within a person who has attained at least a degree of true religious experience. This has nothing to do with sophistication or addiction to theological opinions. The sand paintings of Navajo Indian mystics are often magnificent examples of abstract



MYTHOLOGICAL SAND PAINTING OF THE NAVAJO INDIANS

This very large painting was made on the eighth day of a healing service. The central corn stalk represents the principle of life. The dancers signify deities and legendary persons, and the entire pattern is surrounded on three sides with the elongated form of the rain-bow goddess.

art. They express a true and deep dedication to ideas held sacred in the heart and mind. These paintings may be meaningless to those uninitiated in the tribal rites and ceremonies, but they never offend. They are never cheap or simply gaudy, nor have they been designed to attract attention, cause comment, or bewilder a critic. They are rich with implications and overtones. They are patterns of praise and of service, prayers and supplications in sand, and at the same time, magnificently decorative.

Art cannot be separated from personal experience. To the beholder, it stimulates recollection and sets in motion sequences of association mechanisms. The picture always reminds us of ourselves—something we know, something we have done. If the picture is non-directive, it may exert even greater force because it releases the faculty of imagination. Art, to have any value, must inspire moods, and these moods must be constructive, or at least pleasing. The use of the mandala in Tibetan and Japanese art is a key to the importance of the religious picture. In China, especially, calligraphy has been cultivated as a major form of creative



artistry. The written form of the language is appropriate to dramatic presentation. Inscriptions, short poems and prayers, are written so beautifully upon strips of silk that they are often framed as ornamentations. Here we have the beautiful idea, beautifully expressed. The forms of the letters are appropriate to their meanings and the message they convey. This should be true in all great art. The form should glorify the meaning, and the meaning should be worthy to be so glorified.

Western religion has been in a state of general confusion for centuries. Sectarian considerations have been elevated above those universal truths which are the soul of enlightened belief. We have never learned to reveal our faith through the direct practice of its redeeming power. In every walk of life, ideals, moving into physical expression, are deformed, restricted, or impaired. This long trend is easily recognized in our natural reaction to sacred paintings. The themes and the meanings do not move directly into our conduct; they are things apart, to be admired or even venerated. The new trend should be toward art moving into our personal psychology as a continuing dynamic force. Unless religious art does this, it cannot carry us forward into a practical realization of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

In most cases, we must realize that detail is dogma. When a picture is so complete and its treatment so obvious that nothing is left for us to seek or interpret or complete from within ourselves, we must accept it or reject it by surface value alone. This literalism has long been an unhappy tendency, but solution does not lie in a complete rejection of artistic proprieties. To escape from utter formality, we have sought freedom in masses of color and brittle forms lacking unity of concept or compatibility of elements. Color therapy has shown the value of various color combinations. Psychology has also shown that persons with various neuroses are inclined to express their frustrations by selecting certain colors or using pigments in unnatural or disquieting combinations. Thus it is difficult to distinguish between the works of some of our more modern impressionists and the productions resulting from mental unbalance. Obviously, we are in no real need for pathological ornamentation. We may sympathize with the psychotic painter, but we will gain little of lasting value by hanging his pictures on

the walls of our homes. It is surprising how often neurotics select sacred subjects or involved religious symbols in their designs. Even some of the older masters have been guilty of this practice, and the trend will continue until the facts become generally known.

There is a popular belief that artists and musicians are eccentric individuals living in worlds of their own. From their biographies, we become convinced that they were unhappy, and perhaps intemperate and immoral. All this unfavorable evidence, however, is said to be compensated for by sheer genius. We should forget the man and his conduct, and remember only his glorious contributions in the realm of esthetics. There is a false note here. No person can completely escape from his own temperament. By skill, he may achieve a satisfactory technique, but if something is missing in the man, it will also be missing in his art. This is equally true if the subject matter be religious. We cannot escape the subtle influence of our environment. Nearly everything with which we are associated today has a tendency to disturb our inner lives. We are disillusioned constantly, until finally we become cynical. It is held by many informed persons that the most powerful instruments of reform lie in the fields of the arts and the humanities. We seek to compensate for materialism by developing conscious sympathies for things fine and beautiful. If our arts, literature, and related fields of creativity lack essential integrity, they merely perpetuate the very moods which we are seeking to transform.

Up to now, our most valid religious art has originated in areas comparatively untouched by the pressures of modern sophistication. It is impossible for civilized man, as we know him today, to return to a primitive state, but he cannot afford to linger much longer in the shadowy world of his disillusionments and embitterments. He must move forward until he can rediscover the eternal beauties of a meaningful universe. In childhood, he has the integrity of innocence. He is moved by strange but loving intensities from within himself. He believes, he hopes, and he has faith in the life which he has not yet experienced. In maturity, these values are rediscovered. A childlikeness comes upon him. He is no longer bitter, and his faith has been strengthened by his own need. He has found again the wonderland of beautiful believing. He has used reason to defend his ideals, and he is satisfied that his prin-





### SAINTE CHAPELLE

This magnificent building, erected in the 13th century, for Louis IX (St. Louis), to enshrine the Crown of Thorns, is perhaps the finest example of Gothic architecture. Wall and supporting surfaces have been reduced to the possible minimum, so that the structure appears to be principally glass.

ciples are right, even though some of them cannot be immediately applied.

Between infancy and maturity, however, is an awkward age of adolescence. There are moments of great fear, and hours of splendid audacity. There is much confusion within the self. Faculties and propensities are asserting their diverse forces, tearing the individual with almost continuous conflicts. In these years, also, it is likely that the adolescent would overestimate his own understanding. He resents the dictatorship of his elders, regarding their persuasions as intolerance and their beliefs as survivals of ancient superstitions. If he is brainwashed by higher education, he may come, in the end, to believe that maturity is a skeptical state, and that life is meaningful only in terms of superficial pleasure and profit. Many of our artists are perpetual adolescents. They are evangelists of what they like to call realism, which is actually no more than an unthoughtful acceptance of appearance.

There are improvements, however, that are worth noting. Religious architecture is a good example. The present trend is to unite the elements of structure and ornamentation into one pattern. This means that we have realized that art is structure. We do not *hang* pictures on the wall; we *build* them in, as line, color, and basic form. The whole building becomes a picture, and by its grand design, we are moved upward by a sense of exaltation, freedom, and spiritual liberty. Everywhere there are windows, and these, in turn, help to unite the interior of the structure with the larger world in which it stands. The finest example of this is to be found in the great Gothic masterpiece, the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, which has achieved an incredibly luminous interior. It is good, indeed, when glass can take the place of stone, giving us windows instead of walls, and bringing the light of the sun into vast chambers otherwise oppressive with their gloom. Religion is not a thing apart, hidden in a vast, cold structure where the light of the sun never enters. It is life, motion, warmth, texture, line, curve. In painting, we must seek the same values, making each picture a window into a larger world of understanding.

We are all locked in patterns of personal experience, tradition, and authority. Great art should set us free. There is a story of a man who lived most of his life within the cloisters of a monastery,



in a small, kindly, dominated atmosphere. At last he resolved to go out into the world, but in a short time he returned to the cloister, frightened, disturbed, and totally unable to cope with situations which he had never known. Many religious people are in this dilemma. They create boundaries between things sacred and profane, dividing life according to some narrow precept of their own.

Religion must outgrow this tendency to separate values, and art must help to point the way to the one world, the one universe, the one humanity, and the one God. Things outside must be brought in; things inside must be allowed to come forth, until there is neither an inner nor an outer part to human understanding. Through religious art, the stranger, the friend, and even the enemy, must come into our house to be welcomed or forgiven, as the case may be.

Art has a strange way of demanding its own rights, and censoring conduct. If we have a truly great picture in the living room, it is not quite so easy to fall into negative and critical attitudes. The best in us is supported, and we are ashamed to live below the level of a great picture. If it tells us of kindly and friendly things, then gossip, criticism, and condemnation seem strangely out of place. They are actually forbidden where beauty reigns. We cannot all understand the more abstract aspects of theological symbolism, but we can join with great mystics, like Emerson, who found a little of heaven in the woodland glade. We, too, can hear the sermon of sticks and stones; and simple things, in their plain and native dignity, are more sacred than holy icons.

All good art is religious art, because it impels us to appreciate and to admire, and these are the natural foundations of veneration. It is indeed better to understand than to worship, to appreciate than to accept, and to be at peace rather than to strive after the great abstractions of the spirit. An artist can make great things simple. The art lover makes simple things great.



#### *Success Hint*

A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone.

—Thoreau

## BOETHIUS ON

### “THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY”

There is a class of literature sometimes called “prison books.” These are the works of authors sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, or in prison awaiting death. Although such prison books are not numerous, they include outstanding works which have deeply influenced the lives and characters of countless persons. As examples of such writings, we can mention the last discourse of Socrates, Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, and the work of Boethius on *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Reference could also be made to the devotional writings of King James II and the great *History of the World* written by Sir Walter Raleigh while awaiting death.

Various motives have inspired the “prison books.” In some cases, they constituted intellectual employment to occupy the mind and hand during long years of confinement. More especially, however, they were expressions of conviction to sustain faith, preserve sanity, and to reconcile the injustices of men with the sovereign justice of Deity. The tendency, therefore, is that such productions should be of a pious nature, often combining religion and moral philosophy. The confined person had the leisure to examine himself and to draw upon the spiritual resources which had come to him through education and experience. These books are surprisingly free from bitterness and reproach. They reveal how the human soul under adversity attains victory over the weakness in itself. Such writings have a deep appeal for troubled men and women of every generation, for each, in his own way, is inspired to bear his burdens with nobility and patience.

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, described by the historian Gibbon as the last Roman whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman, was born, probably in Rome, about the year 480 A.D. That he was a man of exceptional abilities, cannot be denied. Originating from a family of importance and social standing, he was destined for a career of statesmanship. At the same time, however, he was devoted to the pursuit of learning,

gaining a wide reputation for his philosophic insight and the elegance of his literary form. Like the Emperor Julian, he wrote in those rare intervals when the duties of state permitted him the leisure for contemplation. As in the case of Marcus Aurelius, he drew his philosophy from the fountains of Greek wisdom, and most of his writings reveal a heavy indebtedness to the classic authors. It is a mistake, however, to assume that he had only an intellectual insight into learning. It is evident that he leaned heavily upon reflection for strength and security and for the courage to remain true to his duties and responsibilities under the most difficult, even tragic, conditions.

As Boethius lived in the early centuries of the Church, when the strength of Christianity in the Roman Empire was rapidly increasing, it is only natural to examine his personal religious convictions. It has been usual to assume that Boethius was a Christian. Actual evidence is lacking, and he fails to clarify the point in his own writings. Certain Christian tracts have been attributed to him, but this is not supported by conclusive evidence. It was common in those times to attach celebrated names to the works of unknown authors for motives of prestige or profit. It is also assumed that religion may have contributed to the downfall of this brilliant man. Several heretical Christian sects were struggling for authority, and the conflict carried with it much personal bitterness and many political overtones.

The attitude of the public mind is perhaps best clarified by the popular opinion that Boethius died a Christian, though it cannot be shown from documentary sources that he was actually a martyr for the Catholic faith. According to the Church record, the local cult of Boethius at Pavia was sanctioned when, in 1883, the Sacred Congregation of Rites confirmed the custom prevailing in that diocese of honoring St. Severinus Boethius on the 23rd of October. This merely formalized a procedure established in the 8th century, by which Boethius was honored as a martyr. In the year 996 A.D., Otho III ordered the bones of Boethius to be taken out of the place in which they had lain hid, and to be placed in the church of St. Augustine within a splendid marble tomb, for which Gerbert, who afterwards became Pope under the name of Sylvester II, wrote an appropriate inscription. If Boethius was a Christian,

his Christianity was essentially philosophic, and he felt entirely free to draw upon all the learning of his age for inspiration and comfort.

