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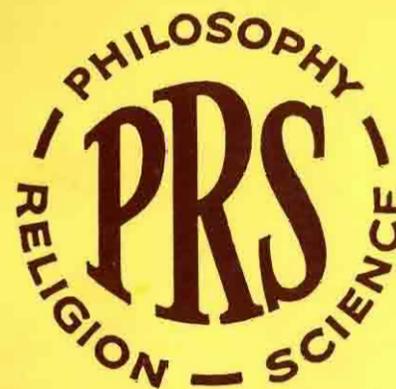
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WINTER 1977



# JOURNAL



PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

Published quarterly by THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.  
3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90027

MANLY P. HALL, EDITOR  
EDITH WALDRON, ASSISTANT EDITOR

\$1.75 a Copy, \$6.00 a Year. Two subscriptions, your own and a gift subscription, \$10.00

Foreign subscriptions are \$7.00 for one year and \$11.00 for two years.

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Please give both the new and old address.

Second-class postage paid at Los Angeles, California

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 76-9615

ISSN 0030-8250

ISBN 0-89314-601-3-(4)

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Most of the reproductions of the early books, manuscripts, and objects of art which appear in this magazine are from originals in the collection of The Philosophical Research Society.

ABOUT THE COVER: The Egyptian Sibyl by de Bry, from *Vesuntini De Divinatione & Magica Praestigii*.

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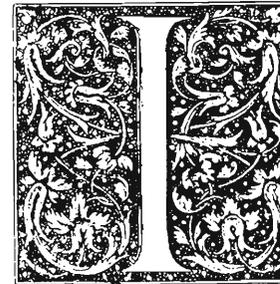
Published by the  
PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.

*A nonprofit educational corporation dedicated to the dissemination of useful knowledge in the fields of philosophy, comparative religions, and psychology.*

Issued Quarterly/Vol. 37, No. 4



REFLECTIONS APPROPRIATE TO THE SEASON



It is now generally assumed that when a person graduates from a university or college with scholastic honors that he is well-educated. Unless an individual attended a theological seminary he may be relatively ignorant concerning religion as it relates to society in general and his own personal life in particular. Spiritual convictions which deeply concern two-thirds of the

earth's population are completely ignored, but matters of far less vital significance are examined in the greatest detail. As it becomes increasingly obvious that we must all live in a world where survival depends largely on internal resources and security is impossible without integrity, it would seem that some practical system of ideals should be taught on all levels of our public school system. One of the reasons why this is an especially difficult situation in the United States has been the reluctance of the government to become involved in the sectarian differences which flourish here under the general heading of religious freedom. In older times most countries had their national credal structure. The Greeks had a patron deity for each city and province and travelers were required to abide by the customs of the areas they visited. Even today several major countries are largely dominated by traditional sectarianism. In the United States there are at least five major Christian denominations and minor sects and cults run

into the hundreds. It has not as yet been possible to assemble a group of clergymen representing the various branches, large and small, of nominal Christianity and Judaism. Immigration from Asiatic and other non-Christian nations further complicates the situation. We are developing substantial minorities of Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems, Confucianists, and Parsees; these are also entitled to contribute to man's religious perspective. The truth is that religion is badly fragmented and for the most part cannot make a comprehensive statement of its doctrines and beliefs.

All over the Christian world a powerful motion is arising to restore the dignity of religion in daily living. Some fairly substantial organizations are reaching large audiences. Many of these groups, however, have a limited sphere of influence but are not less sincere or dedicated. Wherever an individual with high convictions and good moral motives speaks out in favor of religion, he should be given a respectful hearing. At this time, however, it is not only materialism which seeks to discredit him but those who claim to be dedicated to spiritual beliefs. If any prophet speaks today, he must expect to face the disapproval of large segments of the theological community. Instead of encouragement he is criticised, condemned as a heretic, or accused of championing lost causes. Modern religion, fighting for its life, fights against those who would preserve its life. This Christmas, let us be more mindful of those who are attempting, according to their abilities, to further better moral and cultural principles. We may make some interesting discoveries if we approach the subject with a constructive attitude. For example, take note of the upsurge of mysticism and metaphysics among the progressive groups in the various fields of science. Millions of religionists are arming themselves against such heretical doctrines as reincarnation and karma, but these Oriental beliefs have attracted the attention of physicists, biologists, and psychologists. Research on extrasensory perception is progressing well in several countries; the search for the living, conscious universe is no longer ridiculed by the new generation of astronomers. There is scarcely a day goes by that the press does not announce some new finding which supports essential religion, but cannot break through

the adamant wall of orthodoxy which has surrounded most religions since the beginning of time. The Bible says "seek and ye shall find" and I think it would be a very practical benefit for all concerned to move away from despondent criticism and reward those who deserve a word of encouragement. Christmas is an appropriate time to rally around our spiritual heritage and give it all possible understanding, patience, and encouragement.

