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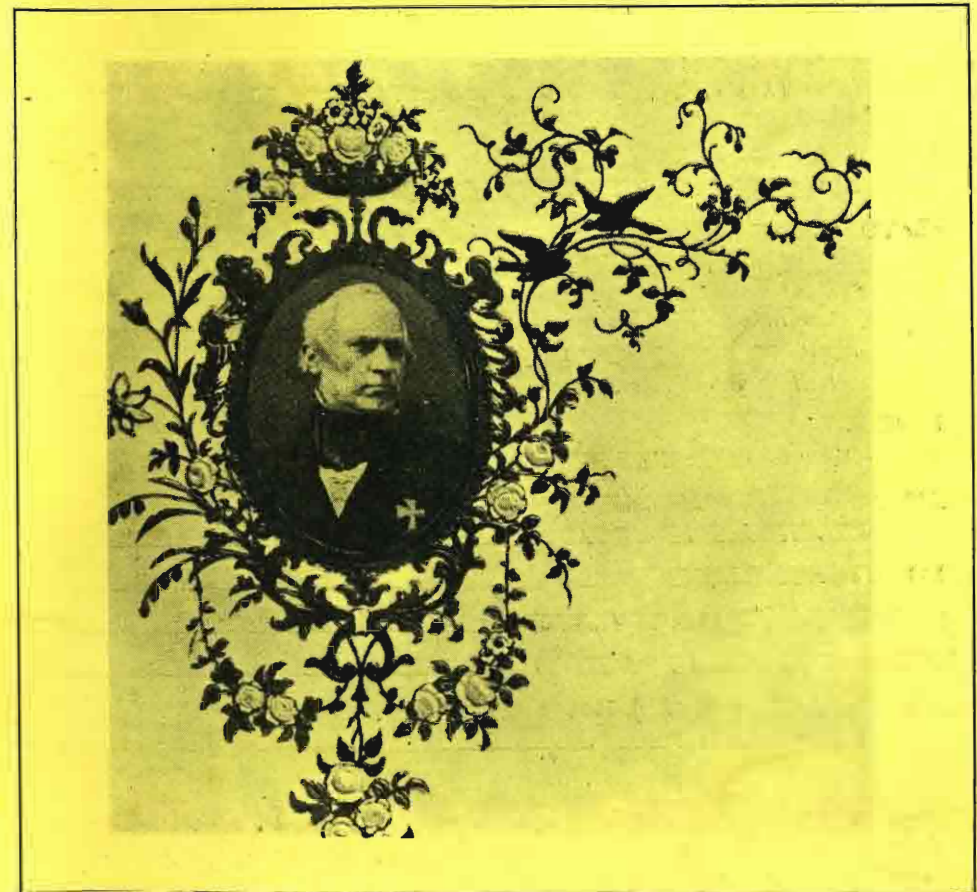
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THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

**BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE,
OR PAYING FOR THE PAST?**

Many persons are reluctant to accept the concept that human life is subject to the law of causality. We prefer to believe in a doctrine of free will, with no restraints upon action except choice and preference. Yet every day we are exposed to irrefutable evidence that the law of cause and effect does apply not only to physical circumstances, but to the mental and emotional aspects of man's nature.

It is impossible to deny the importance of preventive therapy in matters of health. One of the best ways to keep well is to refrain from actions or attitudes that are known to cause sickness. If we eat unwisely, we may expect digestive difficulties; if we drink to excess, our careers are endangered; and if we smoke too much, it is quite likely that we will develop chronic bronchitis or in some way damage the lungs. These simple and undeniable facts are only one way of acknowledging the law of cause and effect.

Viewing the matter from the opposite direction, we go to the doctor because some ailment has become troublesome. The first thing the physician is going to ask for is a case history. He is certain in his own mind that the illness which has arisen in the body is due to some consistent cause. He wants to find out if possible how we have contributed to our discomfort. He will then strongly

advise that we correct our mistakes if we expect to regain our health.

In business, it is generally assumed that our careers will unfold according to our natural aptitudes, acquired skills, and the degree of sincerity with which we perform our allotted tasks. If we invest nothing in a project, there is no reason to expect that we will be successful. If we have no adequate experience in a certain field of endeavor, the likelihood of success is markedly reduced. The successful man, therefore, has caused, by some dedication of his own, the security that he enjoys.

No one can deny that a home is a result of careful planning. Very few couples are able to enjoy a secure or successful marriage unless they make adjustments in their own dispositions, sacrifice some of their personal desires for the common good, and guard the essential values without which the domestic patterns are almost certain to disintegrate. So it goes in every walk of life. The child has to go to school in order to earn the right to make a living later. He has to train his mind if he expects to have a practical and useful career. If we are not friendly, we do not make friends. If we abuse our associates, we will end lonely and forsaken. Any emotional excess that arises in us will probably result in headaches, insomnia, acid indigestion, and psychic fatigue.

To understand these things, to watch the unfoldment of our own lives, and to observe the condition of our friends and relatives, is to be keenly aware that we live under a merit system, whether we like it or not. We can talk all we wish to about free will, but in the long run, freedom is merely the privilege of living constructively or destructively, and accepting the consequences as right and proper.

The Eastern philosophy of karma points out that a considerable pattern of causations is brought with us into embodiment at the time of birth. We do not arrive in the physical world in a state of perfect innocence or absolute virtue. We are all in the midstream of our evolutionary development. Behind us are many lives, with their patterns of causes and effects. Of course, we have already paid a great deal of the old karma, for in each incarnation, there are short cycles of events that complete themselves in days, months,

and years. There are others, however, especially those involving basic characteristics, that take much longer. Critical ailments can be met immediately, but chronic ones may drift along through several lives.

The most common debt we inherit from ourselves is the degree of selfishness that we have brought forward from earlier incarnations. Looking around us in this world, we observe that some persons are almost completely self-centered. They live only to fulfill their own desires and advance personal causes even though they must injure others or abuse the natural rights of cosmic citizenship. Less frequently we find persons who have reached a considerable degree of unselfishness. They are more kindly and generous and thoughtful, and we may be instinctively drawn to them because we recognize their gracious integrity. Also, there are always a few who have reached a degree of almost complete selflessness. They live only to give and to serve, and the world honors them as great examples of human nobility.

Basically, the operation of the law of causality in our own lives is closely identified with the degree of unselfishness we have attained in previous embodiments. Wherever there is a strong self-will and a powerful pressure toward egoism, there must inevitably follow unfortunate and unhappy effects. For the egotist, living is always an uncomfortable experience. By his very nature, he cannot blame this upon himself, but takes the attitude that the world is against him and that he is destined to live and die afflicted and misunderstood.

Most karma that we bring with us into the present embodiment is related to incorrect attitudes that we have held over a period of several lives. One may be selfishness; another, self-pity; and a third, an intense jealousy. If we have never corrected these faults, but have managed to bring them forward into the present lifetime, they will continue to plague us. We can never be safe while we are wrong; and we are wrong so long as any action that we commit is hurtful to ourselves or others.

Many philosophies have been developed to determine, if possible, how we can notice immediately and clearly when we are wrong. How can we be sure that an action will lead to bad karma until

we have committed the action, and have become involved in the effects? The best rule of thumb that we have is summed up in what we call the Golden Rule, which appears, in one form or another, in over forty of the world's religions and philosophies. The Confucian statement is typical: "Do not unto any other person that which thou wouldst not have that person do to you." While this does not cover every emergency that can arise, it is always helpful. If we are angry, or jealous, or spiteful, or given to gossip or the perpetuation of idle rumors, would we want other persons to be equally unkind or thoughtless in their treatment of our lives or their interpretation of our conduct?

Persons in trouble are usually unable to explain the karmic patterns with which they are afflicted. If we believe that man lives only once, and must depend upon this single lifetime for his total existence or his eternal state after death, daily experiences often make little sense. There must first of all be a sincere desire to justify the universe in which we live. If the universe is meaningless, how can we ever hope to accomplish anything of real value or significance? We must justify life in order to justify our own living.

If we believe in God, or a Supreme Power of Good, or the reasonable operations of just and proper laws in nature, then we must finally accept the fact that justice applies to ourselves as well as to other living things. If we have had a difficult life, if it seems that others have always benefited from our activities but have never shared the benefits, if we believe that we are helpless victims of a conspiracy of fate and circumstance, then we have learned very little and our chances of learning more in the near future are not good.

The best thing to do is to try to decide, once and for all, whether God is just or unjust, and whether destiny is honest or dishonest. If we are willing finally to admit, even grudgingly, that the universe is honorable and its laws are right, we can then turn our attention to ourselves to discover, as quickly as possible, why the universal plan seems to be punishing us. The only answer must ultimately be because we deserve punishment. In nature, always, punishment is not revenge. The universe is not emotionally of-

fended because we have made a mistake. It does not pick out the atheist and afflict him because he has had the audacity to deny the existence of God. Nature simply permits him to live through his own attitude until he finds it unendurable.

The old idea that there was a Deity somewhere who hurled his thunderbolts at all who displeased him and saved his blessings for those who catered to his wishes, is no longer valid. Increasing knowledge has indicated that the universe is unfolding according to a vast plan. We do not understand all the operations of this cosmic project, so we cannot cooperate with it fully. We can, however, accept the obvious evidence that the universal way is supreme, and that man can attain happiness only by submitting his own will to the purposes of Infinite Will.

If we have reached middle life, and find we have a number of defects of character that have proved extremely troublesome, we can either blame them upon our physical ancestry, or we can decide that we have brought them with us as part of our heritage of unfinished business. In time, we will realize that the complete acceptance of personal responsibility for what we are and what we do, is by far the wiser course. Any situation that seems to be traceable to ancestry or to conditions in infancy or early childhood, should be re-examined, and we will often finally decide that it is an outworking, directly or indirectly, of the law of causality.

A person may be born with a tendency to be happy or unhappy, with an instinct to be grateful or ungrateful, with the intuitive power to understand or with the lack of such power, leading to misunderstanding. Whatever the pressure may be that he has brought with him, it will first express itself in early childhood. His own peculiarities may very well intimidate his parents, causing them to take a defensive attitude against the pressures that he is already beginning to release. If there are three children in a family, and one of them is destructively self-willed, another negatively submerged in moods and tensions, and the third a rather outgoing, cheerful, forthright person, we can scarcely blame the relatives for preferring the company of the cheerful child. This, of course, will cause the others to feel neglected, and will intensify later complexes. Actually, however, the temperaments of the individuals themselves

have produced their proper effects, and will continue to do so until in some way the temperaments themselves are basically altered.

According to Eastern philosophy, the material world is the vast stage upon which karmic patterns are played out. We are here only because we have not yet outgrown the physical dimensions of existence. If we are able to entirely transcend the material state, we depart and do not return. It is always karma that brings us back; therefore, it is useless to insist that we are right in everything. It is also a mistake to assume that the mastery of any one subject constitutes for us the end of learning. We are here to pay all the old debts and live out the pressures that we have accumulated for ages.

Our present condition indicates the degree to which we have already solved the problems of the consciousness locked within our body. The problems that we have solved, no longer disturb us or even have any real existence for us. Thus the person who is naturally tolerant has learned this lesson, and is not likely to be faced with any negative karma involving intolerance. The serious thinker who has escaped from sectarian religion, will not be required to suffer through unfortunate theological commitments. If we are by nature truthful, we are not inclined to set up patterns of deceit that will lead to suffering.

We all have a number of substantial assets in our psychic integration. The only problems that remain for us are those which have not been solved, and with these we must immediately concern ourselves. The philosophic approach to the matter is to follow the good advice that we should change for the better all that we can change, and accept with patience, kindness, and insight that which we cannot change. In this case, what we cannot change is ripe karma. The debt that has been presented requires just payment for an action previously committed, and cannot be evaded.

We should perhaps divide the unpleasant happenings with which we are afflicted into two distinct groups: those that are obviously long-range debts, and those that we can recognize as having been acquired in the present lifetime. And where we can see that a problem has been set in motion recently, we can do our best to solve it in the near future.

At the same time that we are partly concerned with old scores, we must also consider building for the future. We make whatever

plans we can to relieve ourselves of all consequences of foolishness, selfishness, and cruelty. This generation, especially, is aware how rapidly we catch up to the years ahead. Things put off return with amazing promptness, and there is very little to be gained by mortgaging the future. Every day we are making new karma, usually in the process of catering to existing faults and failings that have not been corrected.

It may be, for example, that old karma has not fitted us to make strong and proper decisions. If in this life we continue to be weak and undecided, we shall get into further difficulties. Another stream of old karma may involve personal antagonisms. Certain people remind us of archetypes within ourselves, and bring out strong resentments in us. If we continue to react in this way, we perpetuate the trouble and must face it again—in fact, we must continue to face it even though we deny the need for solution over a period of many future lives. If it takes a thousand future incarnations to correct a bad temper, nature will provide us with the necessary embodiments. It will permit us to suffer for an unpleasant disposition until through insight born of desperation, we change our ways.

This may sound rather doleful, because in a sense it puts the worst face on the situation. Actually, while we may still be burdened with the uncontrolled temper, we have also achieved much that will assure us greater happiness and security in lives to come. There are many old faults which collective humanity has discarded. There are cruelties that plagued the past, which will not come again; we have outgrown a great deal. As philosophy points out, however, man has a strange resentment against the correction of his own faults. When we remember the wars of Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon, we give thanks that we are no longer subject to such practices; but even as we want to believe we have outgrown them, we are saddened by the terrible record of militarism in the present century.

The answer must lie in a tendency that we all see every day. The individual, focusing his attention on his environment, is concerned mostly with his career, possessions, associations, activities, and hobbies. He is more interested in satisfying his desires than in analyz-

ing and imposing disciplines upon them. He goes to school and on to college, quite convinced that he is building a mature personality. Having fitted himself for a profession, he works through the active years of living, satisfied that he is a successful, prosperous, and respected person. In all this procedure, he has never really brought himself to internal maturity. In the midst of his success, therefore, he may make an unfortunate political affiliation, or find his mind obsessed with religious or racial problems for which he has nothing but intolerance. And all his securities will not protect him against the dangers of alcoholism or help him to guard his health against a nervous breakdown due to emotional intensity.

The old Buddhist teachings emphasized detachment from all karma-causing processes; or if this is not immediately possible, to set in motion only such causes as may prove compatible with future peace of mind. The bodhisattva characteristics of kindness, meekness, charity, mercy, and compassion, are said to bear good fruit, which will sustain us and nourish us in the future years of this life and the embodiments that lie ahead. The first way to protect the future, therefore, is to live harmlessly now; and this means to escape, as far as possible, from all pressures of self-interest that will cause us to favor ourselves at the expense of someone else.

The moment we impose on another person, we are creating karmic debt. The moment we lose patience, and make the sharp sarcastic remark, a tiny seed is planted; and some day, from that seed the weeds will grow. The time will come when these weeds, having assumed formidable proportions, may have to be dug out of the earth with great labor and patience. Also, weaknesses are more or less accumulative. They add up to insecurity and inadequacy. They prejudice our judgment at vital moments, perhaps causing us to lose a good opportunity or to accept some unreasonable responsibility.

Nature will never permit us to escape from the consequence of any unrealistic or unidealistic decision. At the moment it seems that the matter may be of small importance. What are a few unkind words in the course of a lifetime? What is a little selfishness when we have so great a desire to possess something or someone? What is a small bad habit—we are always sure that it will never

grow. Actually, however, each of these tiny faults is germinal, like the small acorn that has a great oak tree hidden in it. When the time comes to correct these little mistakes, we discover that we have grown dependent upon them. They gradually take over many of our attitudes, until it requires a large effort of the will to break away from them.