Boethius was a young man when Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, became master of Rome by slaying Odoacer with his own hand. Thus, in March of 493 A.D., the thirty-three years' reign of Theodoric had its beginning. Broadly speaking, Theodoric brought peace and prosperity to Italy, but in the closing years of his life, he became involved in the persecution of the Arians by Justin, the Emperor of the Eastern Empire. Boethius was drawn into this unhappy situation, although it is not probable that this was the true cause of his death. He enjoyed the extraordinary favor of Theodoric, and was one of the monarch's most intimate friends. In 510 A.D., Boethius was elevated to the consulship, and twelve years later, his two sons were honored in a similar way.

Born out of time, Boethius was in every fabric of his being a true Roman. He had not been touched by the decadence and corruption which had destroyed the early empire. To him, Roman citizenship implied the true and honorable performance of all public duty, the sacredness of oath and obligation, and the protection of Roman liberty, even at the expense of his own life. Generally speaking, Theodoric supported him, but as his influence increased and began to interfere with the ulterior motives of unscrupulous courtiers, a conspiracy was gradually organized against him. Boethius tells us that he opposed Conigastus when he attempted to pilage the property of the weak. He also prevented Trigguilla, the Chamberlain of the palace, from perpetrating acts of injustice. He protected Paulinus and Albinus from evil men bent upon their destruction, and on one occasion defended the entire Roman Senate from the accusation of treason.

Finally, three men, Basilius, a vindictive informer, and Opilio and Gaudentius, both under sentence of banishment for fraud, united their efforts and accused Boethius of conspiracy against Theodoric, and of having communicated with the Eastern Emperor Justin to restore the liberty of Rome. It is possible that it was cunningly conceived that Theodoric, who was an Arian, would be most resentful of Justin, who was an orthodox Christian. In any event, Boethius denied all the charges, although he admitted that





A 15th-century manuscript of the work of Boethius translated into French by Jean de Meun, now in the British Museum. The illumination shows the translator presenting the work to Philip IV of France.

he wished he could have lived in a time when Rome could have enjoyed its ancient liberties. He declared that the letters he was supposed to have written to Justin were obvious forgeries.

Largely due to the hatred of his political enemies, who managed to reach the ear of Theodoric with persuasive arguments, Boethius was found guilty and was thrown into prison at Pavia. Most im-

portant of all, his goods were confiscated, a circumstance which may reveal one of the subtle motives of his enemies. While in prison, Boethius wrote his famous work, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, and he was finally put to death in 525 A.D. According to Procopius, the death of Theodoric was probably hastened by remorse for the crime he had committed against the great and honest Counsellor. Theodoric soon repented of his mistake, but it was too late to be of any practical service to Boethius.

According to the religious point of view, it is assumed first that Boethius was a Christian, and second, that he favored Justin, who was the champion of the Orthodox Church. If his death was due in large measure to his religious conviction, or to the fact that Theodoric, addicted to the Arian heresy, was motivated strongly by religious prejudice in permitting the death of the great statesman, Boethius can then be considered as a martyr. This must have been the prevailing opinion, for he was canonized as St. Severinus. It is also reported that miraculous incidents occurred at the time of his death, and the brick tower at Pavia, in which he was confined, came to be regarded as a hallowed building.

Boethius wrote *The Consolation of Philosophy* in the tower prison of Pavia. The spirit of the work reveals the natural disposition of its author. There is no repentance for guilt, because he knew his own innocence. Deprived of all association which might comfort his heart and soul, he sought within himself for an understanding of the misfortunes which had descended upon his house. He made a strong demand upon his own insight, and although he was in desperate straits, the style of his work is gentle and gracious. In structure, *The Consolation of Philosophy* is a kind of dialogue, in which Boethius reasons with himself, explains himself to himself, unfolding his doubts and solving them logically and reasonably. To accomplish this, he makes use of an allegory, introducing philosophy as a person with whom he can hold communion.

In the beginning of the first book Boethius tells us that he was seated alone in gloomy grieving, remembering the brightness of earlier days and the fickleness of fortune. While engaged in these reveries, Philosophy appeared to him in the form of a woman. Her countenance was full of majesty, and her eyes revealed the

deepest insight. Although she was not young, her strength was intact, for she was not subject to the infirmities of mortal age. Boethius noted that Philosophy was of varying stature, for at one moment she had ordinary human dimensions, but at another, she seemed to so increase that her head pierced the sky and was no longer visible.

Her clothing, which was wrought of the finest thread and by the most subtle workmanship, formed one indivisible garment which she had fashioned with her own hands. The beauty of her robes was dimmed by the dullness of long neglect. On the upper border was a Greek letter signifying *theoretical*, and on the lower hem was another Greek letter signifying *practical*, these being the two divisions of philosophy. Between these letters were markings suggesting the rungs of a ladder uniting the lower with the higher. In several places, the garment of Philosophy had been torn and mutilated, for the hands of rough men had torn off such parts as they coveted.

In her right hand, Philosophy carried books, and in her left, she brandished a scepter. Observing that the muses of poetry were lamenting by the couch of Boethius, Philosophy became indignant, demanding by what right they should add to the miseries of the sufferer.

When Boethius inquired as to why Philosophy should come to him in his lonely prison, she asked if she should desert one of those she had nursed. She reminded him that she had stood with Anaxagoras when he went into exile; that she had been with Socrates when he was executed by the Athenian state; she had comforted Zeno of Elea when he was tortured by Nearchus; and she had not failed to be with Caius when he was put to death by Caligula. Her consolation she had given to Seneca when he was driven to suicide by Nero. Why, then, should she not be with Boethius in his hour of need? There is no greater moment in the life of mortals than that in which they approach death, and in this moment, their philosophy, whatever it may be, must stand beside them, imparting courage and restoring spiritual tranquillity.

*The Consolation of Philosophy* is divided into five sections, called books, and in the first of these, Philosophy reveals that although Boethius believes in the existence of a true God, eternal in power and wisdom, he does not understand his own human nature. This

is the cause of the weakness that afflicts his spirit, for without self-knowledge, all other knowledge is insufficient. In the second book, Boethius is brought into direct contact with Fortune. From her, he is taught to understand the blessings that have come to him, the preferment he has enjoyed, and the privileges that have been his. It is pointed out that all fortunes are inconsistent; that there can be no advancement without fear and anxiety. The good that comes to us excites the jealousy of others, and in our success, we may be unmindful of our dependence upon the Divine Being.

In the third book, Philosophy unfolds to Boethius the mystery of true happiness. This comes only to those who have realized that the highest good must be cultivated above all lesser considerations. Only in God and in the service of God can the soul find everlasting peace. To know God, to be like God, and to be united with God—these are the greater felicities which Fortune cannot overthrow, for such virtues other men do not envy because they are not comprehensible to the profane. It is also indicated that while there are appearances of evil, there can be no reality of evil. God is all-powerful, and as God cannot wish evil, it can have no substance beyond those transitory appearances which we like to accept as bad or hurtful.

In the fourth book, Boethius complains, desiring to know why it is that virtue is so often punished and vice rewarded. Philosophy then explains to him that rewards and punishments are illusional, depending only on human attitude for their continuance. Actually, virtue is never left unrewarded, nor is vice ever left unpunished. It may well be that the evil-doer seems to flourish, but if we could look into his heart and mind, we would find many punishments, invisible but real. Things gained unlawfully, or held dishonestly, become poisonous serpents in the hands of their possessors. Men may die of their successes as quickly as of their failures, for every powerful man is in a desperate position. If he has gained his station without honor, he will lose it to another whose honor is no greater. Conversely, virtues have their rewards, more wonderful and more perfect than we can ordinarily perceive. That person who enjoys the inward sense of honor has an ever present comfort which cannot be taken from him. He not only faces this world with the courage of integrity, but approaches the unknown



future with real and abiding hope. He has faith in himself because in himself he has been faithful. There can be no greater reward, nor any treasure more satisfying and more indestructible.

In the fifth book, the problem of man's free will is examined. This is clarified by an exposition of the true nature of God. Deity is presented as living in an eternal now, a condition without past or future, but enclosing both. Because God is both in-knowing and fore-knowing, being without ignorance in any part, and aware of all that occurs within the eternity of his vision, it is truly impossible that there should be any failure of divine law. It is the duty and privilege of man to understand this sovereignty of good and to realize that all occurrences and all conditions, regardless of their appearances, conspire together for that goodness which is God.

It is implied from these discourses that Boethius is consoled. Standing at the gateway to the unknown world of eternal life, he realizes that his mortal existence is in preparation for his immortal state. Whatever happens here in this sorry sphere of eccentric fortunes, is no longer important. Boethius has lost nothing of himself. That which has been stripped from him is no more than that which death can always claim. He goes forth, therefore, hand in hand with the wisdom of God. He has found his true philosophy, and he is no longer afraid. For many years he studied, gaining what he could of knowledge and understanding. He has known good men and bad, honor and disgrace. Without his realization, the things that have happened to him have enriched him inwardly. When, in his extremity, he calls upon this enrichment, it is immediately available. Darkness passes away. Even in prison, he comes to know that he has escaped more disasters than have fallen to his lot. Of many sufferings he must bear only his own.

In the end, therefore, gratitude takes the place of anxiety. Boethius knows that the soul of man, advancing triumphantly toward union with God, ascends from the obscurity of the mortal lot to be one forever with the beautiful and the good.



## PLANETS AND EARTHQUAKES

“And the old  
And crazy earth has had her shaking fits  
More frequent, and foregone her usual rest—  
The rocks fall headlong and the valleys rise.”—Cowper

Like many other subjects about which we may assume that our knowledge is adequate, earthquakes have come to be taken for granted. It is assumed that they will occasionally occur, resulting in serious loss of life and huge property damages. Actually, however, we know very little about the laws governing seismic disturbances. We are not quite sure that they simply happen, or that they have no meaning or significance beyond the obvious. As we come to contemplate the universe as an intellectual entity, as a mind manifesting in an orderly and reasonable way, it might be interesting to assume that earthquakes are the effects of proper causes set in motion, and that these causes bear witness to a cosmic morality. Ancient peoples assumed disasters to be punishment sent by the gods.

Research tends to indicate patterns underlying all sequences of events. Thus, we note that great fires, plagues, calamities, and even earthquakes occur most frequently following wars and civil upheavals. Mass hatreds, antagonisms, and violent outbursts of ambitious aggression often appear providential. Consider, for example, the epidemic of influenza accompanying World War I. The number of deaths from this disease vastly exceeded the losses among the armed forces of the several nations.

On August 23rd, 79 A.D., at 1:00 a.m., the eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, near Naples, Italy. Pompeii was buried under hot ashes, and Herculaneum beneath flowing lava. Lord Bulwer-Lytton, in his historical novel *The Last Days of Pompeii*, describes the conditions existing in these communities immediately prior to the disaster. He draws a strong moral conclusion, pointing out the corruption and dissipation of the doomed people, and that their fatal end was richly deserved.

We do not mean to imply that all areas stricken by seismic disturbances are corrupt or delinquent. After all, the earth is a kind



—from Kircher's *Mundus Subterraneus*

An eruption of Mt. Aetna, reproduced in steel engraving, which was observed by Kircher in 1637. Father Kircher, the Jesuit priest, was one of the first to attempt a systematic study of seismic phenomena.

of crystal, with definite lines of fission. It is one body, and if we assume that mental and emotional energy can affect the earth's magnetic atmosphere, then the evils done by some of its people may bring misery to the whole planet. If a river is polluted, many towns and villages making use of its water may suffer from pestilences or epidemics. We all breathe the same air; we depend upon the same life for our survival; and if the reservoirs of our natural resources can be contaminated by our own conduct, many mysteries might have reasonable explanations.

An earthquake is generally defined as "a shaking or trembling of the earth's surface due chiefly to the faulting of the rocks, but also to volcanic explosion, and perhaps to other subterranean disturbances." We must allow from experience that earthquakes arise from more than one cause, even if we consider only physical fac-

tors. Great masses of the earth's surface may tremble and agitate and be moved, to all appearances, from within themselves. Or, again, an earthquake may be a vibratory motion, propagated through the solid materials of the earth in approximately the same way as sound is propagated by vibrations in the atmosphere. We have no proof that the real cause of the earthquake must actually lie within the earth itself. In fact, we have several strong indications that such is not always the case.