The last few years have taught us the fallacy of trying to get something for nothing. Some religious groups cater to this all too human optimism. As a result the drift has been way from solid integrities and many affiliated with the more liberal sects have neglected to cultivate the higher aspects of personal character. In reality, man's relationship with the Divine Power at the source of life should have first priority. The search for truth will never be successful unless we recognize Deity as the fountain of all good. Each of us must be a defender of his faith which literally means that he must protect his own soul against the contamination of his own thoughts, emotions, and actions.

In the coming year, let us resolve to be watchful for evidence of a worldwide renaissance of idealism. Some of the older intellectuals will not change but, as the elder generation fades away, younger men and women, well-educated and recognizing their natural spiritual hunger, are resolved to build solid foundations under positive religious commitments. They want to live better, they want happier homes, better health, and to contribute to the restoration of idealism on all the various levels of endeavor. We should all be more mindful of such efforts and stand ready to support constructive aspirations and earnest endeavors and keep posted with the broadening literature of the field. Remember how quickly the Chinese art of acupuncture has been established in the realm of modern medicine. What was regarded as an ancient Oriental superstition is now being systematically investigated by many well-qualified scientists who are not afraid of metaphysical implications. A number of important books have been published dealing with such problems as the survival of human consciousness after death and the latent spiritual potentials of the human being. The re-

ligious practices of the American Indian medicine priest are being subjected to elaborate research programs—not to discredit them but to gain a better understanding of the mysticism of healing. Each time we note a constructive motivation it should bring with it a measure of encouragement—a realization that we are slowly moving from a physical orientation to a more esoteric approach of nearly all forms of learning. If we keep our eyes and ears open we will appreciate the wisdom of the old saying: “Man’s emergency is God’s opportunity.” We have drifted too long in what John Bunyan describes as the “slough of despond.” We have deliberately closed our minds to the good; there is one great Christmas gift we can share with all and that is a good hope supported by factual evidence.

The approach of Christmas reminds us that over half the population of the earth will celebrate the natal day of Jesus of Nazareth. Napoleon I pointed out that the Christian Bible is a powerful moral wall, so strong that no tyranny has been able to breach it successfully. In harmony with the prevailing skepticism it may be timely to estimate in practical terms the present spiritual state of human society. Today we are inclined to think as factually as possible on nearly all abstract subjects, so we will devote a few paragraphs to the conflict between idealism and materialism.

It is somewhat over-convenient to divide mankind into theists and atheists. This dichotomy sounds impressive but has very little actual meaning. That atheists do exist is undeniable, but their actual number is relatively small. Even in countries such as Soviet Russia and The People’s Republic of China, it is doubtful if more than ten percent of the population is completely emancipated from religious beliefs. If the governments of these nations discontinued their anti-religious propaganda the old faiths would probably be restored within one or two generations. In essence, atheism is little more than a revolt against theological abuses. We have a fair sprinkling of agnostics who secretly would like to be religious, but are unable to accept the pronouncements of the various sects whose dogmas have never been reconciled, even to the satisfaction of the faithful.

In propagandizing their points of view it is obvious that materialists have certain advantages. The total rejection of a theistic philosophy leaves no doubts or uncertainties to be arbitrated or evaded. Unbelievers are all of one mind so long as the subject of their unbelief is the same. The atheist cannot be locked in conflict over the state of the soul after death or such complex issues as predestination or transubstantiation. Atheists do not quarrel among themselves on religious issues because they have eliminated all subjects of controversy. There is one major drawback however. They have left themselves without a valid reason for personal improvement.

The way of the idealist is far more complicated and confusing. He can belong to any of the world’s major or minor religions but will find their dogmas virtually impossible to reconcile. The devout believer is building his hopes for this world and the life to come upon invisible realities beyond the common experience of mankind. On the level of general argument the idealist must depend almost entirely upon faith. He can build a strong case but it is comparatively meaningless, however, to those unwilling to accept the reality of things unseen. Theologians have never yet been able to present a united front. The several major religions, all of which are idealistically oriented, are divided by elaborate theological structures which refuse to transcend their own creedalisms. The competition of creeds has seriously weakened religious influence, and brought great comfort to the atheistic groups.

It is becoming more obvious every day that the world must fashion an enduring moral-ethical structure. We cannot survive without integrities, and these, while invisible in their substances, must sustain the mortal world and its diversity of purposes. Atheists have attempted to promote a non-theological morality and what might be described as a scientific ethics. Generally speaking these attempts have failed because a materialistic philosophy of life simply will not support them. If nothing means anything in the long run, the individual finally decides to make the most of immediate opportunity with an appropriate increase in delinquency and violence.

Fortunately, there is a factor in human nature which ultimately rejects futility. The idealist finds comfort and inspiration in the fact that the normal person seeks a life in which enduring values not only exist but are ultimately victorious over doubts and fears. One of our major problems is the non-recognition that religion is not merely an institution established by human authority but an eternal manifestation of the archetypal spiritual needs of humanity.