The love of nature, enjoyment of beauty, and the cultivation of constructive hobbies—pursuits that forever remind us of the more noble achievements of mankind, can result in enjoyment without karmic indebtedness. Western man, however, is reluctant to accept the idea of the peaceful life. Having few developed resources that do not require some form of justification or satisfaction through intense action, he finds the prospect of the contemplative life rather embarrassing. He must learn that it is perfectly possible to substitute simple appreciation for many more aggressive approaches to pleasure and relaxation.

The best way to create good karma is to set in motion dedication to the unfoldment of our inner creative and idealistic potentials. Like the Boy Scout's good deed, we attain merit by acts of thoughtfulness, words of kindness, and thoughts of beauty. Whenever we understand any subject to the degree that we find good in it, we are liberating ourselves from bondage to false interpretations. As we must carry forward the person we now are, it becomes essential to transform that person immediately to the best of our ability. If we admire unselfishness and a pleasant smile in others, we can have them also if we will cultivate the attitudes for which happiness and graciousness are the proper consequences.

As of the individual, so of the world. Nations and races have their karmas, and the first nation that attains the full realization of a peaceful way of existence, and is willing to live for principles, will free itself from the terrors of war. There is a deep satisfaction in realizing that we do live in a merit system, and that if we resolve to keep the rules, nature will protect that resolution, advance it in all reasonable ways, and bestow upon us the good rewards that we have earned.



PARALLELS BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

GNOSTICISM: THE SCIENCE OF SALVATION

Religions and philosophies come into existence, unfold their teachings, attain their maximum sphere of influence, and then either diminish and fade away, or are subject to broad renovations and reforms. It is possible to construct a graph which shows clearly the parallels between the motions of ideas and the evolution of organic forms in nature. From the study of such a graph, if carefully prepared, a quantity of useful information can be gathered.

Several inter-related factors influence the complicated course of a spiritual revelation. First of all, a major philosophical system nearly always originates in a period of moral or ethical confusion, resulting from a spreading revolt against some earlier school of thought that has lost its effectiveness. A new belief must also be placed in its proper setting involving the time factors and the environment in which some reformation is urgently required.

It follows that in almost every instance, beliefs originate in a local need, and therefore develop in the restricted atmosphere of a clan, tribe, or community. They must also be considered as the productions of emergencies. The gods long honored by a people have ceased to answer its prayers, or have no longer bestowed protection against the enemy. On the philosophical level, the experiences of the community may have advanced the people until the beliefs of their ancestors are no longer satisfactory or applicable to existing conditions.

A new teaching, in order to survive, must transcend the area, the time, and the conditions associated with its origin. A faith given to a people living in the desert, must be acceptable to those who dwell in cities. It must extend its influence through the levels of society, finding enthusiastic exponents among farmers, merchants, professional persons, and aristocrats. If it cannot adapt itself to the needs of the many, its influence will always be restricted to the few, and as these die out, the doctrine itself must perish.

There are also larger considerations. A teaching, to gain world prominence, must transcend barriers of language, the isolating factors of political systems, and find ways of supplanting older beliefs or forming a cooperative partnership with them. Having thus assured a large area of influence, it must cope with the factor of time which, in turn, is the measure by which social change is weighed and estimated. As it is relatively impossible for any human being to foresee the mental, emotional, and physical conditions of his remote descendants, or estimate the problems that future ages must meet in order to survive, it is inevitable that men will outgrow the interpretations their forebears have placed upon spiritual and natural phenomena. Progress does not disturb facts, but it does require a new interpretation of the moral and ethical implications of realities universally accepted and respected.

It is interesting to compare situations that arose almost simultaneously in the unfoldment of Eastern and Western civilization. For a long time, it was assumed that the timing was coincidental, but it is now suspected that some direct contact between the two hemispheres contributed to the similarities that have so long disturbed scholars. In Western civilization, which still centered around the Mediterranean area, the first century of the Christian era has been so significant as to result in our calculation of historical sequences as Before and After the beginning of the Christian era.

Let us summarize briefly what may be termed the intellectual emergency. Greek philosophy had fallen into decline, and the Grecian states were under the dominion of Rome. Roman philosophy was a negligible factor, offering very little to satisfy the inner life of the Latin people. Egyptian learning had been so seriously debased that it was little more than an abject formalism, catering to the whims of Rome. The Jewish religion was under enormous pressure because the God of Israel had been unable to preserve the freedom of his people, and had permitted the desecration of his temple in Jerusalem.

Christianity was emerging, but at that time, had very little general influence. It was one of those local beliefs that was tied too closely to the shores of Galilee to enjoy much respect from scholars or self-satisfied patricians. Primitive faiths on the borders of the Ro-

man empire exercised only a negligible influence, but the more advanced and stimulating concepts of the Persians were intriguing to the Roman Legion.

In various ways, systems of beliefs too old or too young to cope with the human tragedy that was being enacted in the centers of Western culture, attempted to renovate or strengthen their teachings, making them more attractive to the multitude with its countless prejudices. Out of the collapse of the school of Athens, came the Neoplatonists and Neo-Pythagoreans of Greece, Rome, and North Africa. The Romans themselves began to produce a few idealistic leaders who sought to restore the sacred schools they had inherited from Greece and Egypt.

The Roman situation found inspiration in Neoplatonism, the most able exponent of this system among the emperors being Julian the Apostate. Egypt was in the process of revising its own system and laying the foundations for that elusive cult which has survived to us as Hermeticism, which in turn gave rise to medieval alchemy. In the Judaistic area, a forthright mysticism was evolving as a consolation in time of great sorrow. Here is the traditional source of the *Sepher Yetzirah* (The Book of Formations) and the *Sepher ha Zohar*. (The Book of the Splendors). The Mishnah was taking precedence over the Torah, and after the Diaspora, the children of Israel carried their mystical aspirations, together with the strange spiritual sciences which they evolved, throughout Europe and the Near East under the broad name of *Cabalism*.

Christianity, although comparatively young, sensed its own need almost immediately, and rebuilt its foundations upon the ministry of St. Paul, who emphasized strongly the mystical experience of Christ as the spirit of life, hope, consolation, and resurrection in the heart of every true believer. Even this broad program, however, had one besetting weakness. Christianity had developed upon a level of simple needs, and naturally had little to offer to the philosopher, the scholar, and the sage. In order to solve this dilemma, the early Church Fathers condemned in general all branches of higher intellectualism, insisting that by simple faith alone, salvation was possible. Several groups opposed this point of view, with the result that the early centuries of Christianity were plagued with schisms and heresies.

On the fringe of Christianity, where it mingled its influence with Neoplatonism and the old sacerdotal mysteries of Egypt, there developed another remarkable pattern of heterodoxies. The most famous of these were the Syrian and the Egyptian Gnosis. The Syrian group was addicted to the teachings of Simon Magus, and the Egyptian School followed Basilides and Valentinus. Around the Gnosis, and intertwining with it, at least to a degree, were the Manichaeans, Nestorians, Arianists, and pre-Islamic mystical associations of Arabia and Persia.

It was all very complicated, but with the concept of a graph in mind, the broad trends are immediately clear. Western man had reached a point of no return in his journey from antiquity to modern times. The institutions he cherished were collapsing about him. He had to either reject his faith or reform it. As the human being is by nature religious, and simply declines to exist in a society devoid of abstract ideals, he followed the most reasonable course. He preserved his old heroes, honored the sanctuaries of his ancient beliefs, but convinced himself that beneath the surface of his former theological acceptances there were esoteric truths, spiritual laws, transcendental arts, and mystical forms of wisdom, and the time had come for these to be revealed. Having made this bridge, and having escaped in this way from the abstract and arbitrary boundaries of orthodoxy, he came into possession of an evolving religion, a faith that grew with him and could therefore be enthusiastically bestowed upon future ages. Thus came the days of the great evangelisms.

Now let us turn our attention for a moment to conditions in Asia, using the same dateline—the beginning of the Christian era. Everywhere on this vast Eastern continent, religions and philosophies were in trouble. Hinduism, far the oldest, was still staggering under the impact of Buddhism, and from his early discourses, it is evident that Buddha actually regarded himself as a reformer of Hinduism, and was so generally accepted during his own time. The numerical weight of Hinduism, however, was beginning to close in on the Buddhist schools. Furthermore, the old gods of India were more glamorous than the quiet, unworldly arhats who preached the way of salvation taught by the Light of Asia.

These arhats also were under difficulties. In the six hundred years after the death of Buddha, the Sanga, or the Brotherhood, had been confronted with numerous obstacles, and had slowly lost the tremendous impulse bestowed upon it by the personal life and teachings of Gautama Buddha. Councils had become necessary, and the Sanga had taken refuge under the protection of benevolent monarchs and princes. It was generally assumed that Buddhism was destined to slowly fade away. Its moral code was too severe, and not many were to be found who would renounce wealth, family, social position, and even the scanty comforts of life, to wander as homeless beggars along the rough roads and paths of Bengal.

Buddhism had become a more or less exclusive order of monks, and like most such monastic groups, had slight hope of survival, and even less hope of exercising a profound influence upon the moral life of Asia. Hindu scholarship was riddled with skepticism, and strong traces of pre-scientific materialism were becoming evident. The various schools had little in common, and the only answer was the rise of some mystical tradition. This need was met by the gradual unfoldment of Yoga and Vedanta philosophy.

China was in a sad way, both politically and religiously. There was no such empire as we generally visualize when we think of the vast area of Chinese influence. There was constant warfare and bickering, rivalry of princes, and a continuing exploitation of the common people. Taoism, the mystical philosophy of Lao-tse, one of the most advanced systems ever devised by the human mind, had fallen into a kind of ceremonial magic, dealing in miracles, trying to perpetuate itself by offering more and more of consolation and less and less constructive instruction.

Confucianism was not much better off. The master himself died disillusioned and convinced that his ideals could not survive. They did live, but gradually fell into the keeping of a group of aristocratic intellectuals. By degrees, Confucianism was used to bolster up the aristocracy and protect it from the righteous indignation of the proletariat. Wherever Confucianism gained ascendancy, it attacked all liberalism. While it gave China a magnificent concept of life, it was never able to gain a sufficient support among leaders free from self-interest. The Near East had not yet felt the impact

of Mohammed, and most of its schools of thought were drifting into compromise and exploitation.

Something was urgently required, and it was among the Buddhist group that this need was most clearly foreseen and adequately met. By degrees, the center of Buddhist influence was moving out of India. One school was establishing itself on the island of Ceylon, where it managed to maintain its identity against the Hindus, Moslems, British, and other foreign powers. The other stronghold of Buddhist philosophy was the vast desert area we now call Turkestan, partly in China, partly in Russia, and with fragments extending through Northern India and into Afghanistan. In other words, Buddhism was setting up its abode on the periphery of the East Indian sphere of influence; and as it moved away from Hindu learning, it came into direct contact with a variety of national groups, racial strains, and cultural patterns.

Most of those with whom Buddhism established friendly terms, were in need of something more vital, inspiring, and encouraging than a doctrine of philosophic nihilism. Hill tribes and mountain people, and those who dwelt in the oases of Gobi, could not be expected to contemplate the abstractions of selflessness or the submergence of personal identity. Everywhere, there was challenge, and most of the Eastern religions and philosophies had no intention of allowing themselves the luxury of liberality. They belonged to that type of thinking which condemned all change, demanded uniformity, excommunicated those who left the faith, and anathematized any who sought to reform it. Into this situation Buddhism moved swiftly and effectively.

The name most honored among the Buddhist teachers of the time was Nagarjuna. Very little is actually known about him, but there is considerable legendry, part of which, almost certainly, is founded upon early historical accounts. He is said to have been born in south India, of a Brahman family, and this seems quite reasonable. Although he renounced his class and his caste, he remained to the end a man of powerful attitudes and brilliant, if somewhat cynical, mind.

According to a Tibetan legend bearing upon his early life, it was predicted at the time of his birth that he would not live more

than seven days. This so greatly disturbed his parents that they sought in every way possible to preserve his life by deeds of merit performed for his sake. So extraordinary were their virtues, and so diligently did they earn protection for him, that Nagarjuna's life was extended to seven weeks. This in turn was lengthened out to seven months, and then to seven years.

Before he had attained to the exhaustion of his merit, Nagarjuna enrolled in the ancient priestly college of Nalanda, and began to personally venerate the great Buddha Amitayus. The piety of so young a child, the utter sincerity of his worship, and his resolution to devote his entire life to the teaching of the Blessed Doctrine, gained for him a special dispensation. Amitayus bestowed upon the child the promise that he should live for three hundred years. Apparently, however, this burden of age was too great, and having completed his proper ministry, Nagarjuna is said to have committed suicide by decapitating himself.

There is much to suggest that we are now in the rarified atmosphere of Tibetan religious fiction. If we delete the extravagances, the facts seem to remain that Nagarjuna was likely a delicate child, whose health caused great anxiety to his parents. In answer to their prayers and other pious devotions, he survived, and like many who are naturally lacking in robust health, he chose a religious career. In the quiet atmosphere of the sanctuary, and because of his natural spiritual dedication, his health improved, and he enjoyed a fairly long life.

According to the Tantric School, Nagarjuna is the third of eight patriarchs through whom the doctrine descended. When the Japanese patriarch Kobo Daishi went to China to study the esoteric teachings of Yogachaya, he was given paintings of the eight patriarchs. It appears that two of the paintings were so deteriorated by age that copies became necessary. One of these was the portrait of Nagarjuna. This was actually copied by Kobo Daishi himself, and the account is one of the best authenticated of those associated with early religious paintings. The picture is now in the Todaiji Temple in Kyoto, Japan. It shows Nagarjuna, seated, with a distinctly non-Chinese cast of features, his complexion somewhat swarthy, to suggest that he is a Hindu. He wears a robe of red and yellow stripes, and holds in one hand the thunderbolt.



NAGARJUNA

This portrait is attributed, with substantial evidence, to Kobo Daishi.

The painting is over a thousand years old, and shows considerable fading and repair, but it is probably the best available likeness of Nagarjuna, and may trace back to contemporary or nearly contemporary records. The tremendous power of the patriarch is well depicted, and it also reveals the extraordinary skill of Kobo

Daishi as a painter of religious themes. Although the esoteric sect originally had its stronghold in China, it gradually lost most of the vitality that distinguished it in early times. In recent years, Buddhists have sought to restore their heritage, and have rebuilt esoteric Buddhism upon the foundations of the Japanese records.

All this leads to a very reasonable question: What did Nagarjuna teach that was to become so important in the descent of Eastern metaphysics, and how did this teaching compare with that of Western mystical revivals? Actually, the teachings of the two are so similar that it is now believed that some inter-dependency did exist, and that the Bodhisattva Doctrine, as advanced by Nagarjuna, may have been inspired by early contact with Christianity. On the other hand, it has also been suspected that Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, and Hermeticism are Europeanized adaptations of esoteric Buddhism, brought along the caravan routes from high Asia.

Broadly speaking, both Eastern and Western mystics recognize three levels of knowledge and three ways in which it can be attained. By *knowledge* we mean the sacred truths of religion and philosophy. The first way of attainment is by study and research. It assumes no extraordinary capacity on the part of the truth seeker, except sincerity and a reasonably well-cultivated intellect. By this means, strength of character can be induced through acquaintance with the noblest concepts and beliefs of mankind, and through the advancement of arts and sciences, the increase of skills, and the maturing of judgment.

The second way by which enlightenment can be advanced is called *spiritual intuition*. This is the stimulation of the inner resources of the individual by which he comes to sense or feel within himself the reality of his own spiritual life. It does not follow that any metaphysical faculties have to be developed; rather, enlightenment is based upon a sensing of realities and values, and a conviction that inner guidance is valid and that inner certainty is reasonable and even factual.