We may therefore divide earthquakes into two general classifications: first, there are those seemingly of natural origin, as caused by the slipping along lines of natural fault, the overloading of the continental shelves, and those directly attendant upon volcanic action. Under the second class, are such seismic disturbances as are not susceptible to classification in any division of the preceding group, and which are attended by phenomena not yet adequately explained by modern science. To this classification properly belong those earthquakes which are preceded by phenomena, usually of an electrical nature. If an earthquake is really only a breaking away or shifting of masses of rocks, or a sudden slide or motion occurring at a precise moment, and there is no earthquake until the shock actually occurs, how shall we account for the curious circumstances which are so often reported prior to the actual shock?

A few examples will serve to illustrate the points which we wish to emphasize. Research in this field from the beginning of the 19th century, and, to a limited degree, even earlier, has brought out a number of significant facts. Before the earthquakes which occurred in London in 1749, it was noted that vegetation grew with unusual rapidity, as though expanding from some considerable increase of energy within itself, and shortly prior to the actual shocks, a curious black cloud hung over the affected area and discharged some rain.

At the time of the Lisbon disaster of 1755, it was recorded that the three preceding years had been exceedingly dry, so that many of the wells had entirely failed. On the day of the earthquake, it was unusually warm and clear, the weather being decidedly unseasonal. This is an early record of what is popularly called "earthquake weather." Shortly before the disaster, a haze was cast over



the sun, as though a mist filled the air. Soon afterwards, there was heard a deep, distant rumbling, which increased to the degree that it became equal to the heaviest artillery, and soon after this, the first shock was felt. It should be particularly noted that the sound preceded the earth movement by quite an appreciable interval. More important still, however, was the peculiar death-like stillness of the atmosphere, which caused nervous apprehension in countless persons.

Shortly preceding the earthquake at Caracas in 1812, the horses and animals in the city showed distinct uneasiness. A Spanish stallion, with a remarkable display of strength, broke its way through stable walls and, rushing madly down the main streets of the city, escaped to the highlands. The place where the horse sought refuge was undisturbed by the shocks, which followed almost immediately. At the time of the earthquakes in Chile, in 1822 and 1835, great flocks of sea birds flew inland. The wells of the city became discolored, and the lakes in the neighboring mountains showed strange agitations on their surfaces. In one case, it is recorded that all the dogs left the city, and it has often been remarked that animals, by their uneasiness, have indicated that, by some sense perception not possessed by man, they were aware of the impending catastrophe. Thomas Edison is said to have been studying the extrasensory perceptions of animals in the closing years of his life.

One writer has been led to say, "That occasionally there are signs attendant on earthquakes, although we cannot give them a physical explanation, we cannot doubt." It has been frequently observed that just before the seismic shock, a peculiar light resembling the aurora borealis, is seen hovering over the fatal areas. Such was the case at Messina, in 1908. Prior to this terrible disaster, an aurora was visible in the northern sky, and on September 12th, preceding the event, an immense sunspot was observed. As early as 1700, it was recorded that earthquakes were frequently preceded by singular phenomena of an atmospheric nature. Strange lights, balls of fire, meteoric precipitations, unseasonal storms, and many other warnings heralded the approach of the disaster.

The English earthquakes of 1849 and 1850, were preceded by unusually warm weather, an auroral display, and the whole year

was remarkable for fire balls, lightning, and similar omens. The same accompanied the earlier Maestricht earthquake in 1751. Glimmering lights were seen in the sky before the New England earthquake of November 18th, 1765. At the time of the great Sicilian earthquake of 1692, strange lights were seen in the sky, and *ignes fatui* have on several occasions been observed with earthquakes.

That earthquakes are accompanied and preceded by definite atmospheric and electrical phenomena, is therefore generally acknowledged by nearly all prominent seismologists. This aspect of the subject, however, is usually glossed over with little if any effort to reconcile it with generally accepted earthquake theories.

Sir Charles Lyell, Bart., M.A., F.R.S., (1797-1875), in his work *The Principles of Geology* (Vol. 2), gives the following list of "accompaniments" of earthquakes, with the half-apologetic note that he inserts this brief summary so that it will be unnecessary for him to make further references to such peculiar happenings. Sir Lyell then observes that there are "irregularities in the seasons preceding or following the shocks; sudden gusts of wind, interrupted by dead calms; violent rains at unusual seasons, or in countries where, as a rule, they are almost unknown; a reddening of the sun's disk, and haziness in the air, often continued for months; an evolution of electric matter, or of inflammable gas from the soil, with sulphurous and mephitic vapours; noises underground, like the running of carriages, or the discharge of artillery, or distant thunder; animals uttering cries of distress, and evincing extraordinary alarm, being more sensitive than men to the slightest movement; a sensation like sea-sickness, and a dizziness in the head, experienced by men . . . etc." The eminent geologist then neatly evades the issue which his words bring up by suggesting that most of these phenomena lie beyond the province of his treatise.

According to Professor John Milne, a leading authority on seismology in the 19th century, the Japanese devised a method of foretelling earthquakes by the aid of a magnet. On November 11th, 1855, a very destructive shock partly destroyed the city of Tokyo. Shortly before the disaster, the keeper of a spectacle shop in Asakusa was astonished to observe that a magnet dropped a

number of keys and old nails that had hung on it for some time. The optician paid little attention to the circumstance, supposing that the magnet had lost its power through age. Then came the earthquake, and when the shock was over, the magnet regained its normal power. It is from this occurrence that the seismoscope came into being, and numerous examples of this curious instrument are to be seen to this day in various parts of Japan. A traveler in the Island Kingdom thus describes this seismoscope: "They have ingeniously constructed a light frame supporting a horseshoe magnet, beneath which is a cup of bell metal. The armature is attached to a weight, so that upon the magnet becoming paralyzed the weight drops, and, striking the cup, gives the alarm. Everyone then seeks the open air, leaving the house for safety."

A more surprising thing still is the effect of earthquakes upon eggs. Many an incubator full of eggs has come to nought because of a slight, almost imperceptible earth tremor. That the motion is not the cause of this condition is apparent from the fact that moving the incubator, or shaking it mildly, will not necessarily injure the eggs. After the Long Beach earthquake of 1933, a man who had several hens setting went to examine the eggs, and discovered that the hens had thrown them all out of the nest and broken them. The auroral lights were also described by several reliable witnesses in connection with this earthquake, and it was observed that at certain intervals, these lights increased, appearing to flare up, and that these flarings were immediately followed by shocks of considerable intensity.

The effect of earthquakes upon clocks and watches is also worthy of mention, and it can only be ascribed to some magnetic condition. A wristwatch is in almost constant motion; yet it may stop suddenly during an earthquake. If such phenomena occurred soon after the earthquake, it would be quite reasonable to suppose that the electrical force had been generated by the shifting in the earth itself, but as they frequently happen before the shock, sometimes several hours before it occurs, other factors must be considered. Is it therefore not more than a mere notion to suspect that earthquakes themselves may be the result of some peculiar

electrical discharge, or an agitation of magnetic currents occurring before the actual event?

To acknowledge electricity to be the primal agent of earthquake phenomena may bring us somewhat nearer to the truth, but the problem is not yet actually solved. Even if we acknowledge, with Professor Jobard of the French Academy, the existence of an intelligent electrical agent, we must examine still further for the actual key to those great changes which so modify the boundaries of continents that in the course of ages, their shapes, areas, and even their places, can be largely altered. It was the opinion of Plato that the earth is suspended in a field of energy, like a ship in an ocean. Thales, an earlier Greek scholar, had gone so far as to say that our planet was a ship sailing in the ocean of space, and that earthquakes were the result of the waves rocking the boat. If we consider these waves as motions of force in space, perhaps he was closer to the truth, in his quaint symbolic language, than we have been inclined to suspect.

It may be useful to pause for a moment and summarize the classical concept of the universe as found in the writings of ancient philosophical nations. In the older systems, three distinct planes or spheres of life were established by processes of science and reason. The highest part of the world was the abode of causes, or of the great patterns which Plato called *archetypes*. These patterns represented the will of God, or the Creating Power, and the thought that moved in the Divine Mind. Divinity was therefore the Unmoved Mover of all things, itself unchanging, eternal, and unconditioned, but causing all mutation from within itself.

The second sphere was that of the deities arising from the First Cause—the secondary gods, called the "self-moving, and the movers of all other things." In early astronomy, the planets, called *the wanderers*, were these self-movers. They were the agents by means of which archetypal forces were released into nature, and by their positions and relationships, they set up the machinery of terrestrial changes.

The earth, the least part of nature, was called *the moved*. It was regarded as synonymous with matter, which, in order to be animate, must be ensouled, and having become ensouled, takes on

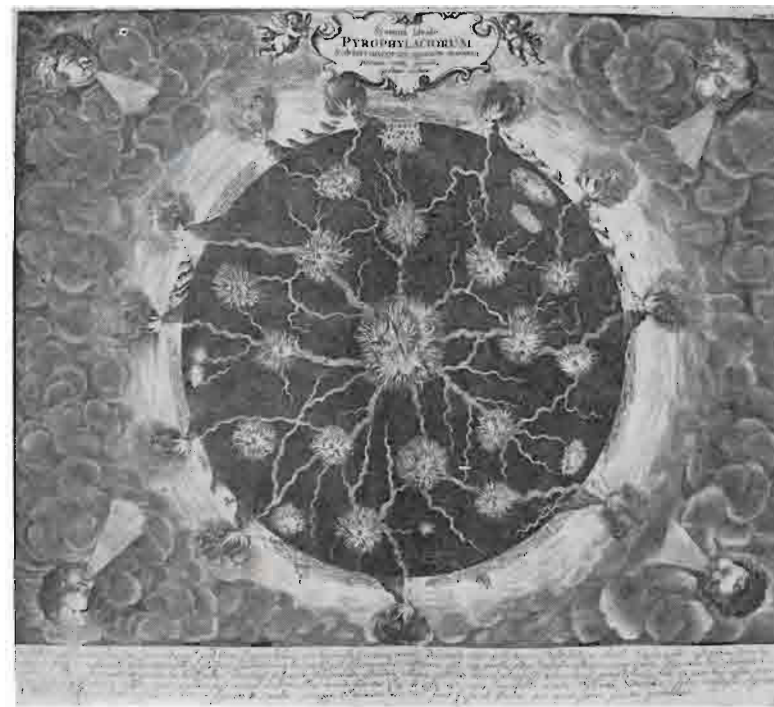


forms and sustains them by virtue of the indwelling life which soul imparts to body. This triad may be again likened to spirit, mind, and body, for it is the mind, occupying the middle place, which receives into itself the impulses of spirit, or consciousness, and distributes them through the material structure, which it thus leads or dominates.

If we ask, then, what parts do the planets play in this drama of the changing earth, the old philosophers would reply that the planetary spirits are the servants of that most high Principle. Yet such planets are continually moving, forever forming patterns, and constantly sending their rays and energies to the earth. It is not the motion, therefore, which is the true secret; it is the nature and condition of that which receives the motion into itself. The rays of the sun nurture many forms of life, but each grows according to its own laws. The planetary motions therefore set off or release factors that are already present, operating by sympathy and antipathy.

If a condition contrary to the universal good comes into existence, the planets oppose that condition, assail it, as mentioned in the Bible, where it is said that the stars in their courses fought against the evil city of Sisera. If there is no unnatural condition, the planets exercise no disintegrating force, for they support and build that which is lawful, even as they oppose that which is unlawful. They are not destiny, but the agents of law, holding all things in obedience to that which is right. If we wish to assume that everything in nature has a vibratory keynote, that all human thoughts and emotions are finally rates of vibration, then we can appreciate why there may be wars of vibration in space, with good and evil struggling in terms of normalcy and abnormalcy, harmony and in-harmony, order and disorder.