At this Christmas Season the nominal believer might do well to explore the level of his religious convictions. Recognizing the prevailing emergency in human affairs, he can attempt to understand why principles that he knows could be solutional to the widespread social confusion are not being actively implemented to meet the current need. Let us look within ourselves and estimate the degree of spiritual insight with which we react to the pressures of daily living. In most cases we are going to find serious inconsistency between our convictions and our conduct. We claim to believe in one God—a Divine Power governing all things. We assume this Power to be wise and good and that Its laws and ways are immutable. Yet, in practice we doubt most of the attributes with which we have endowed the nature of Deity. Assuming God to be omniscient and omnipresent, we are constantly praying that we shall not be left to the tragic consequences of our own misdeeds.

We should be giving greater attention to strengthening our own spiritual resources rather than condemning the attitudes around us. Jesus asked a very simple question: “. . . for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” Yet in human relationships we have little affection for those who disagree with our point of view or fail to support some project with which we have associated ourselves. Today, most people spend a considerable part of their time condemning something or someone. We have developed a vocabulary of unpleasant adjectives with which to describe every aspect of our culture. Everyone is stupid, dishonest, over-opinionated, or full of worldly vanities and ambitions. We can no longer find the human being behind the personalities with whom we come into direct contact. As my esteemed grandmother once remarked: “It is easier to love

a thousand persons you have never met than one with whom you have daily contact.” Christian charity has virtually disappeared from Christendom and, while it is true that considerable exploitation exists in the modern life, it is even more factual that we no longer discriminate but condemn the honorable along with the dishonorable. Religious prejudice is never a virtue, and it continues to divide well-intentioned persons of this generation with the same heartlessness with which it passed judgment upon the prophets of old.

I am not a dedicated exponent of the school of positive thinking. There are many instances in which optimism is misplaced and confidences are betrayed. On the other hand, we would all be happier and better off if we would carefully search out the virtues and good intentions of those around us. We like to think that our own intentions are above reproach, but this is seldom true. Jesus told his disciples, “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” Passing adverse judgment on nearly everything that comes to our attention is a prevailing practice. We expect to produce better citizens by wholesale condemnation when, in fact, we are discouraging and disillusioning those who try to live honorably. It does not follow that we must invent pleasant platitudes for all occasions, but where anyone is making a good try, we should give them constructive and sincere support. To withhold this simply because they do not agree with us is little better than bigotry.

The Divine Power which fashioned this creation evidently believed in variety. It did not make all plants or insects or birds the same but gave to each special and appropriate qualities. If Deity had intended all men to think alike or to believe in exactly the same way about exactly the same things, the project miscarried. It seems that Nature wishes us to enrich each other's insights through the communication of useful knowledge and the discussion of valuable ideals. We can all learn from each other; it is through the traditions accumulated by humanity that we become aware of the workings of the Divine Purpose. Somewhere along the way some individuals became over-ambitious. They resolved to control the bodies and minds of their neighbors. Physical slavery is bad

enough but, when we attempt to impose our own opinions dogmatically, we impair the inalienable right of every person to think for himself. It is only by learning to do his own thinking that he can mature his internal potential.

At the Holy Christmas Season it might be well to remember the words of Christ as set forth in the fifteenth chapter of John, verses twelve and thirteen: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Too many well-intentioned persons have overlooked the importance of personal affection and, as a result, have lost the immanent emotional experience of profound personal regard. In discussing a domestic situation with a concerned individual I quoted the words of St. Paul: "Charity suffereth long and is kind." The Apostle's statement was received with profound resentment. I was assured that intelligent persons had no intention of suffering long or being kind in uncongenial situations. It is obvious that such a reaction revealed the true dimension of the problem under consideration. There are many comparatively loveless families in which children grow up with no experience of parental affection. Each member of the household is concerned only with the satisfaction of his own objectives. He expects others to support his causes, but will never go out of his way to advance the causes of those around him. A misinterpretation of religion is partly responsible for this situation. It is perfectly proper to adore God, the angels, and the saints with a full heart, but human affections should be frustrated in every way possible. This point of view is exactly contrary to the words of Christ and is another example of religious misunderstanding. Obviously all emotions can be perverted and their mystical overtones ignored or neglected. There is no question, however, that constructive human emotional relationships are vital to an understanding of the spiritual mysteries of life. Christmas is a wonderful time to strengthen the simple family ties and to reveal the best type of emotional regard and family devotion.