The third way is described as "standing face to face with reality." It is the refinement and amplification of the inner life to the degree that spirituality is a complete experience, sustained and

supported by the testimonies of all faculties of the mind and the regeneration of the sensory perceptions. This may be considered an illumination or mystical experience.

These three levels can be paralleled with the three degrees of knowledge accepted by the Cabalists. Using the Temple of Solomon as the symbol of the House of Wisdom, they recognized it as divisible into three parts: the courtyard, the holy place, and the most holy of holies. These in turn were likened to the three degrees of spiritual instruction: the Torah, or the law of Moses, was for those who studied and sought to inform themselves concerning the will of God. The Mishnah, which was called the soul of the law, was for those who possessed intuitive power and were able to sense the mystery beneath the literal exposition as set forth in the Torah. The third part was the Cabala, the truly esoteric doctrine, containing the secret instructions by which the person could attain direct participation in the essence of God.

The same thought is suggested in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, where he writes: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known." In this the great apostle seems to describe the steps of human enlightenment, using almost the same wording for illumination—"seeing face to face"—as we find in Mahayana Buddhism.

A number of scholars have suggested the strong parallel between mystical Christianity and the Eastern system. These same authorities have also suggested that it was the rise of early Christian mysticism that ultimately sustained and justified Gnosticism and Neoplatonism. Of course, the pre-Christian Essenes, who have always been linked with Christianity, and who faded out of history as the Christian ministry expanded, are known to have held mystical beliefs and to have practiced esoteric rites, although no details have survived.

In both East and West, the new interpretation was indeed the "glad tidings." It opened the way for a religion of joy, of hope, and at the same time broadened the foundation of faith, making

it acceptable for those of every class or race who were victims of anxieties, sorrows, or bereavements, or for any reason felt the need for spiritual consolation.

There can be no doubt that in both Asia and Europe, the deeper interpretation of the religious mystery brought with it some kind of science of salvation. In India this was derived from the deeper scientific principles expounded by Hinduism. In the West, it was established in the Mystery Schools or secret systems of initiatory rites practiced in Egypt, Greece, and to a limited extent, in the Roman Empire. Believers were reminded that there was much more to their faith than they had come to understand generally. Therefore, they might restore their confidence in the religion they followed, and seek to inform themselves as to its esoteric instruction—all such instruction leading, of course, to the personal experience of illumination.

For a time, these concepts remained vital in Europe, but the Western mind had greater interest in the advancement of material culture. We have records that Gnosticism did not die completely until well into the Dark Ages, and there were several revivals and attempted restorations. Neoplatonism also lingered on to inspire many Christian mystics. The Hermetic arts had a brilliant revival, which extended as late as the 16th and 17th centuries, and Cabalism fell into approximately the same framework of dating. Manichaeism also lived on to vitalize a number of heresies, and to become a prominent force in man's struggle for political liberty, social equality, and religious tolerance. A number of modern secret societies carry forward fragments of Manichaeism. By degrees, however, mysticism outside of the Church was regarded with consistent disapproval by the clergy. With the Protestant Reformation, it almost totally vanished from Protestant Christianity, not to be revived until the 19th century, by which time it was confronted by a strong scientific opposition.

In Asia, mysticism was more fortunate, and although the mystical sects of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism passed through minor periods of persecution, they were never actually driven underground or forced to conceal themselves under such elaborate symbolism as we find in Cabalism and alchemy.

The burden of the esoteric tradition is to assist the devout person to a new relationship with the universe in which he lives. East and West agree that man is not primarily a physical being; nor could he ever attain ultimate good by the perfection of his material institutions. In this point of view, Eastern asceticism is no more excessive than that practiced in the West. Early Christianity went through a great cycle of renunciation, and it is still held in many conservative sects that the renunciation of worldly ambition, worldly appetites, and worldly goods, is indispensable to spiritual salvation.

In this respect, Western doctrines fell upon complications similar to those that faced primitive Buddhism. It was almost impossible to make a religion of total renunciation attractive to the average believer. The monastic orders in Europe finally became more or less of a burden upon the spirit. Monks who lived only to celebrate the Mass and illumine missals and antiphonals, seemed to be of slight value to themselves or anyone else. Most of all, it did not appear that this unworldliness was actually enlarging their spiritual estates.

By degrees, this isolation was broken down, and the clergy was required to take some active part in the preservation and advancement of the social system moving about them. We can observe the trend consistently, and today most successful Christian movements advise their followers to put the simple ideals of Christ to work in their daily lives and to live together in kindness, fraternity, and peace, as a proof that they are truly Christians.

Gnosticism certainly dramatized the universe, bestowing upon the abstractions of space glorious and radiant appearances, and filling the interval between heaven and earth with a hierarchy of evolving lives and intelligences, all of which were in some way involved in the growth of both the world and man. The Gnostics drew inspiration from the religious artistry of Egypt and the rich ritualistic poetry and cosmological lore of Greece. They also found inspiration in fragmentary sections of the Testaments, both Old and New, especially those parts which were brightened and made luminous by Apocalyptic visions.

Gnosticism simply refused to accept a cosmos with God above, man below, and nothing between except a few angelic or arch-

angelic messengers. It assumed, with Platonism, that behind the veil which is no more nor less than the boundary of our own sensory perceptions, is a luminous universe, magnificent in all its parts, surpassing in wonder any apparition that could have appeared to Ezekiel or Isaiah.

According to Gnosticism, the emanations of the eternal principles cast their shadowy forms downward into the abyss of matter. The process of the emanations uniting with their reflections by a kind of Hermetic marriage, becomes the interaction of spirit and matter in the region of phenomena. Every blade of grass, every tree, is the visible extremity of a vast invisible process. The choirs of hierarchies are as inconceivable as the symbolism of Dante and Milton might suggest. These wonders are not to be named except by an adventure of the spirit beholding the substance of truth. For the rest, there can only be acceptances put into words or shapes that suggest but faintly the sublimity of their originals.

This splendid vision gradually faded from the hearts and minds of most Western people. Even for the devout, the spectacle was unbelievable. It became convenient to merely expect a kind of spiritual morality, to strive ever to live well in the hope of earning a better destiny. Where this destiny would occur, even if earned, was uncertain. The visible became the fact, and the invisible faded away as far as man's consciousness was concerned. The unseen world ceased to be regarded as substantial, although there never was, and is not even today, any actual proof that visible forms cease where our power of vision ends.

Many will feel that the issue is not especially vital, and that there need be little time devoted to an effort to locate heaven or substantiate the findings of Aquinas as to how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. The real truth is that when we negated the invisible and ceased to sense at least the presence of superphysical machinery behind physical creation, we deprived ourselves of all evidence or proof that could sustain our moral and ethical codes. Morality could be only a personal decision to live a little better than our neighbor, and ethics a code of honesty that satisfied our own conscience.

In all probability, Northern Buddhism would have failed and perished in limbo long ago, had it not maintained its dynamic con-

cepts of the unseen. It was so successful in the development of a religious artistry that it lowered all resistance of the human mind to the acceptance of the radiant likenesses of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. The vision in the Lotus Sutra has been compared many times with the Christian Apocalyptic works, both accepted and rejected, and recently it has been examined more closely in the light of the Gnostic apocalyptic books that have been found in the present century. Buddhists themselves claim that they can understand from their own sacred texts the real meaning in the Book of Revelation.

The Gnostics attempted sincerely to build a scientific concept of the universe that could support religion, convinced that if materialists explained only natural phenomena, they would arrive at conclusions distinctly antagonistic to faith. How could the unbeliever explain creation in a manner satisfactory to the devout? We can say, of course, that if the explanation is correct, it makes no difference who discovers the facts; they remain unchangeable.

To this both the Gnostic and the Buddhist would reply: this is all well and good, but how do we know who has the facts? Every discovery made by science can be explained in more than one way. What we call knowledge is explanation; it is a conclusion arrived at by the mind as the reasonable explanation of a phenomenon. No one denies that many of these conclusions are probably right; but there is no way of knowing which ones can be wrong. If even ten percent of our conclusions are in error, we might have to completely reconstruct our concept of the universe. We cannot exist with a knowledge if we become aware of a fact that cannot be reconciled with this knowledge. Something has to change—either the fact must be disproved, or the knowledge must be reconstructed.

Gnosticism was convinced that there could finally be only one form of knowledge, and that was universal. The idea that separate arts and sciences should perfect their own systems, with no consideration for each other, and no reconciliation of differences, could not be tolerated. The easiest way to reconcile is by finding common ground in the beginning. If the universe is one firm structure of laws and procedures, then it is not necessary to separate one branch of learning from another, or to isolate scholars from each other. Specialization is possible, but it should be based on knowl-



PRAJNAPARAMITA

The Bodhisattva Prajnaparamita, seated between two protecting deities. The Bodhisattva carries the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, and is a personification of the wisdom concerning the motion of the wheel of the law.

edge of basic generalities. The more we can build a strong pattern of a magnificent, purposeful existence in time and space, the more we can depend upon education to advance the social state of man. But if we divide knowledge from ethics, facts from morality, and wisdom from skill, we dismember that vast being, that great universal totality, of which the poet has written: "Its body nature is, and God the soul."

This phase of East-West thinking arose as the result of desperate need, but the situation remains unbalanced even in our century. We are completely suspicious of Oriental idealism, and the East is instinctively afraid of Occidental materialism. Must these unreconciled points of view forever serve as a barrier between intellectual and spiritual communion of the two hemispheres?

The story of Western Gnosticism is a consistently tragic account of an advanced philosophical system striving for survival in a world of disillusioned and disheartened human beings. The principal account of the Gnostics is derived from Clement of Alexandria, a Christian writer of the Ante-Nicene period who had little or no sympathy for heathen heresies. On the assumption that the Gnostics were attempting to impose an Eastern philosophic structure

upon Christianity, the pious felt it a moral duty to belittle and defame both the Gnostic teachers and the system of learning they sought to disseminate. Actually, what the Gnostics were attempting to do was to bridge Eastern and Western learning, but the time was not favorable, and remained inauspicious until the present century.

Because it was subject to persecution from the beginning, very few records bearing upon the lives of prominent leaders or the deeper aspects of their teachings have survived. The recent discovery of the Gnostic Library at Chenoboskion in Central Egypt is the most important light to be cast upon the subject in fifteen centuries. Even now, however, we have only certain literary remains which are useful inasmuch as they indicate the mystical trend of the better informed Gnostic teachers. It is known that Gnosticism affirmed the Oriental belief in reincarnation, and probably found some support among followers of the old Platonic and Pythagorean systems. Unfortunately, however, Gnosticism was bitterly assailed by Neo-platonism, probably because of its emphasis upon transcendentalism and esoteric practices.

In some way, the Gnostics must have contacted some of the Tantric beliefs which were rising in Northern Asia. This is especially evident in the Gnostic teaching of shakti, or female consorts of the various divinities and divine powers. In both East and West, the shakti were not intended to represent actual goddesses, but rather, the personification of the feminine quality, or polarity, of existence. The Chinese and the Gnostics were in agreement that the divine energies operating in space moved upon various conditions or levels of substance, causing matter or the negative pole of life to be aroused and unite itself with the positive, creating principle. In Chinese metaphysics, man was the child of heaven and earth, spirit and matter, God and nature. These polarizations are represented in Tibetan art by the deities embracing their feminine counterparts. A hint of this is also to be found in what has survived of the original Gnostic theogony.

In Northern Asia, a deity appeared which has been among the most mysterious of Eastern esoteric symbols. This deity is called Prajnaparamita, and is depicted as feminine. She is a bodhisattva, the embodiment of universal wisdom, and in a sense, the personification of the great religious book *The Prajnaparamita Sutra*. She



MORTUARY TABLET OF ABBOT DE LA MARE

Engraved brass plaque at St. Albans Abbey. This picture, reproduced by Ward in *The Sign Language of the Mysteries*, shows the same hand posture as the accompanying figure of the Chinese Kuan Yin. The St. Andrew's cross formed by the hand posture, could here represent the equinox as a symbol of the hope of resurrection.

KUAN YIN

Woodblock from a collection of eighty-four appearances of the Bodhisattva Kuan Yin. The hands are crossed in the position of the St. Andrew's cross and, according to Ward, this could be a secret reference to the solar mystery at the time of the Vernal Equinox.



is the patroness of the book, and is the living substance which it contains. She is a strangely detached and wonderful being, and, like the Greek Athena, the Latin Minerva, the Egyptian Isis, and the Gnostic Sophia, she was identified with the whole structure of the system of initiation into those sacred institutions now called the Mysteries.

Several writers on Orientalism have pointed out that Sophia, as the Virgin of the World, was so similar to the Prajnaparamita concept, that it must be assumed that there was some common ground around which developed this world idea that eternal wisdom is feminine. It became an essential part of many religions, and we will find it again in the Cabala, as the Mother of the Alphabet, with its magical letters.

Although the Tantric cult of India gradually faded out of its own land and, moving eastward, established its strongholds in the deserts of Central Asia and China, it would not be correct to say that the system was ever under any desperate form of general

persecution. At no time was the Yogachaya, or esoteric school of Buddhism, in actual danger of extermination. Unlike Gnosticism, which vanished away before the eighth century A.D., and was virtually extinct three or four centuries earlier, esoteric Buddhism still survives. Its ancient Gnostic rites are performed to this day, and its membership in Japan numbers nearly ten million. It also exists in China, Korea, Nepal, and Tibet, but in several of these countries, its present condition is difficult to estimate. The simple fact of importance is that esoteric Buddhism can still be studied as a living religion, whereas its equivalent in the Mediterranean region, can be approached only historically, and most of the historical records have been mutilated or destroyed.

Another reason for antagonism against Gnosticism—and to a degree esoteric Buddhism suffered the same complaint—was that the Tantric School emphasized various aspects of ceremonial magic. This might cause us to ask the origin of the demonology and witchcraft that arose in Europe during the Dark Ages. The Yogachaya School made use of many strange and secret rituals. The founders of this sect took the old hand postures of India, and the early hand postures found on the first images of Buddha and his arhats, and evolved from this comparatively simple beginning a complete symbolic language of mudras. So complex is this science of the hands and the various positions in which the fingers can be placed, that practically the entire doctrine of Eastern philosophy could be transmitted by these hand positions without a spoken word.

J. S. M. Ward, in his most interesting book *The Sign Language of the Mysteries*, advances the theory that European Christian art also had a secret language of mudras, and that famous painters almost invariably made use of appropriate hand positions and arrangements of fingers when depicting the saints of Christendom, the martyrs, and their disciples. If Ward is correct, the early Christian religious painters were initiates of some secret school which communicated these hand positions.

Another interesting phase of the subject is mantrams, or sound patterns. Certain types of mantrams are known everywhere in the religious world, and there is much to indicate that the Gnostics made use of what they called invocations or incantations in the drawing up of spirits, casting out of demons, purifying the minds of

worshippers, and invoking the Divine Presence in the performance of a Mass. Research will probably show parallels, which I have already noted to some degree, in which the transcendental magicians of Egypt and the magical Cabalists of early Europe followed almost completely the Oriental procedures.

Another example is the magic circle. This occurs in the texts of many books of spirits used in Cabalistic magic and by the necromancers of Central Europe. There is definitely a parallel between the magic circle associated with demonology and witchcraft, and the mandala, which in a sense is the magic circle of Hinduism and Buddhism. According to a recent writer on Buddhist Tantra, the mandala had many meanings—symbolical, mathematical, and cosmological—but it was also a magic circle by which certain spiritual beings or intelligences could be commanded, or caused to arise in the consciousness of the adept.