It would seem that all the principal changes in nature must first have an archetypal existence; that their roots are in space, and not in the earth. If the pattern of an event did not have an existence prior to the occurrence of that event, foreknowledge would not be possible. Yet there are records, undeniable, that men have foreseen even the details of coming occurrences. They have witnessed in advance that which, in terms of materialism, has no pre-existence. The only reasonable conclusion is that, in some di-



—from Kircher's *Mundus Subterraneus*

Seventeenth-century representation of the fiery internal structure of the earth in relation to volcanic vents in various parts of the world.

mension of space, the ideas or archetypes of impending events already have an existence. How else could Nostradamus have named accurately persons not born for a hundred years after his own death? This opens a most confusing issue, but it may have a direct bearing upon earthquakes. If there are vibratory patterns, containing both intellectual and moral energies, these could then well be discharged upon the earth through the vibratory vehicles of planetary positions, thus fulfilling the purposes of the Universal Mind, which does all things with a purpose, whether we are able to understand it or not.

As these archetypal patterns of vibration build up in the invisible world of causes, the planets are the very artisans by which these patterns are brought to completion. It is through the massing and grouping of these planetary rays that the physical elements are finally moved into agreement with the archetypal images.

Thus, the planets are not the actual causes of earthquakes, any more than they are the causes of the disasters which beset men. They are merely the intermediaries by which the harmony of the spheres is maintained, and by which all natures and bodies are moved, through a cycle of constant change, toward an ultimate equilibrium.

It has been admitted in all ages by philosophers and scientists of the highest attainments that the motions and configurations of the heavenly bodies could be an exciting cause of earthquakes. It does not necessarily follow that the planets themselves have sufficient pull to move great masses of earth, but their effect is certainly enough to precipitate the motion of masses already critically poised along lines of natural faults. Although basic research bearing on this subject has been accumulating for nearly five hundred years, most of this labor has been rejected or ignored because it was carried on by a group of persons not scientifically accepted. It is therefore interesting to find parallel conclusions from more recent sources. In *Modern Seismology* by G. W. Walker, A.R.C., Sc., M.A., F.R.S., published in 1913, the following significant statement appeared:

“The general agreement is that earthquake is caused by a rupture in the rocks within the earth’s surface . . . . It is not unnatural to look for such a cause in the tidal stress of solar and lunar origin. In particular we might look for a preponderance of the number of earthquakes at the time of the syzygy of the sun, earth and moon.”

In 1932, an article appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* dealing with a new theory by which the time and location of earthquakes may be determined. This new theory, described as “amazing,” was submitted to the scientific world by R. H. Fanning, commercial radio engineer of the Mackay Radio Company, and former navy sunspot and static expert. A study of planetary juxtapositions was made by Mr. Fanning to see if there was any correlation between their positions and earthquake periods. He found that certain conjunctions, or line-ups, of certain planets with the moon, tallied with earthquake periods on the earth. To be absolutely sure of his calculations, Mr. Fanning went back for a number of years, tabulating the positions of planets, and from this

predicting earthquake periods. Not once have they failed to be verified by the actual records. To quote this engineer: “In other words, it is possible, by calculating the stress maxima of planetary arrangements, to lay down almost the exact area and time of future shocks and to some extent determine their intensity months before they occur.”

A serious earthquake occurred at Cumana, Venezuela, on July 15th, 1853, at 2:15 p.m. It is reported that not a single family escaped this disaster at Cumana, no less than 4,000 being killed, and all the public buildings and most of the private houses were totally destroyed. Twelve months before this earthquake, Commander Morrison predicted a violent shock in that general area, basing his opinion upon the positions of Mars and Saturn in Taurus, in relation to an eclipse which was affecting the northern coast of South America and adjacent areas. He believed that earthquakes might be looked for “among other periods, in July 1853 about the 16th day.” Events proved that he was only one day off in his forecast.

The rules for the prediction of earthquakes from the positions and configurations of the planets have been accumulated over a period of not less than 2,500 years and, according to Cicero, a much longer interval of time. Aristotle noted the tendency of earthquakes to follow eclipses; Democritus admonished all men to pray that there be no earthquakes when great conjunctions of planets took place in certain parts of the heavens; Pliny wrote on the congress of the heavenly bodies as causes of earthquakes; and Hippocrates noted that the same aspects which caused seismic disturbances often produced epidemics and plagues at approximately the same time.

The following will summarize the more important rules of ancient, medieval, and modern findings for determining the probability of earthquakes, and the time and place of their occurrence:

1. Earthquakes increase in frequency at such times as great comets approach the earth.
2. Earthquakes usually follow close after eclipses.
3. At the time of the earthquake, there is usually a large number of interplanetary aspects with numerous aspects to the place



of the nearest preceding eclipse or lunation. (Aspects are angles of mutual relationships of planets mathematically determined, first given by Ptolemy, and perfected by Kepler.)

4. Earthquakes are most frequent when the planets Neptune, Uranus, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars are in the earth signs of Taurus, Virgo, or Capricorn, or in the two water signs of Scorpio and Pisces, or the fixed signs of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, or Aquarius.

5. The planet Jupiter, in conjunction or opposition with Venus or Mercury or parallel in declination with them, especially if in Taurus or Scorpio, will cause earthquakes.

6. If no eclipse has taken place within three months, the time of the earthquake will be discovered by examining the planets' positions at the nearest new or full Moon to the preceding equinox or solstice.

7. Earthquakes generally occur when there are many planets in or near the tropics or the equator.

8. The conjunction of the Moon's nodes with malefic planets is an earthquake testimony.

9. Earthquakes may be expected near the perihelion of comets, and when they approach within the orbits of Uranus and Saturn and Neptune.

10. Ptolemy says that when the Sun or Moon are eclipsed near Mercury, or when a new Moon occurs near the Pleiades and is afflicted by malefic planets, there will be earthquakes.

11. Pliny affirms that conjunctions of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, if in evil aspect to the Sun, will cause earthquakes. Neptune and Uranus are added to these three by modern researchers.

12. The significators of the earthquake are generally in the mid-heaven, or at the eastern angle of the heavens, at the place of the earthquake at the time when it occurs.

13. At the time the earthquake occurs, Mars will often be found ascending on the eastern horizon or directly in the midheaven above.

14. Earthquakes frequently occur near sunrise or sunset.

15. When earthquakes follow eclipses, they do not take place until some malefic planet moves over that point in the heavens in which the eclipse occurred, often a matter of some days.

(please turn to page 55)



## In Reply

### A Department of Questions and Answers

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*QUESTION: I consider myself to be a fairly well-adjusted person, with normal responsibilities, which I generally enjoy. Yet, occasionally, I feel a desperate urge to leave all these secure patterns behind and go on a spree of irresponsibility and "adventure." Is it unnatural to have such feelings, and what is the proper attitude to take when one of these moods comes upon me?*

*ANSWER: I have news for you. The dilemma you describe is practically universal, but very few persons attempt to explain such impulses philosophically. Human temperaments differ widely, and generalizations about human conduct must be advanced with caution. The internal life of the individual is seldom in perfect adjustment with his environmental situations. Usually, there are normal pressures for which there are no satisfactory means of expression. Aptitude tests seldom indicate that there is only one line of activity in which a person could succeed. There may be a dominant complex of talent or aptitudes, but there are also several subdominant areas of potential. These may not be strong enough to determine a career, but they can certainly interfere with one every once in a while.*

Nature is constantly striving to maintain equilibrium in the functions of living things. If, for one reason or another, this equilibrium is lost, automatic procedures set in to restore balance of function. Obviously, the situation becomes more exaggerated in those with larger areas of interests and abilities. There must al-

ways be a degree of conflict whenever circumstances exercise restraint over inclination. In the core of ourselves is a volitional principle, and this usually manifests as self-will. In terms of instinct, we feel the urge to gratify the demands of the volitional force. It requires considerable self-control to limit or inhibit the expressions of will energy.

The social motion from savagery to a civilized state has required a constant program of compromise. Codes have been created, and customs have been introduced to curb that phase of self-expression which we know as selfishness. We have cultivated social graces with notable reluctance, and have never wholeheartedly accepted the concept that we should sacrifice ourselves to protect the security of others. Religion and ethics have played important parts in defining the moral boundaries of right conduct. Common sense informs us that there are certain things we should do, and certain other things we should not do. We listen to its counsel, but we are not completely converted.

One serious cause of trouble is the pressing determination to be too good. There is an idealistic generality of virtue to which we may all aspire, but to the substance of which we may not all immediately attain. Real integrity cannot be forced upon us by circumstances. It must emerge from within ourselves as the result of maturing consciousness. If we try to emulate the unselfishness, patience, or sense of responsibility which we observe in others, we may overtax our own available ethical resources. This is especially true if we select as our ideal some entirely exceptional person of extraordinary attainments, such as a great religious leader. When we try to live as such persons have lived, we are assuming that we possess all the available attributes of wisdom, love, and understanding, of a sanctified few whose conduct has earned for them universal veneration. Under such conditions, it is not unreasonable that we fail to some degree. Many sincere persons seek to move quickly and triumphantly from ordinary conduct to ultimate conduct, becoming exhausted rather than enlightened.

There are levels of humanity where monotony is the natural order of things. Having little imagination and few directives, those functioning on such levels seldom feel rebellious. The tendency is to accept life without question or objection. Whatever comes is

met with a slow and plodding nature. I have known cases where persons of this kind have refused opportunities to travel, to meet interesting people, to rise in their trades or professions, to live in better houses, or to advance their educations. They are satisfied to be what they are and to remain as they are. This simply means that the volitional drive is too weak to be a problem.

Monotony is dangerous to the quick mind, and even the most interesting pursuits become monotonous unless the element of variety is introduced. Monotony is not simply boredom. It is the fatigue which results from the continuous use of one faculty or group of faculties. It may include even the prolonging of an attitude, until it loses its charm, novelty or vitality. We sometimes wonder how primitive man got along so well without eye glasses, and why savage peoples of today never seem to need them. One answer is that the faculty of sight is keyed to a concept of continuous movement. Our remote ancestors watched the world around them, constantly refocusing the eyes to objects both near and far, and enjoyed extraordinary acuteness of vision. After man invented writing and advanced arts and sciences, he began to focus his attention in one place and one visual distance. Continuous use of the eyes with very slight movement resulted in tension and increasing optical fatigue. It soon became evident that he needed assistance because he created a special purpose for sight which nature had not intended.

Primitive man roamed about in his world, following the dictates of his own fancy, curbed only by the larger patterns of seasons, climates, and the requirements of food and shelter. By degrees, these requirements became more exacting. He was forced to spend most of his energy supporting the institutions which he had fashioned and protecting the goods which he had accumulated. Time began to run out before the necessities were met. The problem again presents itself in our concept of leisure. We work in order that we can accumulate enough money to gratify our desires and ambitions. We suddenly discover that our increasing demands upon living can be met only by intensified effort. In the end, we attain not leisure, but responsibility.

We have long educated our minds, but we have not civilized our desires. Because internal integration has not kept pace with



social organization, we find that progress, as we call it, brings little enduring satisfaction. We become involved in a predicament from which we cannot escape without some action, and this, in turn, disrupts the tenor of our ways and confronts us with new problems. The largest conflict of all is related to the materialistic aspects of our existence. There is an instinctive rebellion against using God-given faculties simply to perpetuate man-devised institutions. We inwardly feel that we are enslaved by routine procedures which neither express us nor represent our basic instincts. Probably we do not analyze the confusion, but we certainly do sense an heroic self, capable of brilliant and adventurous attainments, yet bound to a cycle of routine involving constant and prodigious effort which leads toward inconspicuous results.