In recent years there has been considerable complaint about the exploitation of Christmas which many people have come to con-

sider as primarily a merchant's holiday. Considering world conditions it would seem that all persons of good intentions should emphasize the spiritual significance of this festival and upgrade it in every way possible. The importance of the Holy Season to the Christian world cannot be questioned; it is respected and admired by many non-Christian people. Actually, the Christmas festival originated from the celebration of the annual birthday of the sun, the giver of light to all the world. It always combined sacred and secular elements; formal worship prepared the way for general rejoicing including feasting, the exchanging of gifts, the distribution of alms, and gratitude for the countless benefits human beings enjoyed, even in the most troubled times. If we forget to be grateful for the good things we share together, we have lost most of the importance of the Holy Season. It can be a time of self-searching in which we examine our attitudes on life in general, our more intimate communion with relatives and friends, and even "the stranger without the gates." How often do we really consider our dependence upon the One Life that ensouls all things? Do we really count our blessings or merely dwell upon our misfortunes and the injuries, real or imaginary, with which we have burdened our memories. It makes no difference if others are hypercritical or ungrateful—rather it is our privilege to experience within ourselves the highest possible interpretation of the Christmas mystery.

Although the times we live in are confused and conflicting, we still enjoy every day privileges and opportunities which our ancestors never knew. Those who refer to current times as an age of anxiety should remember that our troubles arise from our own attitudes and conduct and the obvious failure to practice the faiths that we claim to believe. Very few of us are ready to accept atheism as the answer to any of our difficulties—spiritual, ethical, or moral. Our resentments against the abuse of Christmas simply give comfort to unbelievers and only discomfort to ourselves.

It also seems to be wrong to assume that Christmas is intended only for children. Fortunately, or unfortunately, we are all children and we are assured that "of such is the kingdom of God." Little folks look forward to Christmas Eve and have done so for centuries.

It is true that they anticipate the gifts which they will receive, but most parents find genuine happiness in bringing joy to their children. Why should they not, in the same spirit, find ways to spread gladness among those of older years. We seldom begrudge extravagances which fulfill our own desires.

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(Act of October 23, 1962; Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code)

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. DATE OF FILING<br>September 26, 1975  | 2. TITLE OF PUBLICATION<br>PRS JOURNAL | 3. FREQUENCY OF ISSUE<br>Quarterly   |
| 4. LOCATION OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION<br>3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles (L.A.), California 90027   |  |  |
| 5. LOCATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OR GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHERS<br>3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles (L.A.), California 90027  |  |  |
| 6. NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHER, EDITOR, AND MANAGING EDITOR   |  |  |
| PUBLISHER<br>Philosophical Research Society, Inc.<br>3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif.   |  | EDITOR<br>Manly P. Hall<br>3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90027 |
| MANAGING EDITOR<br>Manly P. Hall<br>3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90027  |  |  |
| 7. OWNER: Philosophical Research Society; nonprofit Corp. Board of Trustees: Manly P. Hall, Pres., 3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90027; Henry L. Drake, Vice-Pres.; 3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90027; John W. Ervin, Secy.; 14322 Valley Vista, Sherman Oaks, Calif. 91403. |  |  |
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| B. PAID CIRCULATION  |  |  |
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| C. TOTAL PAID CIRCULATION (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2)   | 1516                                   | 1305   |
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## THE SIBYLS AND THEIR PROPHECIES



Our library collection is a very curious book on prophets, magicians, and priests by Janus Jacobus Boissardus, published at Oppenheim in 1615. It is sumptuously illustrated with copper engravings by Johannes-Theodorus de Bry (1561-1623). The present volume includes a special tribute to the princes of the Casimiro family and also a fine self-portrait of de Bry at the age of fifty-four years. He is remembered for the beautiful engravings with which he embellished the alchemical and Rosicrucian books of the early seventeenth century, especially the writings of Robert Fludd and Michael Maier. One cannot reflect upon de Bry's engravings without realizing that he had both creative artistic genius and a considerable comprehension of obscure fields of learning. Boissardus appears to have died before the publication of his great text on divination. He was an able scholar and lists carefully the ancient authors whose works he had consulted.

He devotes considerable space to the Sibyls whose prophecies he examines individually and extracts from them in Greek and Latin and as well as such biographical fragments as have survived. The actual meaning of the word *sibyl* is obscure and of unknown origin but it is used to designate a group of ten prophetesses who lived over a period of some fifteen centuries in various localities of Southern Europe, the Near East, and North Africa. No actual likenesses of these celebrated women exist, but the appearances of a few are described briefly in old manuscripts. De Bry's set of engravings depicts the sibyls with numerous emblematic embellishments. Those who are assumed to have prophesied the advent of Christ are accompanied by appropriate scenes based upon their revelations. De Bry also adds two additional sibyls (the Epirotica and the Aegyptia) which are now believed to be alternate names for those represented in the group of ten. It is possible that the sibyls are related to the muses who are usually shown as a group surrounding the god Apollo who is seated in their midst in the Parnassian





The Epirotic Sibyl, by de Bry. From Boissardus we learn that the Epirotic Sibyl came originally from Phrygia in the land of Troy and later resided in Dodona, a city in Epirus. Here she established her oracle in a grove of sacred oak trees and gathered about her a group of Dodonaean priests. She is said to have developed the first philosophical cosmology.