The parallels between Eastern and Western Gnosticism could be considerably enlarged. In both groups, charms, mysterious spell letters, numerical designs, and protective amulets, were commonly used. Just as various deities, with their names and the shrines in which they were venerated, were block printed in China, Korea, and Japan, and used as protections against evil, so the Gnostics had small books of magical figures, and carved protective symbols and designs into semi-precious stones. These provide a rare group of research material, described by King in his text on Gnostic gems.

As Gnosticism contributed greatly to the rise of metaphysical movements within the structure of Christianity, although the sect of the Gnostics was short-lived as an independent organization, so Oriental Gnosticism vitalized not only many schools of Buddhist thought, but mingled its influence with other religions with which it came in contact. We may therefore distinguish, at least dimly, a pattern of world Gnosticism, which has added to most religions a metaphysical factor that inspired the leaders to seek for hidden meaning in their sacred writings, and not to accept without question literal stories or texts. In the next article, we will see how this trend contributed to the rise of Cabalism, the science of transcendental magic.



In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *Do you have any practical recommendations for persons who are suffering from psychic persecution?*

ANSWER: There has been a marked increase in the number of persons who appeal to us for assistance because they have developed unpleasant psycho-physiological symptoms. These include mysterious aches and pains arising from non-physical causes, curious nervous reflexes, a sense of panic that is without any justification in known circumstances, and the more familiar types of spiritistic phenomena, including voices and the feeling that other entities or beings are interfering with the proper functioning of the mind, emotions, or body. It is hardly possible to classify all the different types of phenomena, but they include most of the experiences associated with demonology, witchcraft, and spirit possession. The sufferer feels that he is the victim of forces or presences which he cannot control and which seem to be unjustly damaging his health and peace of mind.

My feelings on this subject in general are fairly well known to most persons who have attended my lectures or read my publications. A lifetime of experience has convinced me that most of these mysterious happenings are essentially psychological. They are part of the complicated phenomena associated with the cultivation and perpetuation of negative attitudes and emotions, or wrong physical habits.

The first problem, then, is for the sufferer to take a long hard look at his own life and the temperamental peculiarities that he

has permitted to develop and has made no adequate effort to correct. Before looking for a ghost, a sprite, or a poltergeist, he should quietly ask himself some important questions. "Have I had an unhappy marriage, or a disastrous romance? Have my children found my company less than congenial, and gone their own way? Have I been self-centered, selfish, tyrannical or, on the other hand, meek, self-pitying, immature, and unable to carry with dignity a reasonable amount of responsibility? Have I been dabbling with mysterious metaphysical doctrines and beliefs by which I have confused my mind? Have I tried to practice unrealistic systems of esoteric self-improvement? Have I practiced breathing exercises, strange yogic meditations; or have I fooled with the ouija board or listened to the wonderful revelations of mediums, clairvoyants, and other soothsayers?"

"Going way back in my life, was I a difficult, headstrong child? Did I rebel against reasonable discipline? Did I resent all good that happened to other people? Was I poorly adjusted with brothers and sisters, and why? Did I develop any kind of a Napoleonic or Messianic complex? Did I feel I was uniquely destined for some exceptional career; and did I depend upon some strange notion of this kind to make my life important, because I simply could not bear to be like ordinary people? Were other people really always to blame for my difficulties? Did I demand too much and give too little? Did I fail to develop proper and constructive talents or skills because I resented subjecting myself to discipline? Has it always been hard for me to accept duties and responsibilities? When trouble came, did I always run to some internal pattern of attitudes for security—as for example, did I try to explain all my troubles by some such meaningless platitude as, 'I have always been misunderstood'?"

After this little soul-searching adventure, the average person may begin to realize why his psychic integration is disturbed. He can begin to understand how he has set up causations within his own mental and emotional structure which have brought sickness and disorder to the sensitive and vital areas of his own consciousness. He may then also appreciate that what he regards as a psychic situation due to other people, is only a derangement of his own nervous system. His thoughts and emotions have completely escaped

from his control. He has hypnotized himself with pressureful attitudes, and has forced upon his own mind explanations that please himself and completely exonerate him from all responsibility for his own condition.

There is no symptom commonly associated with psychic phenomena that cannot arise within the individual who has permitted his own inner life to become a mass of complexes, phobias, and neurotic tensions; and many mental and emotional symptoms become very physical. We all know that it is possible to have a pseudo-paralysis, in which there is actually no real paralysis present. We can ruin digestion, cripple the body, subject ourselves to palsies, ringings in the ears, unusual visual phenomena, loss of control of the speech mechanism, and a series of remarkable symptoms involving heat and cold and the sense of moving air against the skin. All these can mean that we need a great deal of courage and will power to work through difficulties that will not change unless we change them.

If a condition is actually the result of a chronic attitude, there is little or nothing that medical science can do. It can bring a measure of comfort only by the use of sedational or hypnotic drugs. As time passes, however, the continued use of these drugs will cause a new series of phenomena, and the patient will suffer worse than before.

Psychologists or psychiatrists cannot force health upon a patient, and no therapist of any kind can cure a bad disposition in another individual. All they can do in the form of therapy, is to try to convince the sufferer of the real cause of his trouble, and inspire him to make the necessary changes for himself. It does follow, on some occasions, that when faced with the facts, the unhappy victim of bad thinking accepts the challenge and mends his ways. Usually, however, he will reject the diagnosis, and seek someone who "understands" him better—that is, who sympathizes with his weaknesses and therefore accomplishes no real help.

If we want a major change to take place in our own life, we will have to set to work by a conscious effort, and make the necessary improvements in our own thinking, feeling, and daily physical

activity. This program will take determination, perseverance, patience, dedication, and most of all, complete honesty. But the truth always remains that we must heal ourselves of such problems as actually originate within ourselves, even though we try to blame them upon other people.

First of all, in the field of therapy, an individual who is all wound up in destructive attitudes, must develop positive and constructive interests in life. He must find things to do that keep his mind occupied in a cheerful, useful way. If other avenues are not open, there is always the sincere effort to advance education or increase specialized knowledge in subjects that interest him. If he has talent in music, art, writing, or any craft or avocation, he should turn to this with strong resolution to build his life pattern around the creation of a vital and satisfying pursuit in this area.

If no such activities appear possible, then he must squarely face the fact that he has only two choices: re-educate his thinking, or continue to be the victim of those anxieties and doubts that are already destroying his peace of mind and may well be taking on the appearance of psychic molestations. Positive interests in religion and philosophy will help, but the religion must be a simple, friendly faith, completely free from metaphysical extravagances, and keyed to devotion and unselfish service to others in the spirit of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Any philosophy he studies must likewise be realistic and free from weird, irrational beliefs that would further distort or over-stimulate the imaginative faculties.

In many cases, there is a heavy block of helplessness, in which the victims of many years of wrong thinking cannot imagine that they could find anything pleasant or helpful, and cannot envision themselves taking on any constructive pursuits. To the person who can do nothing and be nothing, we would bring to mind the case of Helen Keller. Even with the help of her teacher, Miss Keller, realizing that she was both deaf and blind, could easily have dissolved in uselessness and helplessness. Yet so completely handicapped, she graduated from college, developed strong religious convictions as a Swedenborgian, and made a magnificent career for herself, which is unique in the records of mankind. This career has

occupied every moment of her life, and she is largely responsible for programs and projects to bring education, faith, self-esteem and usefulness to millions of handicapped persons. If she could do this, nearly anyone can do something. It requires determination and dedication, but without these, a person cannot really expect to recover from any serious difficulties.

Those troubled with psychic phenomena, whether genuine or psychological, often ask if there is some way to turn off this psychic super-sensitivity, clair-sentience, clairvoyance, or clair-audience. There are ways that will help a great deal, but again, they will require a strict self-discipline for their success. There can never be any remedy except discipline for problems that arise from the lack of discipline.

One useful procedure is to objectify personal living by becoming concerned with the things of this world, especially through some contact with people, nature, and the ordinary problems of daily living. Strengthen social contacts, cultivate friendships whenever possible, and do not run away from the hurts and bruises of ordinary experience by living in seclusion.

Most neurotics live alone because they cannot get along with others. They do not wish their own weaknesses to be revealed to themselves or anyone else. Finding that they cannot dominate their friends and relatives or be little tyrants in their own small worlds, they retire utterly from competition, to nurse their wounds in private. Catering to this instinct only intensifies the troubles. The wiser way is to join in the natural, simple activities of well-intentioned people, being satisfied to be one of a group without expecting special considerations and attentions. If the individual learns to mingle in a pleasant way, it is quite possible that he will meet someone who can open the door into a new life for him.

Since all psychic disturbances become worse if we nurse them in solitary misery, it is essential to focus attention on something that is impersonal, but at the same time offers a challenge of some kind. If we can afford to get a camera, photography can become a wonderful hobby; and one way to be popular is to photograph the children of our friends. Or we can study natural history or botany, and take walks in parks and along countrysides to study herbs and plants.

If such possibilities are not practical for us, we can get books from the library or elsewhere and do a research project in art, archeology, world culture, or some such particular theme as animal life, birds, flowers, insects.

If we make a thorough study of some pattern of natural existence, we will gain increasing respect for the wonderful universe in which we live. Knowledge, enthusiasm, insight, understanding—these are always bridges with a larger world; they help us to get out of ourselves. Neither psychic problems nor annoying negative entities can endure a positive, healthy, happy outlook. As we learn more, we will also be more interesting and attractive to other people.

One way to reduce psychic sensitivity is to make a major change in diet, emphasizing heavier foods, especially protein and carbohydrates. For the average person who is not a vegetarian, meat may prove helpful; otherwise bread, potatoes, eggs, cheese, and other dairy products in generous quantities, will have a tendency to draw energy to the stomach and relieve nervous tension. Fasting or dieting makes a person more psychically sensitive, so it is important to eat regularly. It is also a good idea to have some food before retiring. Raw fruits and vegetables, citrus fruit, or any with a strong acid content or heavy seasoning should be avoided, as these may cause irritation to the nervous system. Warm, but not hot, baths will be useful. It may be helpful to have a radio tuned to good music playing softly if the individual is at home alone a good deal. It is usually wise not to go to bed until there is real tiredness, and to get up immediately upon awaking in the morning. Every effort should be made each morning to plan an interesting and diversified day.

Everyone should consider carefully any destructive attitudes or memories he may be nursing, especially out of the remote past. Nearly all neurotics are hypercritical. They find fault with everything and anything, and being displeased with something becomes a chronic situation with them. As it is evident that the world is not going to change to please us, the only solution is to modify our own attitudes. Look for good, and we will find it. It is up to us not to tune in to depressing television or radio programs, be-

come addicted to the negative side of the press, go to morbid motion pictures, read destructive and neurotic books, or in any way support our grievances against the world.

We must also always guard against self-pity or the subtle feeling that we are always right and others are always wrong. We have to keep working on all the negative and unhappy attitudes we have been perpetuating through the years, until we can find the justice in the things that have happened. Our goal should be to transmute unhappy memories into experiences for which we can actually be grateful because they have helped us to grow. If we will take hold of ourselves, strongly and firmly, correcting all the negative habits that we have allowed to develop in our religion, philosophy, and in our business and social relationships, we will soon find a marked improvement in our entire psychic integration.

All this may seem bewildering or discouraging to the person who has been plagued with psychic persecution. He may say that if he could have done any of these things, he would have solved his problems already. But I do not believe he could honestly say that he has done them and is still miserable. In simple truth, it is no more difficult to be kind than to be critical. Too many people, however, are simply out of the habit of using their minds and emotions constructively. The average person today has failed to develop resources of character suitable to sustain him in the home and in business, to say nothing of an emergency. If there is no emergency at the moment, the wise thing to do is to prepare for the possibility of needing inner strength. If the emergency has already come, the thoughtful individual must acknowledge honestly that the most important thing in his life is to attain victory over the weakness in himself. We are here to learn and to grow, and emergencies provide the opportunities.

No matter what our problems appear to be, we can take it for granted that we are the victims of our own weaknesses. If we live selfishly, we must expect final unhappiness. If we break the gentle rules of human relationships, becoming unkind, fault-finding, and self-pitying, the reward will be misery or sickness. We cannot break the rules without bringing misfortune upon ourselves.

Mental and emotional transgressions are very likely to conceal themselves behind psychological or psychical symptoms, but wheth-

er it is a stomach ache caused by something we ate, or a heartache caused by someone we hate, or what appears to be obsession by a malignant spirit, we should always remember that the gracious and beautiful life, lived at peace with all creatures, is the only remedy for fear, suspicion, and melancholia. We cannot be perfect, but we can all try a little harder, and with a reasonable amount of effort, we can free ourselves of any undesirable influence by setting up desirable qualities in our own consciousness.



KEYS TO BIBLE INTERPRETATION

OLD TESTAMENT WISDOM

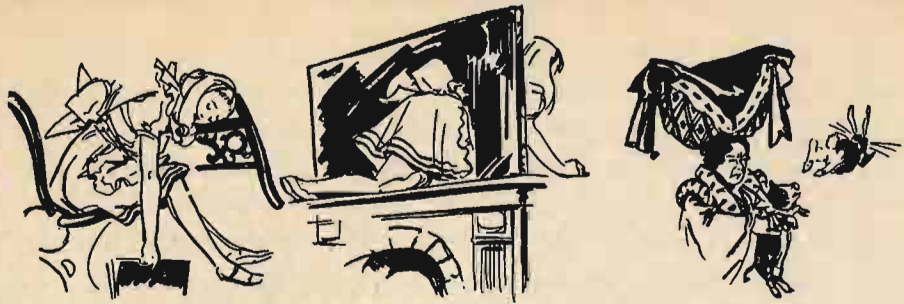
by Manly P. Hall

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Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

PROPHECIES OF DOOM

There have always been persons who gained some strange, morbid satisfaction from spreading malicious or destructive rumors. This occurs not only in private living, but has also played a considerable part in the affairs of nations and at times of the whole world. Periodically, there are outbreaks of direful prophecies announcing some impending evil of such great magnitude as to cause widespread apprehension and even panic. As this has been going on for thousands of years, it is possible to trace a fairly obvious pattern and to recognize the most common causes of the hysteria of masses.

Terrible times are usually foreseen when the public mind begins to experience the stirrings of a bad conscience. There has always been the feeling that if man forsakes righteousness and cultivates selfishness, luxury, dissipation, and ruthless ambition, he will eventually bring some evil upon himself. He has violated his own code of proprieties, and his mind conjures up the specter of judgment and punishment.

The instrumentations by which vague forebodings are crystallized into concrete portents of evil are also fairly consistent. Frequently, the predictions originate in some person who has a reputation for extrasensory perception and has made a series of lesser prophecies that have, at least occasionally, proved to be true. Hav-

ing built a reputation for ability to see the shape of things to come, this prophet becomes more and more daring in his pronouncements. Ultimately, he will fall under the delusion of some basic intemperance of his own nature. He will predict the fall of causes which he naturally dislikes, and he will anticipate, to a point of violence, negative trends that are mildly observable in society. He seems to take on any prevailing discontent, and magnifies immediate insecurities into future disasters.

An extraordinary phenomenon, which has been subject to study since men first sought to examine their own thinking, is the remarkable speed with which bad news travels. Pleasant, constructive, idealistic announcements receive slight attention, but that which defames character or spreads fear is always carried rapidly on the surface of public opinion, especially in periods of social stress.

Needless to say, outbreaks of fearful prophecies are intimately associated with social unrest. They accompany war, economic disasters, epidemical disease, and extreme patterns of morbid or cynical imagination. They nearly always come from the building up of problems for which the average citizen sees no solution. As problems are frequently the result of irrational discontents, they may lead to various degrees of self-hallucination.