The sensory equipment of man does not justify the assumption that he was primarily devised for the purpose of building cities, serving industries, or bartering in commodities. The universe does not appear to be even aware of huge corporations or extravagant programs of promotion and exploitation. These all have to do with only one phase of human consciousness. The impulse of the will includes an insistent pressure toward a universal state of existence. Persons of advanced ability find intense satisfaction in great art, music, drama, literature, philosophy and religion. They would like to improve their own faculties of appreciation; they would like to live graciously—always assuming, of course, that a gracious existence is a happy one. Where other rationalizations are deficient, the person simply desires to be happy, comfortable, and secure. Furthermore, happiness itself is interpreted to mean the right and ability to fulfill our desires, to do what we want to do without inhibition or unfortunate consequences. The more we think about the delightful state we wish to occupy, and the factual conditions in which we find ourselves, the more dissatisfied we become.

When we resolve to take a desperate measure, break through the web of responsibilities in which we have been captured, we make another unpleasant discovery. I knew a person who in early life dedicated himself completely to freedom of action. He resolved to do exactly as he pleased at all times, and he has advanced this program with rare consistency. After thirty years, he is bored to distraction. He has learned that there is nothing more monotonous

than constant variety, and nothing more frustrating than complete personal freedom. This points out that it is not so much what we do that causes boredom; rather, it is any invariable procedure. A vacation loses all meaning to the unemployed or the unemployable individual. Change is precious because of novelty. The man who never travels longs to visit far countries, but the man whose business causes him to travel continuously, dreams of the day when he can stay home.

These moments of personal rebellion may arise from over-consistency of personal habits. If the things we are doing are right and proper, our rebellion is not against right and propriety. A note of music in a composition may be beautiful, but if that same tone is sounded without interruption for many hours, it can cause terrible fatigue. We rebel not against good, but against sameness. We can also rebel against beauty, truth, love, and wisdom, not because we hate them or do not recognize their innate nobility, but because the very faculties with which we appreciate fine things are simply tired, and no longer carry a happy impulse to the brain.

When we observe such symptoms, it is not an indication of a deeply submerged inclination to delinquency. Emotions do not rationalize, nor can we make them reasonable. We develop repugnance or antipathy without even knowing why, and we should recognize this as a weariness of the soul. We are not revolting against good, but against a certain symbolic pattern of good which has become oppressive from long acceptance. Satisfaction does not require that we must turn to evil, but rather to some new and dynamic aspect of good, which is thrilling because it challenges us with adventure of some kind. If we are normal persons, we have the needs peculiar to our kind. If we fulfill these needs sensibly, we will not fall into foolishness.

It may also happen that our spirit of rebellion is not directed against anything real or factual, but against attitudes of our own which we have permitted to become dogmatic. The individual, for example, who decides that he must accomplish certain objectives, burdens his psychic life with a pattern of his own devising. His rebellion, therefore, may be entirely against himself or against his interpretations of facts which are not consistent with truth or reality. The man, for instance, who solemnly determines to make a

million dollars before he is forty years old—and I know several such persons—is creating an archetype which may cause discomfort and unhappiness.

In religion, we frequently take all the joy out of a faith by accepting it as a frustration upon our normal inclinations. We overlook the inspirational content of religion, and consider it merely a burden of inhibitions and limitations upon normal practices which are not in themselves evil or contrary to a proper standard of ethics. When we begin to look upon living as a negative experience, and become a little sorry for ourselves, it is also easy to feel the spirit of rebellion developing in our hearts and minds. We cannot transgress with impunity the laws governing human behavior. When we disregard codes that are proper to our kind, we open ourselves to disaster. Fortunately, however, these same laws invite us to be happy persons. They provide constant opportunity for pleasurable experiences. Actually, it is only the lawbreaker who is frustrated by the law. We resent young people who become lawless in search of thrills, but there are many younger persons who have exciting and satisfactory interests which do not conflict with a responsible attitude toward themselves and society.

If you feel the irresistible impulse to leave secure patterns behind and go adventuring, it might be well to appraise your present activities rather carefully. Are you overlooking the pleasant side of normal happenings? Are you taking the attitude that distant pastures are greener, when in reality the trouble lies in yourself, and therefore can never be corrected by change of environment? It is important to develop the habit of being happy, and of finding happiness in daily experiences. Never permit yourself to indulge in that kind of negative philosophizing which merely caters to the impulse toward freedom from responsibility. You can never walk out of anything, but you can work your way to personal freedom. If you leave unfinished business, it will continue to haunt you, and you will lose a measure of your own self-respect.

It may also happen that you have neglected perfectly proper and necessary outlets. If you have allowed your personal life to be drab and uneventful; if you have failed to cultivate interesting friends, and have not developed normal avocational outlets, it is only reasonable that you should feel resentment and rebellion.

The modern person cannot live with only one interest. He must diversify, finding inspiration and genuine happiness in the appreciation of art, music, and good literature. He may also need special activities of a physical nature to compensate for the over-intellectualizing of his character. Many have found great satisfaction in hobbies and crafts or in social or civic programs, or in the advancement of themselves through education. The modern woman cannot simply be a housewife and a mother. She has abilities in many fields, and if all of these are denied expression, she is likely to fail in her home responsibilities. Even though some may object to her broadening her social foundations, she should insist upon doing so for the common good.

The routine of home management, the constant demands of employment, uninteresting tasks which in themselves become monotonous, are all parts of our existing economy. This means that we must carefully plan for the kind of variety that preserves the natural optimism of our dispositions. It is far wiser to make a careful survey and plan a proper program than it is to allow pressures to mount until open rebellion sets in. Energy is a wonderful thing and, wisely used, sustains a happy and progressive outlook. We do not, however, accept the Aristotelian point of view that we must either accept or rebel. Acceptance in this sense is itself negative. We have a right to plan a destiny that satisfies our souls, and to work toward this goal as enthusiastically as circumstances permit.

It is a little difficult to recommend what you should do when the mood toward irresponsibility and adventure comes upon you. Perhaps we can say that the irresponsibility part will open you to numerous hazards, but the thought of adventure can have healthy and fortunate overtones. Many things have been written about adventure. Understanding people can be a most exciting experience. Building up a new structure of thinking can satisfy our need for novelty and change. There is the adventure of growing and helping others to grow. There is the adventure of planning, and in this country travel is an informative and useful kind of self-expression. If normal adventure is in conflict with responsibility, then tasks and burdens should be re-evaluated. Every individual is entitled to periods of recreation and enjoyment. Perhaps you have tightened the walls of your responsibilities too closely around you.



I know a person who never went anywhere and never did anything because he felt that he was so desperately needed that he could not afford even a moment's rest. As might be expected, this attitude ended in a serious illness, which incapacitated the individual for several months. Illness, in this case, brought the realization that the other members of the family had unsuspected resources of their own. They got along surprisingly well without assistance. In fact, it was their first opportunity to express any strength or individuality of their own.

A sense of over-responsibility is not good. It smothers other people, permitting them to remain weak. This does not mean that we should neglect our duties, but that we can serve both ourselves and others by keeping certain periods of time for our own use. If we are always ready to take on new burdens, the load will increase until we are completely overwhelmed. Folks always find it easy to let willing workers do more than their proper share. You have duties to yourself, and these should be respected by those around you. It is important, therefore, to defend your right to be a person and to do some of the things that will make life interesting for you. If you do not restrict yourself unreasonably, the pressures in your psychic nature will not increase to the degree that a violent release is necessary.

It sometimes happens that in order to do the things we want to do, we must plan well ahead and must also work to provide the necessary finances. Many people like to play, but do not like to earn the right to play. This in itself is a wrong attitude. We enjoy most what we have earned the right to enjoy. Unless dissatisfaction stimulates us to increase personal effort, it can easily lead to a negative situation. Pleasure also is comparatively meaningless unless it is an interlude between regular patterns of endeavor. Modern research has shown that vacations are necessary to workers in all fields, and if you have gradually sacrificed your vacation concept—if you have not set aside a certain amount of time in which to do those things which will refresh your spirit—you will indeed become weary and resentful. The answer usually lies in personal planning. Knowing yourself, you appreciate your own needs, and if you have good ethical principles, you will find outlets that will not violate your conscience; assuming, of course, that

your conscience has not lost perspective. If it has, it must be re-educated.

At this point, words become difficult. Just what do you mean by a "spree of irresponsibility?" The phrase could bring up a rather extreme picture; whereas your ideas might be quite moderate. Assuming that you are tired of a situation, or exasperated with a restricting group of circumstances, it would certainly be unwise to leave the ills you have for others that might become even more uncomfortable. If what you are really seeking is an opportunity to be your real self, and you are an intelligent person, a little adventuring could do you good. If, however, you mean by a "spree" an escape from the basic integrity-values of society, such experiences are seldom solutional or beneficial. If you have a real problem, it may be that you should consider counseling, but if it is just a general sense of need for release and self-expression, I would place it under the natural discipline of your common sense, and seek for useful and constructive outlets that are not likely to end unhappily.



*(continued from page 46)*

16. The countries in which the earthquakes will occur are to be discovered from the signs of the zodiac which rule the various countries, and from the theory of geodetic equivalents. For example, a combination of malefic planets in Aries, may indicate trouble in communities or countries ruled by Aries.

These testimonies are increasingly significant when several concur, and in such years or seasons as these concurrences take place, extensive earthquakes may be safely predicted.

*(Part 2 will cover descriptions of major earthquake disasters and a list of special data for study and comparison.)*



#### *Curious Parallel*

Antisthenes, the Athenian philosopher and founder of the Cynic School, who flourished in the 4th century B.C., was once reproached for being seen in company with wicked persons. He replied, "So do physicians with the sick, yet are not sick themselves." Compare this with Matthew 9:11-12, where Jesus makes a very similar statement.



## Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

### TEMPLE SOUVENIRS

In chatting with a friend of mine, an exceptionally well-informed Japanese dealing in the fine arts of his country and China, the discussion turned to a class of material about which comparatively little is known in the West. For several hundred years, the Buddhist and Shinto temples of Japan have been places of pilgrimage. As we would take a vacation, visiting interesting parts of our country, devout Japanese make leisurely journeys through the delightful countryside, planning to visit certain important centers of their religion en route. Because of the Japanese attitude, these trips are usually pleasurable excursions, for it is not customary for the Japanese to be negatively sentimental in the practice of their faith. Sir Edwin Arnold described the prevailing disposition of the Japanese toward their religious doctrines as composed of a little of fear, and a great deal of fun.

It would be quite natural that those visiting distant and interesting places should like some keepsake or memento to take home and hang in the *tokanoma* (a recess in a wall reserved for religious art and flower arrangements) or place among their Shinto treasures. Western people frequently bring home postcards, prints, or small works of art for the same reason, and put them on a convenient mantel. To meet this reasonable demand, the temples pro-

vide small roll pictures, usually vertical in format. This type of scroll painting, or print, is called a *kakemono*, and it may have a colorful border of silk or brocade. The subject of the picture is likely to be the principal image in the temple, or a likeness of some patron saint or deity associated with one of the cults. Sometimes the scroll consists only of writing, either an inscription, or a prayer or meditation formula.

When a pilgrim reaches the temple, it is customary for him to make a small contribution for the continuance of the establishment and its charities. One of these small scrolls is then given to him, after it has been properly marked with the seal of the temple or some priestly dignity. Such a religious picture is called an *ofuda*, and early examples are often very beautiful. The woodcuts used are handsomely printed on thin, strong paper, and sometimes hand-colored. Examples of multi-color blockprinting are also known. Naturally, the older examples show a great deal more care in production than those of more recent times. The present tendency is simply commercial prints of very little esthetic importance.

The *kakemono*, or roll form, is not only more convenient in traveling, but meets one of the continuing emergencies in Japanese life. Fire and earthquakes are ever present hazards. It is therefore much easier to save these small rolls than a large picture framed or mounted under glass. It is also more convenient to store family art treasures if they can be compactly kept in some small cabinet or chest, large furniture, as we know it, being comparatively unknown.