The Egyptian Sibyl, by de Bry. Nothing is known with certainty about the Egyptian Sibyl. Aelian says that she was one of the four principal priestesses of Phoebus Apollo. Suidas says that she was in Egypt during the time of the Pharaohs. According to Pausanias she was the same as the Persian Sibyl. All agree that she lived in pagan times; some of her prophecies preached recognition of one God. She is said to have predicted Christ and the final resurrection of the dead.

ings of the sibyls attributed to an unnamed Florentine master, tentatively identified as Boccio Baldini who worked in the fifteenth century. There are twelve also in this set, but Dr. Manas believed that the Sibylla Agripina is identical with the Libyan sibyl and that the Sibylla Europa is the same as the Delphic or Cumaean Sibyl. Several authors have suggested that the list was increased to twelve because of the veneration in which this number was held in ancient times. The twelve patriarchs, the twelve prophets of the Old Testament, the twelve apostles of Christ, the twelve tribes of Israel, and the twelve signs of the zodiac can be noted.

In *Anacalypsis*, Dr. Godfrey Higgins makes the following general statement concerning the sibyls: "I saw pictures of the supposed authoresses of these prophetic books in several places in Italy. Their figures are beautifully inlaid in the marble floor of the cathedral church at Sienna, and their statues are placed in a fine church at Venice formerly belonging to the barefooted Carmelites; and they are also found placed round the famous Casa Santa at Loretto." The reference to the Casa Santa in association with the sibyls is interesting. The House of the Virgin Mary in Nazareth was endangered by the Turkish invasion of 1291. To avoid this calamity the house in which Mary had lived was miraculously transported to Loretto in Italy where it is still visited by countless pilgrims. The plain stone structure which is 28' x 12½' has been enclosed within an elaborate basilica. Incidentally, Benedict XV (1914-1922) declared the Madonna of Loretto to be the patroness of aviators.

In 1938 Vatican City issued a special series of airmail stamps which includes two stamps depicting angelic beings miraculously moving the Holy House to Loretto. In 1947 another airmail issue appeared which was of a similar, but more elaborate, design. When we realize that most of the stamps of Vatican City deal strictly with Catholic personalities and beliefs, it is evident that the Church recognizes a number of miraculous occurrences.

In 1509 Michelangelo was commissioned by the reigning pope to decorate the interior of the Sistine Chapel. He did not complete this commission until the fall of 1512. Recognized today as one of the

world's greatest artistic achievements, it includes an elaborate frescoed ceiling decorated with likenesses of pre-Christian prophets and pagan sibyls. This circumstance does not seem to have disturbed the clergy, but the number of unclothed figures in the frescoes are said to have troubled the souls of five popes. In June of 1964 Vatican City issued a series of commemorative stamps on the four hundredth anniversary of the death of Michelangelo. One of the five sibyls depicted on the Sistine Chapel ceiling was reproduced in this set. The one selected was the Delphic Sibyl, a majestic representation of this ancient prophetess. It can hardly be assumed, therefore, that the Church has rejected the Sibylline predictions or regards them as heretical.

Milton S. Terry in his work *The Sibylline Oracles* lists these mysterious women as follows: "Now the Sibyls, according to many writers, have in various places and times been ten in number. But Sibyl is a Romaic term, meaning a prophetess—that is, a soothsayer; hence the female soothsayers have been designated by one name. First, then, there was the Chaldean—that is, the Persian—called by the proper name Sambethe, being of the race of the most blessed Noah, who is said to have prophesied of the affairs of Alexander of Macedon, whom Nicanor mentions, who wrote the life of Alexander. The second was the Libyan, of whom Euripides makes mention in the prologue of the *Lamia*. The third was the Delphian, having been born among the Delphians, concerning whom Chrysippus speaks in his book on Divination. The fourth was the Italian, who was in Cimmeria in Italy, and whose son Evander founded in Rome the temple which is called Lupercal. The fifth was the Erythraean, who also prophesied of the Trojan War, and concerning whom Apollodorus, the Erythraean, made strong affirmation. The sixth was the Samian, called by the proper name Phyto, concerning whom Eratosthenes wrote. The seventh was the Cumaean, called Amalthea, also Herophile, and with some Taraxandra. But Virgil calls the Cumaean Deiphobe, a daughter of Glaucus. The eighth was the Hellespontine, born in the country of Marmessus, near the small town of Girgitha, which was once within the boundaries of Troas, in the times of Solon and Cyrus,



Michelangelo painting of the Erythraean Sibyl in the Sistine Chapel.



The Persian Sibyl, by de Bry. Also known as the Chaldean and Babylonian Sibyl. One of the Persian Sibyls named Sambethe lived during the time of Alexander the Great and prophesied the birth of Christ.