Of course, the physical foundation for prophecies of universal disaster is the historic record of earthquakes, wars, fires, pestilences, and social and political upheaval. There have always been unhappy occurrences, but in historic times, there has never been a world cataclysm caused by nature, the elements, or any circumstances outside of man's own destructive tendencies. The one exception, if we wish to consider it so, is the semi-mythological destruction of the Atlantean Empire. This may have occurred—in fact, probably did occur—but it was actually the disappearance of a large island, somewhat smaller than Australia. While the repercussions are recorded in the histories of many nations, and there were gradual resultant modifications to many continental areas, this cannot be regarded as involving the whole earth, or destroying even the greater part of mankind.

The two great destroyers that we have known up to now have been plagues and wars. Both of these are, to a measure, the result of human ignorance—plagues arising from man's ignorance

of sanitation, and wars being man's ignorance of this own humanity. These disasters have worked great hardships upon the whole human family, but it has survived, for there is much to support the basic conviction that man was created to survive, and not to perish.

In Western history, the most fearful and terrible of all prophecies was indirectly traced to the Bible, or at least an interpretation thereof. It was assumed by early Christian writers and evangelists that a thousand years after the resurrection of Christ, he would return to judge the quick and the dead. This was to be the Last Judgment, and the world would end, dissolved in fire and chaos. The virtuous would be saved, and the evil-doers would suffer the torments of hell forever. This widespread belief, it is only fair to note, was not sponsored by the Church; but in the Dark Ages, when ignorance was almost universal and misery the common experience of most mortal beings, the doctrine of the millennium was distinctly according to the mind of the devout.

Actually, the fear that the world would end was not especially demoralizing until the time grew alarmingly near. By the year 999 A.D., anxiety reached panic proportions and, as may be expected in delusions of this kind, the results were in many cases tragically ludicrous. Men did not repair their houses, because they would be consumed in the cosmic conflagration; but they did sell what they could to some customer who did not believe in the imminence of the final judgment. What the seller intended to do with the cash is uncertain—he evidently hoped that he could find some way to take it with him.

The more devout were convinced that the Last Judgment would take place in Jerusalem. As a result, vast numbers of pilgrims attempted to reach the holy city as an effort to prove their sincerity and honesty. It was inevitable that the poor and the sick suffered terribly in these useless journeys; many died along the way. Few knew the roads, there were no proper methods of transportation, and even in the presence of so dramatic a prediction, highwaymen abounded, brigands of all kinds attacked the pilgrims, who also suffered from the depredations of non-Christian peoples.

In this case, it is impossible to place the actual blame for the vast disaster caused by the millennial predictions. It is safe to say,

however, that they were carried far and wide by fanatics, persons of unstable mind and morbid emotions, who have always been the self-appointed carriers of bad tidings. After the passing of the year 1,000, the survivors felt a little foolish, but still took consolation in the possibility that in some way the date had been miscalculated. There was then an outburst of new interpretations, each advanced with the same finality that had previously obsessed the faithful.

In the 14th century, Europe was visited by a plague that destroyed a considerable percentage of the population and led to a number of curious examples of self-delusion. A serious epidemic is itself bad enough, but when it is in some way considered a peculiar act of Providence, something sent by God to punish his children, or announced by comets and eclipses and other celestial phenomena, the misfortune gains a terrible spiritual or scientific authority. The wiser minds of the time pointed out that solemn predictions of catastrophe contributed greatly to the mortality, and that probably millions died simply because they believed they were doomed to perish. Had their attitudes been different, and had hope and not fear dominated them, they might have had the strength and courage to recover, and the good sense to take normal precautions.

In 1630, the city of Milan in Italy suffered a serious outburst of the plague, which returned periodically for several centuries. This particular epidemic was intensified by the fact that its occurrence had been accurately predicted two years before because of the appearance of a comet. The astrologers had studied the comet carefully, and were more or less certain that the city was doomed. With this highly conditioned background, the neurotics of the community developed an attitude of absolute hopelessness. All they could do was simply to wait for death to take them away.

Among the neurotics was the usual tribe of the mentally disturbed. One individual, for reasons unknown and by maladies undiagnosed, believed he saw the devil riding through the city in a flying chariot drawn by six white horses. The devil tried to hire him to poison the inhabitants of Milan. Being a good, God-fearing man, who was standing on the steps of the cathedral when accosted, he stoutly refused to have any part in the transaction.

Incidentally, of course, no one saw the devil or his six white horses except the one man who spread the rumor.

The unbelievable resulted. Within a few days, there were thousands of reports of other conscientious citizens who had not only seen the Prince of Darkness, but had also been tempted by him, with all kinds of bribery, to destroy their neighbors. The height of the incredible was then accomplished. Knowing full well that they would be tortured to death, burned at the stake, or be subjected to a horrible Inquisitional imprisonment, many normally respectable citizens actually maintained that they had signed pacts with the Evil One, and were personally responsible for thousands of deaths. This may be regarded as the ultimate in collective mania. What impelled these persons to such confessions, made voluntarily before they were arrested or tried, is difficult to imagine. Yet the world has never been without this kind of sickness.

In 1736, there was a prediction that the city of London would be destroyed on October 13. Incidentally, the whole world was to perish with London. It was the end. Here again, a series of most inconsistent actions by normally thoughtful persons are recorded. On the day prophesied, the entire city was in panic. Thousands waited in fields, meadows, and on the long country roads, with their families gathered about them and a box lunch in the wagon, for the inevitable end. Each moment of the day had new terrors. Clouds in the sky became heralds of disaster. Every flutter of birds or the lowing of kine was an omen that caused cold chills along thousands of spines. When it was obvious that the world was going to survive the fatal day, some went home to prepare themselves for the next prediction. Others waited and slept in the fields for several days to be on the safe side. No one learned anything, for within a few days, there were fresh warnings and eager believers.

In 1806, in the English city of Leeds, a hen laid eggs with the words "Christ is Coming" written in good English on the shells. Future research proved conclusively that the owner of the hen had written the words on the eggs. Before this fact came out, however, the city was left almost desolate. People moved out by the thousands, and nearly everyone with a bad conscience was in a state of abject terror. That many died of heart failure, is known.

Others perished for lack of care, and the hopelessly ill were left to die in their beds. As a further complication, the deserted city was pillaged by thieves, and these, to conceal their crimes, burned many of the houses. This was one of those cases where a prediction caused its own disaster.

In the United States, there have been a number of world-end scares or prophecies of large-scale disasters. Some religious groups have believed that mortal sin merited the destruction of mankind, and the members of these limited communities prepared in various ways to meet their Maker. For the most part, in these cases, the world-end scares have been local phenomena. The American mind, normally, is not much given to this type of thinking. It is notable, however, that as a result of two world wars, a tragic depression, the discovery and perfecting of weapons of nuclear fission, uncontrollable inflation, and general ethical and moral decline, a new epidemic of disastrous prophecies is beginning to appear. We should therefore give some thought to the absurdities of the past, and protect our hearts and minds from such unreasonable forebodings.



In sober fact, there is no way of stating with finality whether or not a disaster will occur. That some difficulties are likely to arise, can be taken for granted; and with the future so insecure and so fraught with possible hazards, it is foolish to deny that troubles might lie ahead. Let us remember, however, that there have always been troubles. We have always met them and, up to now, we have survived.

Real troubles are bad enough, and will call upon a great deal of strength and courage. We have absolutely nothing to gain by al-

lowing ourselves to panic because of rumors. We have already learned from experience that such rumors are almost consistently false. Real disasters have usually not been predicted in advance, or the prophecies about them were made in such terms as to be generally undecipherable.

It would appear unwise and even cruel, therefore, to circulate demoralizing predictions. We all owe a certain responsibility to the public, and while we may sincerely believe that by some vision or calculation, we have foreknowledge of impending evil, it is equally important that our foreknowledge should include some practical and constructive solution to the dilemma. We should advance bad news cautiously, lest we force truth upon dire predictions simply by our own hysteria. Whatever happens, let us face the future with courage and confidence, and with faith in the benevolent destiny that guides and guards all things.

●

GREAT BOOKS on RELIGION and ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

by Manly P. Hall

"Your amazing booklet, 'Great Books' arrived. What a compilation of reference material! It will be invaluable to us and a treasure indeed."

—K.H., Mo.

This publication lists, under various classifications, the books that Mr. Hall regards as most useful to both beginners and advanced students of religion and esoteric philosophy. Four sections first appeared in Vols. 24 and 25 of our Journal, but two new sections which have never been printed before, have been added: an Index and a Bibliography.

The Index lists all authors and books mentioned in the text. This not only adds greatly to the usefulness of the publication, but can also serve as a check list for book collectors. The Bibliography lists Mr. Hall's writings (articles, books, booklets, and mimeographed lecture notes) bearing on the subjects considered. This handbook is of basic value to students, teachers, librarians, and book collectors or dealers. Attractively bound in heavy art paper, illustrated, 88 pages. Price: \$1.50 (plus sales tax in California).



A PIONEER SCIENTIST IN ASIA

THE STORY OF PHILIPP FRANZ VON SIEBOLD

Among the rare books in the library of our Society is the magnificent set of volumes recording the researches of Philipp Franz von Siebold, to whom Europe is indebted for its first comprehensive survey of the life and customs of the Japanese people. Siebold's masterpiece, which was published in Leyden in 1852, is written in the German language and is entitled: *Nippon, Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan*. The title page further states that the text includes researches in such neighboring or dependent areas as Korea, the Kuriles, and the Liukiu Islands. This set of books consists of two massive folios of engravings, including selections from almost every phase of Japanese life, maps, diagrams, specimens from several branches of natural history, and examples of racial types inhabiting the various parts of the empire. There are also smaller folio volumes of text and supplementary plates divided into six sections.

The frontispiece of Siebold's *Nippon* is reproduced here as a fair example of the extraordinary workmanship that distinguishes these impressive volumes. In the upper central part of the illustration is the female bodhisattva Marishi-ten. This deity is derived from



Frontispiece of Siebold's *Nippon*

the Hindu goddess Marici, the gracious deity of the dawn, also regarded as the Queen of Heaven and the special ruler of the constellation of the Big Dipper. Although of rather ferocious appearance, Marishi-ten is actually benevolent, and corresponds closely to the Greco-Latin Aurora, the herald of the dawn. She is represented in Tantric form, with auxiliary arms and faces, riding on a boar. It is suspected, however, that her vahan (vehicle) is probably a gradual corruption of the form of the constellation of the Great Bear.

Marishi-ten is a sort of protectress heralding the rising sun of Japan. She is surrounded by a number of objects and symbols pertaining to aspects of Japanese life. Beginning at the upper right, and proceeding in a clockwise direction, these objects include a phoenix—the bird of immortality and good fortune, a Shinto ceremonial drum, rolls of Japanese silk or brocade, ears of corn (which were early cultivated by Japanese farmers), and a curious symbol described as a bow and arrow in the form of the Chinese ideoglyph for a bow.

Next we notice a lady reading. She is not identified, but may represent Lady Murasaki, as a personification of Japanese literature. Below, and slightly to the left, a scene unfolds based upon early Japanese folklore. The hero Kan no Koso is slaying the eight-headed monster which was ravaging the countryside. He accomplished his purpose by placing in front of the cave eight huge bowls of sake. With all its heads intoxicated, the monster fell easy prey to the brave warrior.

Next are examples of Japanese books and writings, and above these are melons, which, according to Siebold, were early used in trade with neighboring countries. Above is a fan, a familiar emblem of gentility, indispensable to the refined Japanese person. Still higher is a bird-headed symbol described as standing at the gate of the emperor's temple apartment in ancient times. At the upper left, is the tengu, a composite creature combining human and bird attributes, famous for skill in swordsmanship and mysterious magical arts.

At the bottom foreground of the engraving, an emperor in full ceremonial robes is seated, and in the background behind him is

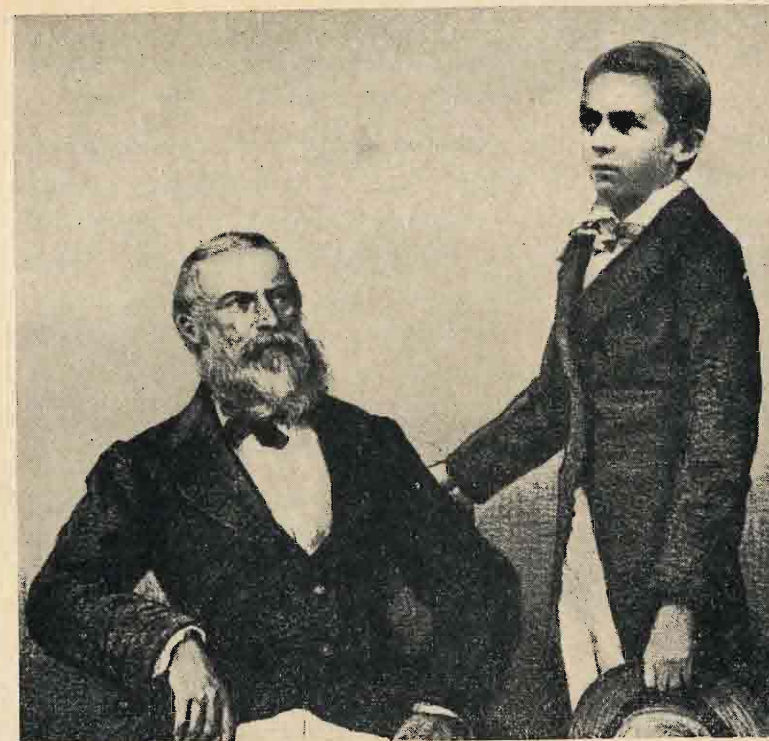
a torii gate to a Shinto mortuary shrine. Behind the Mikado, at the right side, is a seated figure in full armor, carrying a long bow, said to represent the shogun or a prime minister—actually, the military dictator whose duty it was to defend the sacred person of the reigning monarch. He is accompanied by soldiers in full armor.

To the left of the Mikado is a Japanese householder performing the Setsubun ritual associated with the new year's festivities. On this occasion, the master of the house, in formal costume, goes through the various rooms scattering cooked beans, reciting a little formula ordering evil to depart and good fortune to enter the house. Evil, in the form of an oni, or imp, is crouched in the lower corner of the engraving, being pelted with the beans. There are a number of other small symbols, which do not show clearly in the reproduction, but can be seen by consulting the original volume.

In this frontispiece, Siebold attempted to epitomize the whole field of his labors. When we realize that in his day, virtually nothing was known of Japanese manners and customs, apart from the conflicting accounts of early mariners and merchants who had no actual contact with the more serious phases of Japanese life, the accuracy in depicting even the details of native dress, types of armament, and religious paraphernalia, is most astonishing. The answer seems to be that the author made use of the extensive native literature.

The Japanese produced splendid illustrated books by woodblock printing, an art which they had derived from China. There were also beautiful hand-painted scrolls showing the natural wonders of the empire, the architectural designs of celebrated buildings, instruments used in medical practice, lists of Buddhist and Shinto divinities, astronomical observatories and machinery, legendry and folklore. An extravagant array of publications dealt with flowers, birds, minerals, shell life, and even diagrammatic reproductions of snowflakes.

By bringing these books back to Europe, and interpreting them according to the field notes he had gathered in his discussions with native intellectuals, Siebold was able to assemble a reference work that even now cannot be considered as outdated. He certainly had a methodical and encyclopedic mind, and there are re-



SIEBOLD AND HIS SON, ALEXANDER
From a photograph made in Japan

markably few errors in either his illustrations or his text. While the opening of the country has made it possible to extend areas of research, this set of volumes must be considered the foundation upon which Western knowledge of Japan was established.