Writing at the turn of the present century, Lafcadio Hearn described his visit to Kitzuki, one of the most sacred centers of the Shinto faith. He had an audience with the venerable Guji of Kitzuki, a venerated leader of the sect. On parting, the Guji presented Mr. Hearn with *ofuda* bearing the images of the chief deities. This was an especial testimony of friendship and honor. In the homes of orthodox Shinto worshippers, there is what is called the *kamidana*, or shelf reserved for the gods. *Ofuda* are kept on this shelf, the most sacred being given the middle place. According to Hearn, Shinto *ofuda* are occasionally fastened to the door of a house, evidently as a charm. The Buddhists keep such holy pictures in the *butsudan*, or *butsuma*. The arrangements of





### AN OFUDA OF THE NICHIREN SECT

This temple souvenir, in the form of a syncretic mandara, includes representations of various divinities, as symbols of states of existence. At the top, is the sacred Nichiren formula: "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" (Adoration be to the Scripture of the Lotus of the Perfect Truth). The writing is in a script style, said to have been invented by Nichiren. At the bottom, in the center, is the autographic signature of the abbot or principal official serving at the temple at the time the ofuda was presented to some distinguished visitor.

these shrines differ with the various sects, and their size depends upon the financial means of the householder. Lights, such as small lamps or tapers, are sometimes burned in front of the ofuda. Thus they may take the place of images, mandaras, and formulas of good fortune. (See *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*.)

When the ofuda becomes part of the religious life of the household, it is regarded with special veneration as a fit object for prayer and contemplation. It is held to bring good fortune to the family because it represents a pilgrimage, which bestows merit in Buddhist or Shinto philosophy. It is understandable that time will

work a serious hardship on these rather delicate souvenirs. They may be discolored by incense smoke, and the paper and colors deteriorate with age. Also, in spite of all precautions, many are destroyed by natural catastrophes. All these contingencies are of interest to the collector of Oriental art because they mean that these temple souvenirs are difficult to acquire, especially in collectable condition.

My Japanese friend tells me that it is practically impossible to buy ofuda in Japan. Families would not consider parting with one that had descended from some pious ancestor, any more than they would sell the images from their altars. If, for some reason, the Japanese is unable to properly care for these souvenirs, he destroys them. There are sacred days when these mementos can be thrown into the water of a stream or ocean and allowed to float toward the other world. Some of the more important of these early temple souvenirs approach the dignity of national treasures, and even if they could be secured, it would be very difficult to export them.

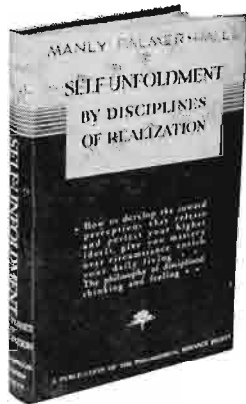
Apparently, there is practically no literature available in English on the subject of ofuda, and from what information I could secure, very little has been written about them even in Japanese. Western collectors generally do not recognize this class of prints, and are inclined to view them merely as small religious pictures similar to other productions of the same general type. Usually, each ofuda bears either seals or inscriptions designating the temple where it was prepared, and the approximate time that it was issued. The dating, however, may only refer to the reigning period of some abbot, important monk, or priest. It would be necessary, therefore, to examine the records of the temple to determine the year in which the souvenir was actually issued. The exact dimensions of this class of pictures vary considerably, but they always suggest a miniature of a larger work. Customarily, the prints are from twelve to twenty-four inches high, and from four to ten inches wide.

We are fortunate in having in our library a considerable group of this interesting material. It was brought out of Japan more than forty years ago, and covers a wide group of Shinto shrines and several different denominations of Japanese Buddhists. Our collection is strong in mementos of the Nichiren sect. They are most

artistic, and offer a large field for research and study. It is possible that an occasional addition could be made, not directly from Japan, but from miscellaneous collections that were formed before the beginning of the present century. The workmanship of these miniature prints justifies their inclusion in any outstanding collection of Oriental religious art.



*Manly Palmer Hall's*  
**SELF-UNFOLDMENT**  
**By Disciplines of Realization**



CLOTH BINDING

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224 PAGES

ILLUSTRATED

**\$ 3.50**

Modern psychology has invented the term *mystical experience* to explain the mystery of illumination. The theme of this book is as natural as life itself. There can be no enlightened living without a realization of the reason for living. The true reason for our existence cannot be supplied by the intellect; nor can it be discovered by the senses. It can be found only through communion with the inner self.

The purpose of the book is to develop awareness and thoughtfulness so that they become a part of you. The disciplines are not to be practiced as a ritual, but as an inherent quality of yourself, until acceptance of them becomes as natural as the processes of eating and digesting food.

(Please add 4% tax in California)



## Happenings at Headquarters



The Spring Quarter of activities at Headquarters included five special lectures in the Auditorium during Mr. Hall's May lecture tour in Chicago and St. Louis. Dr. David Rosenbloom gave an illustrated lecture on the Holy Land; Dr. Gabriel A. Zimmerman spoke on "Motivating Principles in Man;" Dr. Robert Gerard's subject was "A Creative Approach to Psychological Health;" Dr. William Alex lectured on "The Jungian Viewpoint of Neurosis;" and Dr. I. J. Dunn's topic was "The Practical Meaning of Jung's Concept of the Collective Unconscious."

In addition to his regular Sunday morning lectures, Mr. Hall gave two Wednesday evening seminars, the first entitled "Meditation Symbols—Their Impact on Human Consciousness," and the second consisting of five evenings of extemporaneous discussions on questions submitted by students. This seminar will continue through June 22nd. Mr. Ernest N. Burmester's ten-class seminar, scheduled through June 11th, dealt with "Spiritual Problems of Humanity," and Dr. Henry L. Drake's Group Therapy Class continues to meet regularly on Saturday afternoons.

\* \* \* \* \*

A recent meeting of the Group Psychotherapy Association was concerned with the rehabilitation of epileptics. It appears that in Los Angeles County alone, there are some fifty thousand persons afflicted with epilepsy. Our vice-president, Dr. Henry L. Drake, attended this interesting meeting and reports an unusual approach to therapy. In group therapy meetings, a member about to have an epileptic attack was encouraged by the other epileptics present to use his own will power to prevent or minimize the seizure. As the attack came on, the members simply affected the will of the afflicted one by stressing that he had the strength to handle the attack, did not have to have it, and that his friends were all for him with a full measure of moral support. On many occasions, this constructive approach was extremely helpful, and the sufferer was able to handle his symptoms effectively. It is obvious that this





Buddhistic Stele in our Patio



Corner of the Auditorium Lobby

technique is essentially philosophical in principle, though psychological in application.

Dr. Drake also attended the Western Regional Association for Music Therapy. There were interesting seminars on music in self-analysis, which stressed the therapeutic benefit resulting from playing music one particularly likes, and also selections basically disliked. The person does not focus his attention on the music, but on the effect it has on him, and his reactions thereto. He then discovers certain principles and forces operating within himself, thus coming to sense or know more about his own disposition and temperament. The concept implies that such enlarged self-understanding will enable one to function more adequately in the practical affairs of daily living.

\* \* \* \* \*

Since the publication of the Spring Issue of the PRS JOURNAL, arrangements were made to extend Mr. Hall's spring lecture tour to St. Louis, Missouri. On May 18th, 20th, and 22nd, following a week of lectures in Chicago, he lectured at the Theosophical Society Auditorium (Hudson Hall), and on May 19th, he spoke for the First Divine Science Church in St. Louis. Our thanks and appreciation are extended to the many good friends in both Chicago

and St. Louis, whose splendid help was an important contribution to the success of this tour.

\* \* \* \* \*

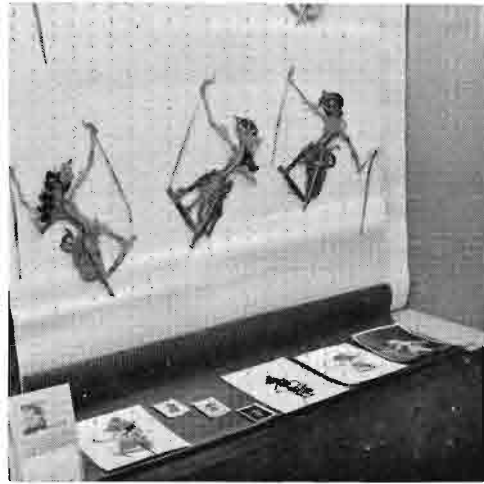
We are happy to report that our building program continues to move ahead. A complete sprinkler system has been installed, and planting is under way. The accompanying illustration shows an attractive grouping of bamboo plants around a Buddhistic stele set into a recess in the Auditorium wall outdoors. The effect is reminiscent of an Asiatic garden. The second illustration shows a corner of the Auditorium lobby. The woodcarving, "Wind and Storm," by the famous German artist Otto Flath, is on loan to the Society.

\* \* \* \* \*

The P.R.S. art department now has seven exhibits out, ranging from Japanese prints through ancient and modern materials from Mexico, to important leaves mounted to show Benjamin Franklin at the height of his career, surrounded by printed leaves from books of importance from his Philadelphia presses. A half dozen other exhibits are on schedule for show in Glendale, Pasadena, and Los Angeles Libraries before the year's end. As the library exhibits have become an important part of our program, we feel that our readers will be interested in an account of the development of this phase of P.R.S. activities.

When, in the autumn of 1955, the possibility of showing elsewhere some of the fine art from our Society's collection was considered, there were some sixty Bible leaves, some of them incunabula, ready for display. These found ready acceptance in the libraries of Beverly Hills, San Marino, and Los Angeles. Members of the P.R.S. Friends Committee canvassed surrounding cities, and visited each of the fifty-two Los Angeles City branches then existent, in an effort to locate available display cases and cooperative exhibits officers.

By the end of the first year, P.R.S. displays included the New Mexico Folk Art and some Japanese material, as well as additional Bible leaves, and had occupied the cases at nine different libraries. Demand for displays continued to grow, and when not installing exhibits or picking them up from outside libraries, the volunteer



Display of Javanese puppets shown at Pasadena City College in February 1958.

workers, under the able direction of Manly P. Hall, went to work assembling, collating, and making ready for travel as rapidly as possible, materials from many countries, which Mr. Hall has collected over a period of thirty-five years.

After forty-nine months, including December of 1959, the P.R.S. art department had placed more than forty categories of material in thirty-eight different libraries, department stores, and in the Tower Gallery of the Los Angeles City Hall. Undoubtedly the most comprehensive, impressive, and valuable of these exhibits was "The Story of the Word," shown at the J. W. Robinson Downtown store in July-August of 1957. An estimated ten thousand persons attended this display of writings, represented in books, leaves, scrolls, and on tree bark, bones and stones from about 5,000 B.C.

The purpose of this Committee effort is to acquaint all of Southern California with The Philosophical Research Society as a center of real cultural aid to students, young and old; to attract visitors to use the magnificent library provided at Headquarters; and to give esthetic pleasure to those who, for one reason or another, cannot visit Headquarters to enjoy the displays of art materials which Mr. Hall keeps in the cases of the library and reading room.



## LOCAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES



We have received an enthusiastic letter from Mrs. Luzette Oostdyke-Sparin, leader of the New York study group, to inform us that their meetings have been highly successful. This group has made a tape recording of one of their meetings, which they plan to send to us as a means of giving us more direct contact with their work and the contributions of the various members.

From Verna Moyer, leader of the Wichita, Kansas, study group, comes word that they are making valuable use of our monthly mimeographed lecture notes. These provide up-to-date material derived from Mr. Hall's lectures. Much of the material covered by these notes is not available in book form, and therefore is of special interest to those already familiar with his published works. This may be considered an extension of the activity of our Headquarters study group here in Los Angeles, which meets twice a month to discuss the lecture of the day.

The Col. George D. Carter, Jr., P.R.S. Local Study Group in Denver notified us that they planned to make a special study of Mr. Hall's book *Self-Unfoldment*. This is an important basic textbook of our program, and we sincerely hope that the group will find this work a valuable aid in personal integration.