The Libyan Sibyl, by de Bry. This Sibyl must have lived in the fifth century B.C. or earlier as she is mentioned by Euripides. She also has the name of Bybissa or Elisa.



The Samian Sibyl, by de Bry. Eratosthenes states of the Samian Sibyl that she was mentioned in the ancient annals of the Samians.



The Hellepontine Sibyl, by de Bry.

as Heraclides of Pontus wrote. The ninth was the Phrygian; the tenth the Tiburtine, named Albunea.”

Many of the sibyls have descended to us only as names or through prophecies attributed to them. Little or no reliable information is available concerning their lives or the exact periods in which they functioned. We have selected for more detailed consideration four of the best known and these may be considered representative of the entire group and the doctrines which they promulgated.

The old location names associated with the sibyls require considerable research and the results are not especially rewarding. There are also mythological accounts of the miraculous births of these seeresses and their descent from deities, especially Apollo. The sibyls usually lived in caverns near the base of cliffs. Chambers and passageways were hewn from the living rock; Dr. Manas includes photographs of some of these rock-hewn sanctuaries. A few seemed to have traveled considerably, appearing in different places. Communities near their retreats depended heavily upon the sibylline revelations especially in times of stress. Some authors, including G. R. S. Mead and Godfrey Higgins, have suspected that many of the sibyls belonged to a loosely formed secret society and that their prophecies were based upon some kind of knowledge held in common. It is also probable that an order of priestesses and not an individual was implied.

In the *Theosophical Review*, Vols. 22 and 23, G. R. S. Mead presents two papers on *The Sibyllists and the Sibyllines*. He departs from the traditional approach, but his standing as a Greek scholar entitles him to a respectful hearing. According to Mead, the Greek States declared war on the Atlantic Empire which was attempting to invade the European continent. This war was followed by the terrible cataclysm which destroyed Atlantis. The destruction extended to the Mediterranean area and the upheavals were so violent that most of the ancient Greek civilization perished. The restoration of Attic culture was a long and difficult task and the people had to depend almost entirely upon folk wisdom, oracles, and auguries. The sibyls were the intermediaries between the deities and their desolated world. With the passing of time the sibylline revela-



The Tiburtine Sibyl, by de Bry. This Sibyl is variously called Sarbis, Taraxandra, or Cassandra. Her oracles are remembered for their accuracy and for their high moral instruction. She guarded the ceremonies and rites of the Roman Senate. She taught a rational worship of God, obedience to just laws, together with a disciplined and upright life.

tions came to be sanctified by centuries of veneration. Every culture has passed through a period in which survival depended largely upon psychic phenomena of one kind or another. Gradually, the intuitive experiences were organized into state systems which gave rise to the Mysteries.

Most representations of the sibyls depict them as holding large books, presumably containing their treasured utterances. It might also be that these books set forth the astronomical system which was supposed to be held in common by these ancient prophetesses. There is an account which was taken seriously by earlier writers that the Cumana Sibyl offered a collection of sibylline prophecies in nine volumes of manuscript to Tarquinius Superbus, the last of the seven kings of Rome. This king ruled in the second half of the sixth century B.C. The sibyl asked a very large price for the old writings which the king refused to pay. She thereupon burned three of the volumes and offered the remaining six to the king at the same price. When he again refused she burned three more, offering the remaining three for the same amount she had asked for all nine. The king who had become uneasy about what had occurred asked to read the surviving volumes and was then so filled with wonder that he gave a larger price than the sibyl had asked.

The king then inquired if there were any way in which the books that had been burned could be replaced and was told by the sibyl that she had no other copies of them and that if such did exist they could be known only through divine inspiration. The Cumana Sibyl then added that in olden days certain persons when moving or traveling had taken with them things held in high esteem and regarded as most useful. With careful inquiry, other sibylline manuscripts might be found. A search was immediately instituted and a number of the sibylline prophetic writings were brought to Rome and kept in the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill. This temple was later burned and it is not known that any of these ancient writings once conserved there have survived. Again, ambassadors were sent out to various areas where the sibyls had functioned in an attempt to assemble another collection of the prophetic writings. Still later, Augustus sought for further copies and the ques-



The Cumana Sibyl, by de Bry. The Cumana Sibyl, also called the Sibyl of Cyma, a Greek town in Asia Minor, in some accounts seems to be confused with the Cumaean Sibyl.

tion naturally arises as to why such Romans as Scipio and Scylla should take so great an interest in oracular pronouncements.

The answer seems to be that most of the sibyls had predicted that an illustrious person, a divine ruler ordained by heaven, would appear in the world about the beginning of the Piscean Age. Ambitious Roman politicians hoped to prove that they were the fulfillments of the ancient oracles. Some of them actually changed their names to strengthen their relationship with some oracular line or phrase. Julius Caesar may have believed himself to be this man of destiny, although Vestritius Spurinna (also a prophet) warned him to beware of the Ides of March. Quoting Higgins, "It is probable that when Julius was killed, some of the devotees would admit that they were mistaken in the person, but this would not in the slightest degree injure the credit of the mythos. The superstition only transfers itself. Evidence or experience in these cases is of no avail. Octavius became the expected *great one*; and of *him* his followers had no doubt . . ."