Although Siebold was well known to scholars in the middle years of the 19th century, and his labors unquestionably deserve adequate recognition, very little information concerning him is available today in the English language. He is quietly ignored by the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and references to him are usually found only in the transactions of learned societies. In preparing this outline of his life, we have made use of the following sources: "Dr. Med. Philipp Franz von Siebold," by Dr. F. K. von Siebold, in the periodical *Janus: Archives Internationales pour L'Histoire de la Medecine et la Geographie Medicale*, Oct. to Dec. 1941; *Kurze*

Geschichte der Medizin in Japan, by Dr. Y. Fujikawa, Tokyo, 1911; and *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis der Geneeskunde*, Haarlem 1942.

Philipp Franz von Siebold was born in Wurzburg, Bavaria, on February 17, 1796, the son of Prof. Dr. Johann Georg Christoph von Siebold and his wife Apollonia, whose maiden name was Lotz. The Siebold family was distinguished for doctors and professors. About the year 1800, the medical faculty of the University of Wurzburg included four Siebolds, and the department was known as "Academia Sieboldiana." It is also noted that two of the earliest women doctors of Germany were members of the Siebold clan—one by marriage, and the other by adoption.

To summarize the genealogy, it is only necessary to note that Philipp Franz was the son of Johann Georg Christoph and the grandson of Karl Casper. All of these distinguished men were either doctors or professors. The descendants of Philipp Franz were also men of consequence, pursuing careers in diplomacy or science, and perpetuating his interest in Eastern Asia during the difficult transition years after the collapse of the Shogunate.

Philipp's father died comparatively young, and the boy was raised by his maternal uncle. He attended the University of Wurzburg, where he gained a reputation for Bavarian gaiety, and received his degree as medical doctor in 1820. He practiced general medicine for a short time, but was possessed by "Wanderlust," which impelled him to a more adventurous career. In his day, Germany consisted of a group of small semi-dependent principalities, and had very little to offer to a man interested in an international career. Siebold therefore cast his eyes in the direction of the Netherlands, which had already achieved prominence for its widespread mercantile interests. From Dutch harbors, ships went to the farthest corners of the earth, and the Hollanders had developed a well-integrated foreign service, not only to maintain and expand their interests, but also to contribute to the advancement of remote countries.

In order to enter the Netherlands' service, it was necessary for Siebold to secure permission from the King of Bavaria. As these rulers were consistently indulgent of the whims of their subjects,

the young doctor encountered no obstacles. Through family connections, Philipp was able to secure an appointment as military physician in the Dutch East Indies, and in due course, he sailed for Java in Batavia in the spring of 1823.

Apparently, Siebold was actually appointed the leader of a scientific mission organized by the Dutch officials in Batavia. It was therefore with considerable prestige that he arrived with his group at the island of Deshima in the Harbor of the Japanese city of Nagasaki.

To make the story of Siebold's life more meaningful, we will pause to consider conditions in Japan in the early 19th century. Actually, the Tokugawa Shogunate had almost completely closed the country to foreign contact. Unfortunate experiences with the Portuguese in matters political and religious, had prejudiced the Japanese strongly against all relations with the West. At the same time, the leading Japanese intellectuals were most desirous to maintain at least token contact with the European powers. Consequently, they permitted Dutch merchants to preserve a precarious foothold on the small island of Deshima in the port of Nagasaki.

The island was roughly the shape of an open fan, and here a miniature Dutch city was built, reminiscent of the tiny villages in the Netherlands. Deshima was connected with the Mainland by a short bridge, which was constantly guarded. Perhaps the surveillance was more apparent than real, but certainly it was enforced to the degree that only privileged persons were permitted to have close contact with the mysterious foreigners who wandered about in baggy pantaloons, smoking long-stemmed clay pipes.

From Deshima, a thin stream of knowledge flowed into the Japanese islands. It touched nearly every branch of learning, from medicine to literature, from astronomy to the arts. Japanese writers began to spread Dutch concepts and, by degrees, the isolated citizens developed some comprehension of the world beyond the Eastern ocean. They were assisted in this by curious woodblock printed books translating Aesop's fables and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Artists, like Shiba Kokan, copied Dutch perspective and opened the way to a major change in the designing of woodblock prints. Many interesting devices also entered the country through

the Dutch, including medical and surgical instruments, spy glasses, and light industrial machinery. All in all, the merchants from Holland were well thought of and highly respected. Even the most suspicious Japanese were finally convinced that these traders had no intention of taking over the country or undermining the spiritual convictions of Shintoism and Buddhism.

It is easy to understand why Siebold rejoiced at the opportunity of establishing himself in one of the neat little square houses on the Japanese frontier of the Netherlands. He was probably the first European at Deshima who had an "Open Sesame" to the world beyond the bridge. He was a doctor, and everywhere men sought health and ways to relieve pain or preserve their physical resources as long as possible. In the beginning, brave-minded Japanese physicians visited Siebold to study with him and to examine the amazing books he had brought from Europe. As time went on and confidence grew, he was permitted to go to their houses in Nagasaki and surrounding areas, thus coming into more direct and meaningful contact with the sick and their problems.

Among Siebold's early accomplishments was the instruction of Japanese physicians in eye surgery for the removal of cataracts. This gained him almost immediate fame and opened many other doors to the closed world of Japanese psychology. It is also reported that he attempted vaccination, with considerable success. The details do not seem to be clear, but it is known that Christian missionaries in China, Korea, and Siam had managed to secure vaccine by sealing it into hollow feathers. Much of this was ineffective, but some retained its virtue, and there are early Japanese accounts of the spread of vaccination dating from the first half of the 19th century.

Although Siebold was a conscientious physician, this was not his primary interest, but only a means to his principal end. He was determined to study the flora and fauna of Japan. He soon began a study of early medicinal plants, and created a small botanical garden which included many healing herbs. He was also considered to have introduced two of the most beautiful flowers of Japan, the chrysanthemum and the peony, to Western nations. Among other things, he took great interest in the cultivation of tea, and tried



Woodcut portrait of Siebold, from life, drawn by his close friend and student, the Japanese botanist Kanyen Iwasaki.

to find ways to transport the fruit of this plant, which contained its seeds, to Java. At first, he was unsuccessful, but ultimately, by using damp clay for the packing, he accomplished his purpose, and the cultivation of tea in Java is said to be due to his efforts.

In order to advance his studies, Siebold had to gain a certain knowledge of the Japanese language. How far he progressed in this is not known with certainty, but he probably did have a fair conversational acquaintance with this difficult tongue. It also appears that he was a skillful diplomat, willing to use any means in his power to gain the information that he felt would be valuable to the outside world. He was favorably accepted by the Japanese, who at that time were rather timidly investigating Western medical science, mostly through books. He apparently treated the sick with considerable success, and was ever ready to discuss his methods with eager young Japanese doctors who sensed the direction which their country would have to follow in the years ahead.

Some say that he made rather lavish presents of Western articles to prominent Japanese, and have interpreted this as a form of bribery. Since it was a custom universally followed, however, and he was dedicated to the advancement of learning and not personal profit, he does not appear to be open to criticism.

In 1826, Siebold was appointed to a Dutch delegation that was required to pay its respects to the shogunal government. This meant a trip to Edo (Tokyo), where the Dutch participated in special festivities and provided colorful entertainment in exchange for the preservation of their small but important franchise. By some means not fully recorded, Siebold was able to secure permission to remain in Edo when the other members of the delegation departed. Thus he was the only man of a Western nation in a city of nearly two million persons.

It is assumed that he was able to convince the Shogun that he could modernize and scientifically instruct the physicians and surgeons of the country, acquainting them with the attainments of European science. In any event, he rose in popular esteem, and included among his new friends many of the leading minds of his day, who sympathized with his objectives and saw no reason why he should not advance his scientific research in his spare time. Some went so far as to assist him. Even so, he gathered an incredible amount of information in a comparatively short time.

While everything seemed to be going well, an actually innocent occurrence, exaggerated by court spies, brought Siebold's career in Japan to an untimely end. The Japanese had very strict laws to prevent maps of their country from coming into foreign possession. They felt, rightly or wrongly, that such maps could be used against them in case a foreign power should decide to invade the islands. Siebold may have known of the law, but probably did not take it too seriously. In any event, he exchanged a map of Europe for one of Japan, which was secured for him by an agent in the Shogun's court.

The government was deeply disturbed at the idea that the details of their extremely vulnerable coastline might come into foreign hands. The agent who provided the map is said to have suffered capital punishment, and Siebold was imprisoned by the authorities.

The misfortune spread, threatening the lives and liberties of many Japanese friends and students, and involving Siebold in a complicated legal investigation.

The Dutch factory director at Deshima immediately took action on behalf of Siebold, and the Netherlands administration in Batavia asked the King of Bavaria to intervene. Actually, Siebold was highly regarded by the Japanese authorities, and apparently he defended himself with great courage and skill. He was released about the 18th of January, 1830—perhaps slightly sooner—with a strict warning that he must never again return to Japan. Factually, however, he was treated with considerable courtesy and was permitted to take with him out of the country most of his valuable collection of specimens, books, and notes.

Siebold arrived in Holland in 1830, and at once became a European celebrity, regarded as the one and only authority on the Far East, a region of mystery and wonder. He was created a Baron, and made a Colonel in the army. He received numerous honorary degrees and decorations, and was elevated to the title of "Jonkheer" in the Dutch aristocracy. He spent the remaining twenty-nine years of his life writing his numerous books and essays and arranging his scientific specimens in the museums of Leyden, Munich, and Wurzburg. The present ethnologic museum at Leyden is essentially a monument to his researches.

In the scientific world, Siebold's geographic achievements above all gained him enthusiastic recognition. In the area of philology, he also made valuable contributions to the understanding of Chinese ideographs as used in the Japanese written form. He also recorded the hitherto unknown details about the written language of Korea. At that time, Professor Julius Klaproth was regarded as the authority on Oriental languages. He was quite incensed when Siebold reported that he had discovered a Korean alphabet. Professor Klaproth said this was impossible, and intimated that anyone who announced such an improbable discovery and tried to "saddle" it on the intellectual world, might be mentally deranged.

Actually, Siebold was entirely correct. In 1443 A.D., King Sejong of Korea resolved to completely reform the archaic and complicated system of writing the Chinese language by use of the Chinese



Formal portrait of Philipp Franz von Siebold wearing his decorations.

ideographs. He gathered about him a distinguished group of progressive scholars who shared his vision of increasing the literacy of his people. To broaden the foundation of the new written form, the King caused an examination of the written languages of Manchuria, China, Japan, and Indo-China to be undertaken. He even went so far as to investigate the Sanskrit written language and a number of East Indian tribal types of writing.

At that time, there was no contact with Western nations, and the King and his associates invented for themselves the idea of consonants and verbs. In the end, they produced an alphabet of twenty-eight letters, achieving in this way an advancement in writ-

ing not accomplished by any other Asiatic power. It is interesting to note that there is a practical Korean typewriter, put on the market in 1933, as well as an inter-type machine using Korean characters for typesetting and the publication of newspapers.

Soon after his differences with Professor Klaproth, it is said that Siebold suddenly developed an interest in international political matters, and traveled considerably about Europe, settling in Germany. It is now believed that he is the only European who fully appreciated the revolutionary movement in Japan and the political unrest there which would overthrow the shogunate and restore the governing power to the Imperial House.

Most European countries did not take the Japanese situation seriously or regard it as any subject for careful study. As a result, such outside nations as became concerned, including the United States, sided with the shogunate. It made little difference in the long run, because in 1868, the last of the Tokugawa shoguns voluntarily relinquished his power, and acknowledged his obedience to the Imperial House. At that time, Siebold was commissioned by the King of the Netherlands to write a letter to the Shogun, which probably contributed to the opening of Japan to the Western powers. Unfortunately, however, the Dutch government refused to follow Siebold's advice, and when the final treaties with European states were signed by Japan, Holland's influence in the area was completely lost.

In spite of his earlier warning never to return to Japan, Siebold did go back in 1859. He was sixty-three years old at the time, and had semi-official ambassadorial power. His mission was reasonably successful, but not outstanding. Upon his arrival in Nagasaki, he was joyously received by his friends and students, and many honors were bestowed upon him by the government. Although the Emperor had not yet been actually re-established at that time, the shape of things to come was obvious. There was considerable anti-Western feeling, but every precaution was taken to protect the famous doctor. He soon had a large practice, and was even permitted to visit sick patients in the evening. All that was necessary to insure his protection was a servant walking ahead of him with a paper lantern upon which was painted a large letter S. Even rob-



PORTRAIT OF SIEBOLD IN DECORATIVE FRAME
From the Ethnographic Museum in Leyden

bers respected this symbol of an errand of mercy, and there is no report that he was ever interfered with or molested. Needless to say, he soon accumulated another impressive collection of ethnographical material.

Siebold returned to Europe in 1861, living for a time in Wurzburg, and later in Munich, and was retired from the Netherlands army with the rank of Major-General. According to his biographers, the learned physician must have been a truly stout-hearted German. When the Prussians threatened Munich in 1866, the King of Bavaria warned Siebold that it might be wise for him to pack away his collection. Siebold replied that he was not afraid of the Prussians; he would put on his uniform, pin on his Prussian medal of honor, and stand in the full dignity of a general of the Nether-

lands Army. When thus arrayed in all his splendors and honors, he would like to see the Prussian who would not stand smartly at attention.

The great Orientalist passed out of this life on October 18, 1866, apparently of a pulmonary complaint. He was buried in Munich. The monument over his grave includes a likeness of himself carved into the stone. There are three Chinese characters on the monument, which can be freely translated: "His spirit was truly courageous." As is so often the case, his labors were soon forgotten in his own country, but memory of him lingered on in Holland and Austria, and the Japanese never forgot his constructive labors in their country and his sincere efforts to bring understanding between the East and West. A statue to him was unveiled in Nagasaki in 1879, at least partly financed by his former students and grateful friends. He received other honors, and the Emperor of Japan caused a memorial for him to be completed at the Vienna fair of 1873.

After World War I, cultural relations between Germany and Japan were most strained, and the memory of Siebold prepared the basis for mutual appreciation. Collections of his material are now under the protection of the Japanese government. Much could be said for the continuing effort to honor this learned Bavarian. Perhaps his achievements can best be summarized from the inscription on the memorial stone in Suwa Park in Nagasaki: "Among the learned of Europe, Siebold stands as the scientific discoverer of Japan, and this reputation is well grounded. Let it here be carved in stone, and erected as a memorial for him on the coast of Nagasaki: His name is immortal through his great work, in that he recognized what is most noble in our land and our people, and transmitted his understanding of this to the nations of Europe. Here in this stone, which we have erected to his eternal memory on the coast of Nagasaki, let his fame be engraved."

Probably Siebold's greatest contributions to the study of Japanese life, customs, flora, and fauna, are set forth in his monumental folio, *Nippon*. Studying the splendid engravings, with their exactness of detail, it is difficult to imagine how this man, with the limitations imposed upon him by the political situation of the time,



The crater of Mount Fuji. From an engraving in Siebold's monumental work, *Nippon*.

was able to so completely acquaint himself with the life of the Japanese people. One would think that he had spent not six, but fifty years in the country, with complete freedom of action and a thorough knowledge of the language.

All forms of Japanese culture were within his province. He reproduced the architecture with marvelous exactitude. He gave a vast amount of space to religion, correctly identifying hundreds of deities. He published most of the important views of the country, including a very fine engraving of the crater of Fujiyama. He understood the monetary system, picturing several types of coinage and paper money. He knew Japanese arms and clothing, and was able to distinguish correctly many of the anthropological variations to be found among the inhabitants of the islands. He correctly pictured the Ainu of northern Hokkaido, described their festivals and customs. He presented elaborate pictures of Japanese ceramics, bronze work, and the utensils in daily use in the home.