Mr. Hall's new long-playing recording "Personal Security in a Troubled World" is ideal for study group purposes. The text runs approximately thirty minutes, and compresses a great deal of information into brief, understandable form. A number of study groups have made special events inviting non-members to hear Mr. Hall's other recordings. They are professionally made, and more suitable for public use than the tape recordings which are offered for study purposes only.



The following questions, based on material in this issue of the PRS JOURNAL, are recommended to Study Groups for discussion, and to readers in general for thought and contemplation.

Article: *RELEASE FROM PREJUDICE*

1. List three types of prejudice which may be regarded as almost universal, and suggest at least one remedy that could bear upon all of them.

2. Explain the relationship between prejudice and fear. Why is it that we have a tendency to fear that which we do not understand?

3. In what way can philosophy, especially mysticism, help us to rise above prejudice and establish our lives on more kindly and factual foundations?

Article: *BOETHIUS ON "THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY"*

1. Make a small project out of checking available data bearing upon Boethius, the times in which he lived, and his relation to Platonic philosophy. Encyclopedias and similar works can be consulted.

2. What is meant by a "prison book," and why may it be regarded as a peculiarly intimate expression of a person's deepest spiritual and philosophical convictions?

3. Boethius devotes considerable thought to the mystery of fortune, good or bad. How does he solve for us the fears and worries resulting from misfortune? Apply this concept to problems in your own life.

(Please see the outside back cover for a list of P.R.S. Study Groups.)



*Ever the Trusting Soul*

According to a manuscript report, written in 1879, the introduction of railroad trains into Japan caused a minor crisis. Passengers boarding the coaches carefully removed their sandals, and left them in rows on the station platform. When the train arrived at its destination, they expected to find their footwear as they left the train. It took several months to train the passengers to carry their shoes with them when they traveled by this new-fangled contrivance.

## THE "UNWORTHY" ONE

### A GHOST STORY



HERE was no mistaking the soft voice at the other end of the telephone. It had to be Mr. Nakamura. "Haru San, I hope you will forgive your humble servant for intruding upon your peace of mind with this diabolical instrument."

"Nothing could give me greater pleasure, Mr. Nakamura, than this wonderful evidence of your thoughtfulness." There was a sharp intake of breath audible over the wire, and it seemed that I had said the right thing.

"Oh, thank you, please. There is a very special exhibition at the art museum. I am on my way there now, and

dare to hope that I might have the privilege of your company."

"The honor is mine, and I most gratefully accept."

"Good, good. I will meet you in the lobby of your hotel in about ten minutes. It is only a few steps from there to the museum."

The few steps proved to be several blocks, for distances meant nothing to Mr. Nakamura. He was wearing his good suit, and the Homburg hat. As special notes of distinction, he had added to his attire a wing-collar and a black four-in-hand tie.

As he trotted along beside me, he explained the purpose of his sudden call. Not far from Kyoto lived a Japanese merchant-prince who had amassed a large fortune exporting silks and brocades, mostly to the United States. Because of his growing admiration of Western culture, he had assembled an impressive collection of European art, featuring the works of the earlier masters. His treasures were described as fabulous, and he had generously consented to exhibit the choicest of them at the art museum, where

a gallery had been especially furnished for the occasion. The exhibition would open to the public the following day, and there had already been a private viewing for members of the Imperial family. The curator, a lifelong friend of Mr. Nakamura, had invited him to see the collection immediately after the departure of the royal guests.

Professor Ibata, the curator, all bows and smiles, met us at the entrance to the museum. He was handsomely dressed in striped trousers, cut-away coat, and tall silk hat. The glow from entertaining royalty still enveloped his slender person. He ushered us into the brightly lighted European gallery, and after a short conversation in excellent English, made a dignified departure and left us to our own devices.

"Professor Ibata has paid us a rare compliment," murmured Mr. Nakamura, "when he permits us to wander here unattended."

"It is not us, but you, he trusts," I replied softly. The little art dealer did not answer, but obviously considered my remark an appropriate bit of Oriental flattery. He walked over to a long cushioned bench at one end of the spacious room and, seating himself comfortably, gazed about.

It was certainly an impressive display. On the walls, were excellent examples of the works of Tintoretto, Salvator Rosa, Botticelli, Raphael, Durer, and "The Master of the Life of the Virgin." In prominent places, stood intricately carved cabinets from ducal palaces of Italy, Gothic woodcarvings, and suits of regal armor. Smaller articles—ivories, porcelain, gold and silver ornaments, embroideries, laces and enamels—were tastefully displayed in massive glass cases.

Mr. Nakamura rose quietly and examined every item with minute care. Painstakingly, he read the descriptive cards, word for word. His expression of serene attentiveness never changed. He gave his full mind to the exhibition, and evidently expected me to do the same.

After about two hours, Mr. Nakamura went back to the bench, picked up his hat, and with head lowered and eyes half closed, walked toward the door. I followed close behind. As though by magic, the curator reappeared. My friend thanked him profusely;

there was handshaking all around; and a half hour later, we were in the little back room of Mr. Nakamura's antique shop.

Over tea and rice cakes, in the pleasant atmosphere of Mr. Nakamura's back room, our conversation drifted quite naturally to the exhibition we had just seen. My host regretted sincerely that he was not better informed in Western art appreciation. "But I am glad to report," he added, "that all the items in the gallery are genuine and authentic, except the Cellini candlestick, and that is without doubt a clever reproduction."

Mr. Nakamura was reluctant to make any critical remarks on European art. He would only state his own preferences, explaining that he was not "a gallery man;" that is, that he did not especially enjoy seeing many diverse artistic treasures crowded together under glaring electric lights for the amazement of the public. He did admit, however, that after inspecting several grim portraits of Florentine princes and Dutch burghers, he suddenly remembered a Chinese painting that pleased him greatly. It depicted a grasshopper climbing up the edge of a blade of grass. "It was such a happy little insect," he concluded.

Obviously refreshed by his thought of a happy grasshopper, the shopkeeper suddenly rose to his feet and disappeared in the direction of his private storeroom. He returned quickly, carrying a square box of unpainted wood. Untying the old cord that held the lid in place, he lifted out a mysterious object wrapped in thin yellow silk. Removing this veil of frayed and faded fabric, Mr. Nakamura placed reverently on the table a small bowl of dark-brown glazed earthenware. Although not completely circular, the little bowl was about three and a half inches in diameter and two inches deep. The rim was uneven, and the bowl did not stand squarely upon its base. The soft glaze was in strange shades of brown, with reddish areas and faint suggestions of dull green.

"This, as you know," explained Mr. Nakamura, "is a *chawan*, or tea bowl, used in our ancient tea ceremony. It was fashioned by a celebrated artist by the name of Chojiro more than three hundred and fifty years ago, and is one of the rarest pieces of Japanese ceramics in the world. The colors are supposed to symbolize the tinting of forest leaves with the coming of the first frost of autumn.



You will notice that it has been skillfully mended in many places with gold lacquer.”

It was certainly an incredible little bowl—at one moment humorous in its disproportion; at another, sympathetic in its crude simplicity. Yet there was about it a haunting, irresistible beauty bearing witness to the loving genius of a master potter.

Seeing that I was properly entranced with the chawan, Mr. Nakamura brought his hands down on the arms of his chair, and announced briskly, “Now let us relax and enjoy the simple beauty of this masterpiece.” He lighted a graceful old oil lamp, and placed it on the table so that the flickering glow would touch and highlight the uneven glaze of the bowl. “I find this the best way to appreciate fine art,” explained my host as he switched off the electric lights.

Mr. Nakamura was right. The wavering, uncertain flame brought out subtle shades and forms utterly beyond description. After we had gazed silently for several minutes, the antique dealer spoke. “It may well be, Haru San, that we find special comfort and inner peace from a work of art that reminds us of ourselves. Like this crude chawan, I am a creature of clay, much out of shape, and fashioned of crude material. I, too, have been broken and mended many times, but like this rude bowl, I know that I was created by a master hand, and something of the beauty of the one who fashioned me lingers on in my composition.”

Taking a deep breath, my Japanese friend returned to his quiet meditation. A little later, he stirred uneasily and, reaching out, touched my arm. “Do you notice something that is not usual?” I studied the bowl carefully and shook my head. Mr. Nakamura pointed at the oil lamp. “Consider the position of the light as it strikes the chawan. Should there not be a shadow cast by this tea bowl on the table?”

There certainly should have been such a shadow, but I could not see any trace of it. My friend moved the lamp about, but the bowl appeared to be equally lighted on all sides. Finally, he took the chawan in his hand and held it so that the shadow would normally be reflected on the wall of the room. The shape of his hand was plainly visible, but there was no trace of the bowl. I was

about to ask the several inevitable questions, but my host clasped the bowl to his breast and sank back in his massive chair with his eyes closed.

“The chawan of Chojiro was the most cherished work of art belonging to my father, who valued it above all the other pieces in his collection. When in proper course of time, it came to me, with its hallowed associations, I performed a time-honored ritual, and proclaimed it the treasure of my house. Not long thereafter, we had a serious earthquake here in Kyoto, and as so often happens, it was followed immediately by a disastrous fire. My home was completely burned, but searching afterwards among the ashes, I was overjoyed to find this bowl well preserved, except that some of the old mending had broken away.

Considering the discovery we have made this evening, it is possible that the bowl actually died when my house was destroyed; but somehow I doubt this. Many ancient examples of artistry have passed through such disasters, but they still cast a shadow, for only their bodies were injured. Something more significant has occurred in this case. Our tea bowl has remained suspended between two worlds, under what would appear to be a spell of magic. There are records of such occurrences in our old legends and histories. The bowl is what you might say ‘undead,’ like spirits that come to live with mortals, but cast no reflections in the mirror.”

“But why, and how?” I inquired incredulously.

“That we must try to discover,” Mr. Nakamura replied pensively. “So it is best that we proceed in an orderly manner. First, let us see with whom this little bowl has kept company through the years.”

He rose and went to a shelf near his table and selected a notebook, handsomely bound in gold vrocade. Sitting down, he turned the pages rapidly. “It is customary for collectors and dealers to preserve careful records of celebrated art treasures. Thus, we are able to learn the histories of famous pieces, and also, in some cases, their present whereabouts. Ah—here is some information about our bowl.”

He ran his fingers down the columns of Japanese characters. “Long in the family of the Shōgun . . . passed to the collection

of Prince Tosa . . . nothing unusual . . . purchased by Baron Minko . . . a very prosaic man . . . was stolen; missing for nearly sixty years . . . hm, interesting . . . found in the effects of a Mr. Kenkuro after his death, in the 12th year of Tem-po; that is, 1841."

The antique dealer stroked his chin reflectively. "Something tinkles a bell in my mind. We must know more about Mr. Kenkuro. I have an acquaintance, a learned gentleman, who is full of rich gossip. Excuse please."

Mr. Nakamura hastened to the front room of his store, and I soon heard him struggling with the telephone system. Then followed a long conversation in rapid Japanese, punctuated with exclamations of what sounded like pleasure and surprise. When he joined me again, he was in a most complacent mood.

"It would seem that our Mr. Kenkuro was indeed a very eccentric person. As a young man, he lived a dissipated life, but in his older years, he turned to scholarship, and mastered the ancient Chinese books on magic and secret arts. My acquaintance, by the way, insists that Mr. Kenkuro did not actually die, as our prosaic historians have reported. One evening, he called his closest friends together, and after a beautiful ceremony, announced that he was departing to the land of the celestials. Suddenly there was a flash of light, and he vanished, leaving no trace. It seemed best to simply announce that he had died."

With that natural sense of drama with which Mr. Nakamura was so richly endowed, he suspended his narrative and carefully examined the surface of the chawan. "I notice that there is a faint design under the glaze, but it is scarcely visible. It looks like a pine branch, but I cannot be sure." The shopkeeper then wrapped the bowl in the fragment of faded silk, and laid it back tenderly in the wooden box, whispering "patience, my beautiful ghost, patience."