At this point it should be clearly understood that the Sibylline Oracles are not the same as the Sibylline Books which were compiled at a far earlier date, probably from oral tradition. Reference works discuss the Sibylline Oracles under separate headings from the writings of the ancient sibyls. It is possible that some older fragments may be included in the Sibylline Oracles, but they were completely revised with considerable interpolation by Christian mystics during the first to third centuries A.D.

One of the best available renditions of the later works in this field is *The Sibylline Oracles*, translated from the Greek into English blank verse by Milton S. Terry, New York, 1890. In his introduction, Professor Terry makes a number of general observations of importance to all students of mystical literature. He writes of the surviving Sibylline Oracles as follows: "They belong to that large body of pseudepigraphal literature which originated near the beginning of the Christian era (about B.C. 150-A.D. 300), which consists of such works as the Book of Enoch, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Book of Jubilees, the Assumption of Moses, the Psalms of Solomon, the Ascension of Isaiah, and the Second Book of Esdras. The production of this class of literature was most

notable at Alexandria in the time of the Ptolemies. The influence of Greek civilization and culture upon the large Jewish population of the Egyptian metropolis, and the marked favors shown this people in that country, turned them far from the strict usages of their Palestinean brethren."

It may be noted in passing that Marie Corelli's well-known novel, *Ardath*, is based upon a quotation from the Second Book of Esdras. In this same, highly significant period, most of the hermetic writings first appeared; some early texts relating to alchemy seem to have a similar origin. The Gnostic philosophy is divided into two definite schools—the Syrian and the Greek—and there is increasing evidence that it gradually centered around the City of Alexandria. Another mysterious, but highly significant, text, *The Mystical Divinity of Dionysius the Areopagite* (also known as the pseudo-Dionysius) should also probably be included along with many other elusive and undated productions. The surviving texts of the Sibylline Oracles contain numerous Jewish, Greek, and Christian elements. They recapitulate the Mosaic story of the creation of the world with certain minor variations of content. Such foundations in Holy Writ attracted the attention of early Christian mystics and ultimately contributed to the rise of heretical sects. The early Church Fathers favored the Sibylline Oracles which they assumed contained pertinent references to the New Testament. Among those who were apologists for this literature, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian are worthy of mention.

Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. I, III.) says: "As God, out of his desire to save the Jews, gave them prophets, so raising up prophets also to the Greeks from their own nation and language, as far as they were capable of receiving that good gift of God, He separated them from the vulgar, as not only the preaching of Peter, but the Apostle Paul also declares, speaking thus:—'Take the Greek books into your hands, and look into the Sibyl, how clearly she speaks of one God and of things to come; then take Hystaspes [an ancient king of the Medes] also, and read, and you will find the Son of God much more clearly and evidently described, and that many kings shall employ all their force against Christ, out of hatred to him and to all that call upon His name.'" (See *The*

*Gospel History and Doctrinal Teaching Critically Examined*, A. D. Thomson, London, 1873).

About the close of the fourth century the Emperor Honorius is believed to have issued an order for the destruction of the Sibylline Oracles. A number of fragments survived having been hidden by devout believers and, during the revival of Greek philosophy about the beginning of the sixteenth century A.D., eleven manuscripts were found, at least two of which had been preserved in the Vatican Library. The most recent discovery seems to have been made in 1817 when a manuscript of the fourteenth book of the collection was found and published. The first printed edition of the Greek text appeared in Basel in 1545; a number of Greek and Latin versions followed in due course. Professor Terry's translations include the surviving parts of fourteen of the Sibylline Oracles.

The best modern parallel to the Sibylline Oracles is *The Prophetic Quatrains of Michael Nostradamus*. This famous sixteenth century prophet and physician admitted indebtedness to the ancient prophetic works and depended heavily upon visions and trances in his pronouncements concerning the future. Like the earlier Sibylline texts, the works of this French seer are curiously and ambiguously set forth in poetic quatrains and sixains. They have puzzled experts for centuries and even today there is no general agreement as to the meanings of most of the quatrains. There is enough evidence to support the realization that Nostradamus did foresee future events which he intentionally concealed under adroitly structured symbolical statements. While robed in sanctified vestments and bearing a laurel wand, he entered a state of ecstatic trance and called forth spirits from the misty deep. Such procedures have not endeared him to academic thinkers, but he is still highly regarded by students of esoteric lore.

The opening lines of the first section of the *Sibylline Oracles* is indicative of the general tone of these writings.

"Beginning with the earliest race of men,  
Even to the latest, I will prophesy  
Of all things, past, and present, and to come  
In the world through the wickedness of men.