Reaching out beyond these more intimate matters, Siebold examined the animal life of the islands, giving considerable attention to a rare kind of fox that is not known elsewhere. As a physician, he tried to understand "fox fever," a kind of dementia in which

the victim believed that his body was inhabited by the soul of a fox. Naturally, he exchanged medical theories with the native physicians, learning about acupuncture, moxa cautery, massage, and the value of mineral baths. His books are enriched with many figures and diagrams that could scarcely be improved upon if they were made today. He was much interested in native foods, tried to explain the climate of the country and its susceptibility to earthquakes, and set up ways to minimize the disasters that accompanied seismic disturbances.

As already mentioned, Siebold was able to secure a number of excellent maps, and while these perhaps are the least accurate of his contributions, they show the complex of islands as these were known to the Japanese themselves. He also included the engraving of the Harbor of Nagasaki, with the Dutch settlement of Deshima in the foreground. (See page 45.)

It has been claimed, probably justly, that the Emperor Meiji would have suffered many more reverses, and encountered almost insurmountable obstacles, had it not been for the Dutch merchants and the scientists, especially Siebold, who accompanied them. It was probably part of a universal process that Japan, emerging from feudalism, should have found a staunch and dedicated friend in a Bavarian physician who had a great desire to visit far places and their people.

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Library Notes

by A. J. HOWIE

EDGAR CAYCE

A Unique Ability to Diagnose Disease Psychically

The first comprehensive account of the experiences of Edgar Cayce, as his psychic abilities became evident and expanded, is set forth in *There Is A River* by Thomas Sugrue, first published in 1943 and now available in paperback edition (Dell Publishing Co.). There is an ever growing bibliography of research done to analyze his case histories and to determine how the information may be used by students and doctors to further the purposes to which Mr. Cayce dedicated his life.

Cayce had a scientifically unexplained power that enabled him in a state of autohypnosis to diagnose and prescribe for many physical problems brought to him in person or by correspondence. A weak factor in the effectiveness of his efforts was that he was not the healing agent, nor was he conscious either of the diagnoses or prescriptions. He never understood the power that was his natural gift, although he did later, during one of his sessions, transmit an answer to questions on the subject.

Cayce's grandfather was known for his success in water witching. Also, he used to amuse his family and friends by moving chairs and tables and making brooms dance without touching them. Both his grandmother and mother had some measure of "second sight," and expressed some perceptiveness and understanding of his psychic nature. His father seems to have been quite down to earth, although he later became active in the work.

Edgar Cayce's psychic awareness was evidenced while still a youngster. He had built a house under some vines in the garden when a boy came to play with him. The next day, the boy brought another. Later there were more boys and girls. They seemed always to be the same size as he; as he grew older, they also seemed older. They were never seen by any other person and ran away as

soon as anybody came into the area—that is, with the exception of a neighbor girl who shared his play. He mentions that on one occasion his mother saw him with one of the boys. Then one day they no longer came to play with him and he sought other pursuits. All of this before age seven when he was sent to public school.

In the spring of his 11th year, he built a lean-to retreat in the woods for himself. He used to go there to read, especially his Bible. One afternoon in May while he was reading the story of Manoah, the father of Samson, he looked up and became aware of the presence of a woman.

She said: "Your prayers have been heard. Tell me what you would like most of all, so that I may give it to you."

He answered: "Most of all I would like to be helpful to others, and especially to children when they are sick."

Suddenly she was no longer there. He ran home and confided in his mother.

The next day at school he was more than usually dull. His Uncle Lucian, who was also the teacher, was outraged at his apparently willful stupidity and reported the matter to his father, who decided to take a hand in teaching him to spell. For hours that night they drilled in the spelling exercises, but with no more success. Both were exhausted, and his father's temper was edgy. In the midst of this, the boy seemed to hear the voice of the lady of the previous day say: "If you can sleep a little, we can help you." Edgar begged to be permitted to rest for a few minutes. The father left the room with a remark that he would be right back to try some more and that things better improve or else. Edgar closed his spelling book, put it back of his head and curled up in a chair to snatch a few moments of sleep.

When the father returned, he jerked the speller from under the boy's head, waking him. Edgar assured his father that now he could answer all the questions correctly. The session proceeded with letter-perfect spellings taken at random throughout the book, even from the last page. Both were apparently too exhausted to press the how-come at the time.

During the remaining several years of his schooling, Edgar continued this method of learning to recite his lessons with such suc-

cess that he was rated a top student. He apparently had permanent recall of the contents of books that he slept on, but it was a parrot-like process without reference to comprehension or application. For some reason, he seems not to have read his Bible in this fashion.

When he was eleven, he was hit at the end of his spine by a baseball during recess play at school. He acted queerly the rest of the afternoon, and when he got home, performed a number of irrational antics. He was put to bed, where he quieted down. He gave instructions for a poultice to be put at the back of his head near the base of the brain. He said he was suffering from shock but would be all right in the morning. After the poultice was applied, he went to sleep, but continued with occasional irrational talk and frequently pounded on the wall with his fists. In the morning he was normal, although he remembered nothing of the previous afternoon or evening. This was the earliest evidence of a power to diagnose and prescribe.

The next landmark in awakening the use of his mysterious gift occurred during his early twenties. Illness had left him with an aphonia for which the doctors could offer no relief. Unable to talk above a labored whisper, he had to give up his sales work and find a new livelihood—which he found in a photography studio.

A travelling hypnotist heard of his handicap and decided to make publicity capital by wagering that he could restore his voice for \$200.00; if he failed there would be no charge. He put Cayce under hypnosis and gave the command for him to talk normally. Cayce responded—under hypnosis. But when he was awakened—no improvement. Several subsequent attempts were similarly unsuccessful.

A local college professor heard of the case and gave it some publicity. The result was a number of visits from psychologists and hypnotists, which were noneventuating. A Hopkinsville amateur hypnotist and correspondence course student in osteopathy asked to be given a chance to make a trial of an idea he had worked out. After some hesitation, Cayce, who had nothing to lose, was persuaded to try just once more. The man, Layne, suggested that Cayce put himself to sleep, and then he would take over and ask the ques-

tions regarding his condition and treatment. Cayce responded with a diagnosis, and instructed Layne to command a circulation of blood to the throat. When Cayce was awakened, he could talk normally. However, the restoration of his voice was not permanent, and during the subsequent years, occasional repetitions of the original treatment were required.

There followed a progressive involvement in the use of his psychic faculty. He resisted, doubted, worried. Layne was a persistent man. He had Cayce diagnose a personal condition that had troubled him for years. He was delighted with the accuracy of the diagnosis, and followed the prescribed treatment religiously with complete success. He persuaded Cayce to diagnose a number of his more difficult cases, with similar good results. When Cayce tried to withdraw, his voice failed him and he had to enlist Layne's cooperation in restoring it, thus giving himself an increased sense of obligation and dependence.

For a long time, the voice problem gave Layne a hold over Cayce in persuading him to diagnose and prescribe for others. Cayce continued to be greatly troubled by the fear that his diagnoses might be wrong, or that the treatments might prove harmful, even fatal. It was many years before he diagnosed willingly, in spite of the fact that each reading added to the testimony that his readings were correct and the prescriptions effective when followed to the letter. Ultimately, in an emergency, he found that others could perform the same service that Layne had in restoring his voice.

The gift of a psychic diagnostic ability did not confer on Edgar Cayce any omniscient understanding. He suffered the vicissitudes of a man torn between a sense of an opportunity to serve an enlarging circle of disease-ridden sufferers, and his own uncertainties as to the source of his gift—from God or the devil. For many years he refused to accept money for his readings, supporting himself and his family at various occupations, principally photography. He resisted all attempts to commercialize his readings.

For students of comparative religion and philosophy, the history of Edgar Cayce is a contemporary example of a man who, with no obvious mystical background, was able, under certain conditions, to tap a reservoir of knowledge or information not nor-

mally possessed by him. It was hard for an orthodox Christian, an active Sunday School teacher and Christian Endeavor leader, to determine if his psychic gift was from God or the devil.

It was not until 1923 that Cayce gave a series of readings in which philosophy, metaphysics, rebirth, karma and other unorthodox beliefs were introduced. The questions and answers opened a new vista to him, although he was a little slow in becoming convinced. By this time, however, he had begun to accept the readings as true and reliable. These concepts introduced a new approach to his readings, which began to answer questions regarding personal problems as well as those concerning health. The readings never lost their biblical tone. Cayce read his Bible avidly; in one publication he states that he had read the Bible 56 times, an annual reading since early life having been his intention.

As late as 1933, Cayce admitted in a public address that he knew very little about the source of his information. He said: "There would seem to be not only one, but several sources of information that I tap when in this sleeping condition. One source is, apparently, the record that an individual or entity makes in all its experiences through what we call time. The sum-total of the experiences of that soul is 'written,' so to speak, in the subconscious of that individual as well as in what is known as the Akashic records. Anyone may read these records if he can attune himself properly."

During the many years of his readings, Cayce continued his activities in the church. However, on one occasion he stated in a talk: "At this point let me remind you that it is unwise for us to feel that we can blot from our lives the teachings of great teachers who are not connected with the religion which we profess. Just as many avoid the study of religions other than their own, many avoid the study of the influences of the planets, of numbers, of the power of thought, and forgotten sciences. But we must learn to recognize that the forces which act upon man, in a measure control him, are many and varied." He seems not to have recognized any conflict between the statements in the readings regarding rebirth, karma, and astrology, and his devout acceptance of Bible teachings.

The ups and downs of the Cayce personal circumstances, his involvements with selfishly motivated individuals who sought to exploit his psychic powers, his dream of a hospital where faculties would be provided for the unusual and orthodox treatments often recommended by the readings, go far to make *There Is A River* compelling reading.

During his life, Cayce never was able to acquire a standing or recognition in the eyes of the medical profession or psychologists. Countless individuals interviewed him almost to the point of persecution. People with incurable conditions would take his readings to their physicians, only to be rebuffed, refused, or condescendingly given the proposed treatment. When a healing resulted from following the treatment, the evidence was discounted or ignored. But the enthusiasm of those who had been helped lived on. People from many walks of life have proved happy to testify to the help they received.

In spite of his many doubts, Edgar Cayce built well for the future and preservation of his readings. For more than forty years, he had transcripts made of the readings. Transcripts of thousands of readings given between 1901 and 1944 are stored at Virginia Beach, Va. According to one pamphlet, these have been classified as follows: 8,976 physical readings, 2,500 life readings, 667 business readings, 401 mental and spiritual, 24 home and marriage, and 879 miscellaneous. These are available to qualified researchers for study. Only the anonymity of the subjects is preserved.

In addition to Sugrue's book, there have been several other biographical studies: *Edgar Cayce: Mystery Man of Miracles* by Joseph Millard (Fawcett Publications, Inc., New York, 1956); *Venture Inward* by Hugh Lynn Cayce (Harper & Row, New York, Evanston, and London, 1964); *Edgar Cayce, the Sleeping Prophet* by Jess Stearn (Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1967). Each presents a different facet of Cayce the man, servant of mankind, and unconscious voice of a vast universal subconscious reservoir of the total experience and accumulated knowledge of the human race. Two are written in a journalistic style, making the most of the dramatic and spectacular readings.

As would be expected, Hugh Lynn Cayce gives a more comprehensive interpretation and correlation both to the individual

readings and the total purpose of his father's life. He reviews the publicity that marked various phases of the Cayce work and attracted attention, inquiry, and directed the many troubled sufferers from obscure diseases as to where they might seek answers to their health problems. He notes an excellent bibliography of books about his father, and books with a section about him, and suggested related reading. He elaborates on how a study of the Cayce material can be applied to the reader's life, both in solving personal problems and expanding and integrating the spiritual faculties.

Gina Cerminara has made a special study of the Cayce readings for the light they reflect on the problems of rebirth, karma, personality, family, and social involvement: *Many Mansions* (William Sloane Associates, Inc., New York, 1950); *The World Within* (1957); *Many Lives, Many Loves*. When we stop to think that Mr. Cayce was able to answer only a small part of his mail during the latter years of his life, these inquiries are evidence of a widespread need for advice and guidance in understanding and directing the affairs of many lives. This is food for thought. It is true that many of us resist or ignore good counsel; and yet if we were open to such instruction, to whom would we turn? Cayce correctly recorded that ultimately we must turn within. Still, the readings that Miss Cerminara has assembled make quite a case for the benefits to be derived from having some outside help, inspired and enlightened by spiritual insight.

An organization has been incorporated for the purpose of studying and applying the information contained in the Cayce readings. It is called The Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc. It was organized by those who knew Cayce or had been helped by him in some way, either directly or indirectly. It is now open to membership, which entitles the member to an index of the readings available and a very considerable literature by various students. One of the available publications is a mimeographed transcript of the meetings of a small group of people who met weekly with Mr. Cayce, and who questioned him, while he was in a trance state, as to their qualifications for applying his principles and how they might develop their spiritual natures.

Some subjects of wide interest have been researched and all the references in the readings assembled in pamphlet form for study. The following titles are suggestive: *A Story of Jesus*; *The Christmas Story*; *The Bible Is the Handbook for Understanding Life*; *Symbols of the Self*; *God's Other Door and the Continuity of Life*; *Auras*; *That You May Heal—a manual of individual and group study*; *Dreams: The Language of the Unconscious*; *The Great Pyramid and Its Builders*; *Atlantis: Fact or Fiction*; *Earth Changes: Past—Present—Future*.

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HAPPENINGS IN THE WORLD

It has recently been reported in the international press that a Buddhist scroll has been discovered in South Korea, which may prove to be the oldest known example of printing. It was found in a cavity in one of the building stones in the Pulguksa Temple in Kyongju. With it were a number of reliquary vessels, images, miniature pagodas, and fragments of ancient silk. They are generally regarded as charms, and are usually found in a religious depository.

The scroll consists of twelve sections of paper fastened together, making a total length of twenty feet. Each sheet of paper was printed from a wooden block into the surface of which shiny characters had been cut and could be inked like modern type. The text is called a *sutra*, and the body of the writing is in Chinese, but included are a number of special prayers, called charms or *dharani*, which are Chinese transliterations of Sanskrit letters and sounds. It was against the religious policy of the time to translate these magical sections; they had to be kept exactly as in the original forms.

It is obvious that this book is older than any example of moveable type yet discovered or mentioned in historical writings. While the articles that have appeared are not exactly specific, and the evidence advanced is not incontrovertible, the impression seems to be that the newly discovered scroll was printed about the year 704 A.D. This estimate is based on the type of paper used, and to some degree on the formation of the various characters in the text. If this date is maintained by further research, it is older than the Japanese *dharani* that were printed between 750 and 770 A.D.

Apparently, the type of text and the related prayers are about the same in the Korean and Japanese versions. Both give the impression that they are not by any means first examples of the printing art in the areas where they were found. It is quite possible that

in the course of time, the development of printing in Asia will be traced as far back as the third or fourth century A.D. The problem of moveable type presents numerous difficulties. There is much to suggest that it was also invented in Korea, and while it may not have come into general use before the 12th or 13th century A.D., it was probably known two- or three hundred years earlier.

Incidentally, there has also been a new interest in stone rubbings, and present speculation would indicate that impressions taken from stone on paper, particularly from monumental stones or tablets, may have been made as early as 1200 to 1500 B.C. Technically, these are printings, although some doubt exists in the minds of scholars as to whether the rubbings should be so included. The new Korean discovery is in general harmony with the trend now becoming fashionable to push back the dating of many inventions, arts, crafts, and scientific speculations.