Mr. Nakamura hesitated for an instant, with the lid of the box in his hand. Then he sent a shrewd smile in my direction. "Piecing together the evidence provided over the telephone, an intriguing probability presents itself. When Mr. Kenkuro summoned his companions to that last eventful meeting, he undoubtedly performed the ancient tea ceremony. No other ritual would have been possible

under the circumstances. Through scholarship and interior inspiration, he had discovered the elixir of immortality. This he poured into the richest and most valuable of his tea bowls, and certainly he could possess none superior to that fashioned by Chojiro. At the proper moment, he drank the elixir and disappeared instantly, taking the soul of the chawan with him into the other world. The body of the bowl could not accompany its soul, but it had also received the divine medicine into itself. Therefore, it enjoyed a special kind of immortality here in this world."

"Do I understand, Mr. Nakamura, that the bowl casts no shadow because it has no soul? This does not seem entirely reasonable. Sticks and stones, chairs and tables, cast shadows."

"That is quite true, Haru San, but sticks and stones, and chairs and tables, have souls; otherwise, they could not exist, except in a case like this, where they are held by magic."

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## Library Notes

By A. J. HOWIE

### THE DAIBUTSU OF KAMAKURA

Travelers to Japan, and the East in general, are inclined to accept unthinkingly and unwonderingly the presence of art treasures even when they exclaim enthusiastically about their great beauty. It is seldom that we hear comments about the miracle of their bare survival, let alone the inexplicability of their original creation. What the tourist sees, and the art and history books record, is only a small portion of the creative productivity of countless generations of industrious hands and minds, that which has weathered many centuries of human as well as natural violence that has harassed the Orient.

Japan is an arc of land that was thrust up above the sea level some millions of years ago from the ocean floor at its greatest known depths by mighty volcanic convulsions. "The highest peaks in Japan rise to some two miles above sea level. The great Tuscarora Deep, off the eastern flank of the islands, descends more than five miles below sea level. Geologists say that so immense a range of elevation within short lateral distances develops such stresses that this part of the earth's crust is a highly unstable area of numerous volcanoes and frequent earthquakes." (Sansom, *A History of Japan to 1334*.)

There has not only been the havoc wrought by nature with her elemental catastrophes — earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, monsoons, drought, famine, pestilence, epidemic—but there has been the violence of man, as clans and social groups have struggled for power. Merciless civil wars have been waged there that were climaxed with exterminatory slaughter and general pillaging. Further, because of the scarcity of the more durable types of

building materials, Japanese architecture has tended toward fragile, delicate, and highly combustible structures. Thus, even in periods of peace, carelessness has often caused flash fires that wiped out entire communities before anything could be salvaged, even if individuals escaped with their lives. Temples were no more immune than government buildings or private dwellings.

The traditions of Japan are far older than her history. There are no written records earlier than the 6th Century A.D. Prior to that time, a hereditary body, the *Katari-be*, recited the exploits of sovereigns and heroes. Personal embellishment and quality of performance crept into the recitals—proving that flattery of current potentates is nothing new. The heroic leaders drafted huge armies all out of proportion to the size of the country and ordered ambitious and daring maneuvers that had little regard for the expendable troops. The primitive tillers of the soil often were left to starve after their harvests were confiscated to feed any band of warriors that might be passing that way—it was as often their own lord of the land as the forces of an invader.

Even after the art of writing was introduced into Japan, and literature gradually began to preserve fuller and more accurate accounts of events, and to embellish the culture with poetry and romances, only the noble and heroic classes were portrayed; the masses were only live props who served the needs and whims of the aristocracy—the sad but truthful fact of their actual existence.

Prior to the introduction of Buddhism, the culture of Japan was simple, unimaginative, austere, militant. The Shinto rites of the national religion were observed at very modest shrines. It was only after Buddhism was accepted by the Imperial family and the aristocracy that beauty and impressive ritual were introduced into the religious life of the people. As early as 685 A.D., an imperial edict ordered that a small Buddhist shrine should be provided in every house, and an image of the Buddha with some Buddhist scriptures placed therein. This edict probably applied only to official houses, but it is evident that the idea of household shrines took strong hold and penetrated into homes throughout the land. The sequel, of course, was that unskilled natives developed into skilled craftsmen and early devoted their talents to fashioning *Mokubutsu*, wooden

images of Buddha. During the Nara epoch (8th cent.), sculpture in wood and bronze was elevated to a fine art.

*Terry's Guide to the Japanese Empire* states: "Perhaps the greatest value of Buddhism to the nation was educational." Then, quoting from Lafcadio Hearn, it continues: "To enumerate the improvements and innovations that came to her by that route would be to tell almost the whole story of her progress. All that can be classed under the name of art in Japan was either introduced or developed by Buddhism . . . . It was a civilizing power in the highest sense of the word, for it introduced drama, the higher forms of poetical composition and fiction; history, philosophy, architecture, painting, sculpture, engraving, printing, landscape gardening—in short, every art and industry that held to make life beautiful. All the refinements of Japanese life were of Buddhist introduction, and at least a majority of the diversions and pleasures."

It is an unfortunate necessity that history must affirm the fact that the integrity of the Buddhist clergy did not rank with the benefits conferred by the impetus of Buddhist concepts. At the same time that Buddhism made positive contributions to Japanese culture, the monastic orders provided the only avenue whereby men of lowly birth might advance their stations in life. Buddhist scholars awakened and developed the native talents of their Japanese converts, but they could neither discipline nor harness the spirit of personal ambition which was blind to the utter selflessness of the true Buddhism of their teachers. With trained and brilliant minds in the strong and rugged bodies of peasant stock, they did not hesitate to use their Buddhist offices to achieve the ends of wealth and power. It was thus that political ambition, greed, and corruption infiltrated the Buddhist priesthood. Many of the sects maintained standing armies, at first to protect church property from thieves and marauding warriors; but many times political factions enlisted the aid of these religious armies, and their support often swung the balance of power between warring clans. When the ambitions of certain sects overstepped the bounds of discretion, either by seeking power for themselves or asserting their independence of political factions, they aroused persecution and restriction. In any case, the worldly ambitions and strong armies

of the monastic orders invited many instances for the further destruction of Buddhist art objects and religious furniture.

Although not documented, one guess regarding the origin of Japanese Buddhist art seems certain. The artistic skill required to produce the beautiful sculpture and architecture was developed and flowered in the rude minds and hands of the peasants. The aristocracy and warriors were not workers. They might be generous as patrons of the arts, but they had little part in the genius behind the actual work.

The annals record many instances of the cultural exchanges on a very high level. The records are definite that Buddhist teachers were invited under imperial patronage and protection. The story is quite clear, with instances of conversion to, or maybe better acceptance of, the Buddhist teachings by members of the aristocracy following in the wake of the examples set by the royal families. These were the ones who discoursed on the finer points of philosophical distinctions, who learned to read and write, who learned how to express the Japanese language in Chinese characters, and later popularized the katakana devised by a Buddhist monk.

But the chroniclers are silent about the bands of selfless monks who travelled throughout the land preaching the Good Law to the common people. There are no names given of those who transformed the rude craftsmen into skilled artisans, awakening in them an instinctive color sense, urging them on to the production of distinctive art-forms peculiar to the Japanese people. There is no recognition of the devotion, intelligent purpose, and labor, by means of which the crude pottery of the Ainu aborigines was transformed into the exquisite ceramic and porcelain patterned after Chinese and Korean antecedents.

The Buddhist tuition was education in its literal sense—they led, but did not direct or limit. They did not destroy the ancient Shinto traditions, but blended and reconciled them to the Buddhist concepts. They brought no conflict for the people. The result is that in Japanese art, we can observe the calm and reflective interpretations of the many aspects of Buddhist meditation, reincarnation teaching — in sculpture, painting, architecture, the symbolic utensils and furnishings of temples and shrines. The Japanese were earnest, industrious, willing, quick, and capable students. At



the same time, they instinctively preserved a national integrity and individuality in what they absorbed from the continent.

While Nara still was the capital of Japan, many Buddhist temples were built under imperial patronage. On November 7, 743, the Emperor Shomu proclaimed his intention of erecting a colossal bronze casting of Buddha as the *Lord of Light*. The text of his announcement is extant and sets forth that "through the influence and authority of Buddha the country enjoys tranquillity," and while urging that no pressures were to be brought to bear on the people to take part in the project, he promised that every contributor should be welcome, even though he brought no more than a twig to feed the furnace or a handful of clay for the mold. The Emperor himself carried earth with his own hands to help make the platform. The actual work of casting began in 747 and was completed in three years, after seven unsuccessful attempts. The head and neck were cast in a single shell. The body was formed of bronze plates, 10 by 12 inches, and 6 inches thick, built up in the form of walls, and cooled a foot at a time. The figure is seated in an open lotus bloom, in an attitude of calm reflection, the entire figure being fifty-three and a half feet high. The temple housing has been destroyed by fire many times; the head was so badly damaged by an early fire that it was replaced by a new one in 1183.

The same Emperor Shomu who instigated the *Nara Daibutsu* caused numerous monasteries to be established throughout the land, and among the temples thus built and endowed is the *Kotobu-in Monastery* at Kamakura. It was under the protection of this monastery that the *Kamakura Daibutsu* was placed when the memorial was completed.

It seems incongruous that Yoritomo Minamoto, who defeated the other warring shoguns, and established the actual rulership of Japan in the hands of the *shogunates* from the 12th century until the revolution of 1867-68, should have inspired the memorial which has become the "pride and glory of Kamakura." The tradition is that he was so impressed by the majestic proportions of the *Nara Daibutsu* when he visited it in 1195, that he became desirous of erecting a similar figure in his own capital. He did not live to execute the wish, but a devoted lady of his court, together with the priest Joko Shonin, collected the funds which permitted them



THE DAIBUTSU OF KAMAKURA

This unusual photograph was made about 1880, soon after photography was introduced into Japan. It shows the setting of the great image, with natives standing on various parts of the statue, which would not be permitted today.

to select an unprotected and sequestered fold of valley and to construct the figure. The image was sculptured in wood and enshrined in an elaborate and beautiful temple which was completed, after more than five years of work, in June, 1243. This glory was ruined in a severe storm during which the sacred figure suffered great injury. As a result of this catastrophe, it was resolved to create its successor in a more lasting form. The present figure was cast in bronze by Ono Goroyemon, and bears the date 1252.

The figure represents the *Amida Buddha*, the "Buddha of Immeasurable Light which illuminates all worlds in the Ten Directions of Space." The greenish-black statue is seated on a lotus-flower resting on a low elevation of crude masonry about 5 feet high. The figure is 49 feet high. Originally, it was housed in a



building with a massive roof supported by 63 immense columns of *keyaki*-wood. In August 1335, during a civil war, a force of soldiers sought shelter from a great storm within the vast temple. During the night, the building was wrecked by the violence of the wind, about 500 warriors perishing beneath the ruins. In 1369, the structure was again partially destroyed by a tidal wave, and the building was completely annihilated during a similar calamity in 1495. Since then, the image has remained unsheltered, and the face of calm repose and nobility, without the usual aureole, is framed only with the ancient pines and cryptomerias and the green background of the Kamakura hills.

The Countess Iso Mutsu, in her *Kamakura Fact & Legend*, writes: ". . . . however effective may have been the ornate environment and the 'scented twilight of the gods,' surely no artificial background could be more entirely in accord with the dreamy meditation of this embodiment of eternal peace than the blue heavens with its shifting clouds, the sunshine, and the whispers of wind-stirred trees. The great divinity seems fraught with special significance in the dark hours when the shadowy valley is flooded by the pure silver of the full moon, investing the lonely figure—its head bowed in sorrow for the sins and sufferings of the world—with a mysterious and unreal atmosphere, that accentuates its austere majesty and utter aloofness from the unrest and turbulence of this human earth-life. Mortal forms may crawl and wander about its feet, but the great serene *Daibutsu*, oblivious and undistracted, will apparently sit enthroned upon his stony pedestal through all infinity, a symbol of repose and absolute detachment from the world."



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