The Genus Homo Habilis

As the consequence of grubbing about in the interval between the lower and the upper Pleistocene, anthropologists have come upon the remains of one of our most remote ancestors. It has been established with reasonable certainty that he is a bona fide member of the genus *Homo*, but his specific designation, *Habilis*, is reported to mean "a creature of ability; resourceful, mentally skillful, vigorous, and ingenious." From all this, it may be inferred that he was, in some ways at least, more advanced than his descendants.

The remains of this intriguing creature, or perhaps more correctly person, have been discovered in the Olduvai Gorge in northern Tanganyika. Although he is represented only by scattered fragments, the location of his remains, and other corroborating testimony, indicate that he flourished more than a million and a half years ago. He therefore must be regarded as earlier than other previously discovered prototypes of modern humanity.

Even this, however, does not end the situation. Not long after the discovery of *Homo Habilis*, another equally remarkable and even more difficult to pronounce ancestor has become a strong contender for final priority. He is the *Kamapithecus Punjabicus*.

and it is now reasonably well established that he possessed distinctly human characteristics while he wandered about the earth fifteen million years ago.

While to the average person such remote forebears may not seem especially vital to our present survival, a number of witty reflections, not entirely scientific, have added brightness to these discoveries. One school of thought has observed that we have always thought man's immaturity was due to the fact that he was a recent edition—perhaps even an afterthought in the program of creation. After all, if the human being has been evolving for a mere hundred thousand years, as was long believed, there is considerable justification for the slowness of his progress. If, however, he has been evolving for fifteen million years, it might be assumed that he should have accomplished considerably more.

As one commentator noted, the recent discoveries must be accepted as the final proof that mankind is getting nowhere fast. When we also realize that the cranial remains of our recently excavated progenitors indicate that they were skillful and ingenious, capable of making their way in wild and uncivilized regions, and survived without most of the conveniences that we regard as absolutely necessary, such thoughts fill us with a deep respect for the early struggles of man to establish himself in this uncongenial atmosphere.

It is very doubtful, according to some modern thinkers, that man of today, if he changed places with the *Ramapithecus Punjabicus*, would survive more than a few hours. And one columnist suggested that if early man had invented automobiles and freeways, and had explored the rarified field of nuclear fission, there would be no man of today. More seriously, there is also the belief that from the anthropological discoveries, we must learn that in nature, all growth is slow, and that the perfect world we look for will take some time in developing.

Capital Punishment in California

There are bills under consideration, in both houses of the state legislature to abolish capital punishment in California. Efforts are also being made to bring this issue to public vote in the primary

elections in June 1968. In recent months, therefore, considerable careful thinking has been directed toward this age-old problem, and several new facts and relevant arguments in favor of the abolishment of capital punishment have been brought out.

At present, the strongest case for capital punishment assumes that it is a powerful deterrent to crime. In this country, there are now thirteen states that have abolished the death penalty. These include New York, Wisconsin, and Michigan, which are typical of areas where violent crimes can be expected. Records now available prove conclusively that the crime of murder has not increased in twelve of these states. The thirteenth is difficult to estimate, as it is the newly created state of Alaska. Furthermore, in these twelve states, the rate of murder, in terms of population, is lower than the national average.

It would therefore appear that the death penalty may not be a deterrent, but may even contribute to an increase in homicide. Sober thinking would point to the probability that a murderer, especially if he is a materialist, considers death as the easiest way out. This same man might hesitate if he realized that he was actually faced with a prison sentence of from thirty years to life, combined with a rigid enforcement of laws regulating parole.

It is now recognized that there is grave question as to whether the death penalty constitutes a just basis of punishment for another human being. Records show that very few murderers who are able to afford expensive legal fees are convicted of first-degree murder. It has also been pointed out that if capital punishment were abolished, a convicted person would always have the benefit of newly discovered evidence. Thus there would be fewer cases in which juries withhold a conviction because of a strong defense plea that a possible miscarriage of justice could never be rectified.

There is no justification in the spiritual codes of humanity for the death sentence, and very few persons would impose it if they were required to personally carry out the execution. It would seem reasonable, therefore, and toward a better comprehension of life, to realize that only basic enlightenment and the strengthening of man's ethical code can actually solve the problem.



Happenings at Headquarters



Our Spring Open House was an outstanding success. As it fell only one day from Mr. Hall's 66th birthday, the occasion was appropriate for congratulations, good wishes, and general festivities that featured a large and beautiful cake. We have it on the highest authority that the cake, including its sumptuous green and white frosting, was made entirely without sugar, in deference to Mr. Hall's present dietetic austerity regime. The luncheon of home-made salads, hot dishes, sandwiches, and desserts, was served by the Hospitality Committee to almost three hundred people. Attendance at the morning lecture overflowed our facilities. Willing helpers rounded up every available extra chair, and even before eleven o'clock, there was standing room only. Many friends made long trips to our headquarters for the occasion. Dr. Hisashi Ohta, whose paintings were on exhibit in our Library, gave a demonstration of the sumi technique, and art lovers were further intrigued by the display in our Gift Shop of unusual items imported from Japan. Dr. Bode provided a selection of books on East Indian philosophy, secured directly from India and not normally available in this country. All in all, our Open House was truly a cooperative endeavor, made possible by the enthusiasm and hard work of the members of the Friends Committee. We are also continually mindful of the fact that these social activities at our headquarters were able to develop only because of the completion of our Auditorium, which was made possible by the support of a very large circle of friends throughout the country.

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The spring quarter, extending through June 25th, offers Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evening classes in addition to Mr. Hall's usual Sunday morning lectures. Subjects discussed by Mr. Hall in the Sunday lectures included Atlantis, psychic phenomena, the history of China, medical botany, Zen, religion and hallucinational drugs, and the importance of daily worship. On Wednesday evenings during April, he continued the classes on his new book,

Buddhism and Psychotherapy, expanding the material in the last five chapters. In the seminar for May and June, entitled "What We Need to Know About Knowledge," Mr. Hall is presenting his evaluation of what is required for an intelligent general understanding of five great fields of learning: religion, philosophy, science, history, and the arts. On Sunday, April 30th, Dr. Henry L. Drake took the platform, lecturing on "Buddha's Contribution to Psychotherapy." He also spoke on Wednesday evening, May 10th, on "Zen Procedure and Meditation."

Dr. Framroze A. Bode gave two Tuesday evening classes. Under the general title "Perspectives on Man," he discussed Ultimate Reality, Tibetan mysticism, divine healing, Yoga, and ESP. During May and June, in a seminar on the *Zend-Avesta*, he is presenting an intensive study of the concept of soul as found in the Zoroastrian religious scriptures. Dr. Bode also held a lecture series on "Great World Teachers" at the Beverly Hills Evening High School in April and May.

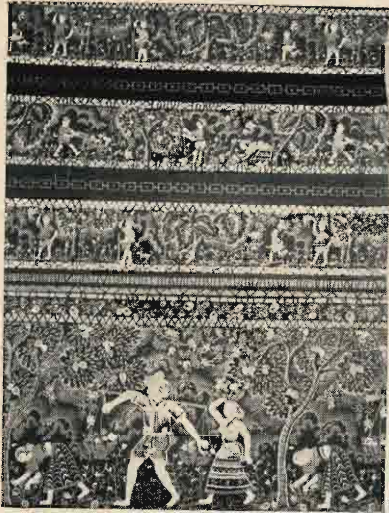
The Workshop in Oriental Brush Painting conducted by Dr. Hisashi Ohta on Monday evenings continues through the spring quarter, with lessons in bamboo, calligraphy, and two evenings devoted to painting saints, priests, and the Buddha. Dr. Ohta will also give two Wednesday evening lectures at our headquarters. On June 21st, he will speak on "The Zen Mood as Historically Exemplified by Sumi Painting," and on June 28th, on "The Circle as Symbolic of that 'Nothingness' Which Is Something."

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As noted in our last issue, Dr. Bode performed the Parsi ceremony for the Vernal Equinox on March 21st. After giving the ritual in the native language, he explained and interpreted the various meanings of fire, light, and truth in the Parsi faith. He pointed out, among other things, that the Parsi community in Bombay, though small, has a wonderful record for humanitarian projects and has done much to improve the standard of living in the area. There was a large and enthusiastic audience, including a number of local Parsis who seldom have an opportunity to attend one of their own religious ceremonies in this country. Mr. Lew Ayres was present and gave a brief talk on the basic principles

of the Zoroastrian religion. He then showed his film, which featured Dr. Bode conducting another Parsi ceremony. After the formal meeting, the many friends adjourned to the patio for light refreshments. The evening was pronounced a complete success.

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The April exhibit in our library featured a group of fabric samples from the looms and mills of India, gathered for our Society by Dr. and Mrs. Bode during their visit to India last year. The art of weaving was highly developed in India in remote times, and the artistic fabrics of this country found their way into Europe at an early date, contributing much to the vestments of Western nobles and clergymen. The patterns have been copied in many other countries—for example, the beautiful palm-leaf designs added to the distinction

of Scotch weaving and the beauty of old Paisley shawls. Our exhibit included homespun cottons with interesting folk patterns in block printing. In contrast to these were the gossamer-thin sari silks with their splendid decorations of gold and silver threads. The accompanying illustration shows a sample of Khadi dress material. The threads are hand-spun and hand-woven, and the pattern is printed by a hand-block process. The theme of the broad panel at the bottom is a village scene, with country people journeying to market to sell their wares. In spite of the bright coloring, the over-all design is charming and refined.

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To keep everyone posted, we are including a new photograph of our Gift Shop. It will be noted that display space has been enlarged, and a new showcase and card rack have been added. Interesting items are arriving from many parts of the world, and the emphasis, of course, is upon art with religious, philosophical, and



symbolic meaning appropriate to our general program. Mr. Hall introduced the Gift Shop as a small experiment several years ago, in order that persons interested in religious art might be able to acquire culturally authentic material for their homes. There is much need for intimate association with significant art, both classical and folk crafts, for the development of appreciation not only enriches life, but contributes to balanced unfoldment of the personality. The growth of our project has been phenomenal, and while it is still, and always will be, only a minor phase of our activities, we feel that it is educational, informative, and esthetically stimulating.

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We have recently secured an unusual group of material dealing with the religious architecture of the Moslem world. This area, which is largely neglected by Western students of comparative religion, is well worthy of careful attention. Our recent acquisition deals principally with mosques and sacred monuments in Istanbul, Bursa, Cairo, and Damascus. The group includes over fifty beautiful large lithographic plates in full color, and was published in Czechoslovakia over forty years ago. Its primary importance lies in the fact that the various elevations, windows, friezes, arches, and minarets were carefully and accurately reproduced by a profes-



sional architect, and the details of the ornamentations and inscriptions are remarkable. The buildings are of marble or tile, and reveal some of the most intricate and skillful workmanship.

The great mosques of Islam are among the most beautiful and majestic sacred edifices in the world. Although many collections of fine prints are available on most of the religious structures of Europe, those in European Turkey and adjacent areas in Asia Minor and North Africa are not generally depicted. The carving of marble into patterns of lace-like delicacy was a highly developed skill in the Islamic world. The work is still being done in some parts of India, but the period of great construction ended several centuries ago. Mosques are often inlaid with quotations from the Koran in semi-precious stones or even gold and silver; yet with all the detail, powerful geometrical elements are not lacking.

The pictures that we have just secured reveal extraordinary architectural form, and prove beyond any doubt that the grandeur of Bagdad and the unworldly splendor of the Arabian Nights Entertainment were not exaggerated, so far as the building arts are concerned. We plan an exhibition of these wonderful plates, with appropriate material from our collection of Islamic manuscripts and miniatures, for the early fall.



LOCAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES



It is always a pleasure to announce the formation of a new P.R.S. Local Study Group. We have just been informed that friends in Chicago are planning a program of regular meetings under the leadership of Mr. Steffan R. Lyter. We wish this new group all possible success, and hope that those in the area who are interested in this project will communicate with Mr. Lyter at 6254 W. Giddings, Chicago.

The members of the Huntington Park Study Group, under the leadership of Mr. A. Gilbert Olson, have sent in a group picture, which we are pleased to reproduce herewith. Mr. Olson reports that the group has held weekly meetings for a year, with a record of 95% attendance. Their most recent project has been an intensive study of the subject of reincarnation, using various publications by Mr. Hall. Most of the members also attend activities at our headquarters.

The present issue of our Journal begins a series of three articles on parallels between Eastern and Western systems of esoteric philosophy. This material will be especially suitable for study group research and discussion. The first article is devoted to Eastern and Western Gnosticism, and assignments can be made so that various members can explore special fields of interest. One idea that is well worth developing involves the chronological patterns, which agree too closely to be considered completely coincidental. A chart pointing out the historical elements and comparing the many situations involved, could do much to broaden the students' understanding of religious and philosophical unity.

One of the most interesting and important of the beliefs shared by Gnosticism and esoteric Buddhism is the concept of emanations. This would offer a possibility for preparing special diagrams, and would go a considerable way toward the clarification of early Christian mysticism, especially the teachings of St. Paul. Several



MEMBERS OF THE HUNTINGTON PARK STUDY GROUP

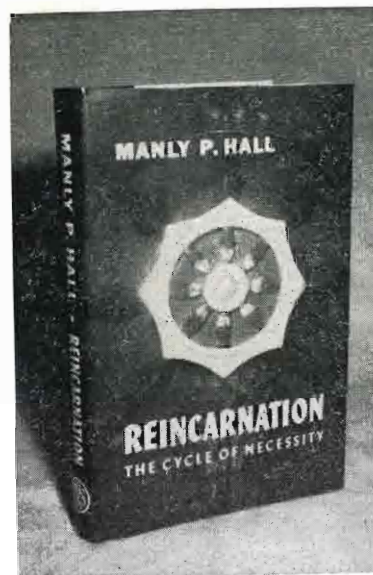
Upper row, left to right: A. Gilbert Olson, Norma dePalma, Don Pratt. Lower row, left to right: Meredith Olson, Grace Smith, Wilma Fisher, Catherann Schrader, Douglas Dunbar.

study group meetings could be devoted to this intriguing theme. For additional material on Gnosticism, we suggest that study group leaders check pages 23 and 78 of our publication *Great Books on Religion and Esoteric Philosophy*.

Somewhat more current is our editorial, which asks the question of whether the average person, through the experiences of daily living, is laboring to build a better future, or merely striving to work out old karmic indebtedness. Here is an opportunity to develop a lively discussion, for with a little encouragement, each student will probably have definite opinions on the matter. On the ground that we may be paying old debts, how would you feel that the records are kept by which mistakes of the past have a tendency to repeat themselves and complicate our present lives? It might also be interesting to ask how we can correct old karmic patterns when we do not even remember our former mistakes or what tempted us to make them. Is such memory actually necessary, and what good would it accomplish if it were available to us?

The invitation stands for P.R.S. Study Groups to send in reports of special study projects, as well as photographs of their meetings. Due to limited space, only group pictures can be accepted.

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



The Fifth Edition of

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by Manly P. Hall

This book is recognized as a definitive work in the literature on rebirth. For the new edition, Mr. Hall has added a "Postscript" containing timely notes and observations, including further bibliographical references and an important case history reported in 1966.

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Entirely compatible with the scientifically acceptable teachings of evolution and causality, rebirth is sustained by the almost irrefutable testimony of Universal Law and natural procedures. We are in a generation of scientific skepticism, but strangely enough, the belief in reincarnation has gained greater recognition from trained minds than any other solution for the riddle of human destiny.

Bibliography — Index — Cloth bound — 224 pages — \$4.00

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