And first, God bids me utter how the world  
 Came into being. And do thou declare,  
 O crafty mortal—prudently declare,  
 Lest ever thou disparage my commands—  
 How the celestial King, who made the world  
 And all things, said: Let it be, and it was.”

The most natural way of tracing the descent of these various prophetic writings is to assume that: (1) The sibyls lived in various parts of Southern Europe, the Near East, and North Africa and gained local distinction for their strange ways of life and their more or less incomprehensible utterances. (2) Their words were recorded by local scribes. In the course of time a collection of these writings was brought together which was greatly esteemed by the pagan Romans. (3) The veneration in which the sibyls were held became the basis of later mystical revelations attributed to them which were finally published under the title *The Sibylline Oracles*.

The Erythraean Sibyl is the earliest for which any approximate date is recorded. She must have lived about the time of the Trojan War (1200-1400 B.C.). She was held in the highest regard by the Romans and many of the early Christians. Eusebius and Lactantius refer to her prophecies. Eusebius will be remembered as the secretary of the Nicean Council which convened in 325 A.D. Early writers record that the Erythraean Sibyl predicted to the Greek leaders that the expedition against Troy would be successful and that the city would be destroyed. It is also believed that Homer (who according to Herodotus lived in the ninth century B.C., but an earlier date is possible) included extracts from the Sibylline prophecies in the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. Diodorus Siculus (first century B.C.) is the authority for the reference of Homer. Modern researchers, however, have been unable to identify conclusively the passages involved.

The great acrostic which appears in the verses of the Erythraean Sibyl is favorably considered in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. An acrostic is usually concealed in a text of poetic nature in which the first letter of each line when read vertically in proper order can form words which reveal a secret meaning. The most remarkable



The Erythraean Sibyl. Illustration by de Bry.

example of such an acrostic occurs in the verses of the Erythraean Sibyl. The initial letters read downward form the words "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior." The next four lines read in the same way give the word "cross." The authenticity of this last word has been questioned. In the Greek original the word *ichthus* (fish) stands for Jesus and was in common use among the early Christians. A fish drawn in the sand or dirt was a sign of recognition among the devout. The great acrostic is often discussed, but the text with which it is involved is not easily available. In the book by Boissardus (already mentioned) the acrostic is reproduced in the original Greek together with two Latin translations which preserve the original cypher. We produce here one of the Latin versions in which the acrostic is clearly shown. It would not be possible to give the verses in English and preserve the original acrostic. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* does not question the authenticity of this prophecy; the Erythraean Sibyl is among those pictured by Michelangelo in the Sistine frescoes.

The Roman senate, after the original Sibylline verses were destroyed in 83 B.C. when the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was burned, sent fifteen ambassadors to search for the other manuscripts. Among the towns visited was Erythrae where about one thousand verses attributed to the Erythraean Sibyl were found and conveyed to Rome. St. Thomas Aquinas, in order to prove that the heathens were capable of prophecy, referred to the instance of the sibyls who made clear mention of the mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation of the Word, of the Life, Passion, and Resurrection. It is true that the Sibylline poems now extant became in course of time interpolated; but, as Benedict XIV remarks, this does not hinder much of them, especially what the early Fathers referred to, from being genuine and in no wise apocryphal. (See *Catholic Encyclopedia* article on "Prophecy.")

Joseph Ennemoser in his book *The History of Magic* published by Bohn, London, 1854, writes: "St. Augustin is probably to be regarded as the most especial defender of the Sibylline books amongst the Fathers. In the very commencement of his work he speaks of the Sibyls, and quotes seven-and-twenty verses of the

J udicii fuerit cum signum ; terra madabit.  
 E cælo veniet Princeps per sæcla futurus.  
 S cilicet , ut carnem præsens , & judicet orbem.  
 O mnis homo hunc fidusq; Deum , infidusq; videbit;  
 V nã cum sanctis excelsum sine sub ævi.  
 S ede sedens animas censebit , corpora & ipsa.  
 CH erfos erit mundus , spinas feret undiq; tellus.  
 R ejicient simulachra homines , & munera Ditis.  
 I nquirens portas infringet carceris atri.  
 S ic etenim cuncta veniet lux libera carni  
 T unc Sanctis . Ignis fontes æternus aduret.  
 O ccultos actus omnes & quisque loquetur.  
 S ed tenebrosa Deus collustrans pectora pandet.  
 TH renus erit cunctis , & stridor dentis adesi.  
 E ffugiet solis jubar , astrorumq; choreæ.  
 O mne poli Lumen solvetur , & aurea Luna.  
 V alles extollet , collèsq; à vertice perdet.  
 V squam nec celsum mortalibus , aut grave quicquam.  
 I nde æqui montes campis , Hinc cærule Ponti  
 O mneratis spernent onus . Hiscet fulmine tellus.  
 S ic fontes simularescent , & fluminis alvei.  
 S tridula tunc querulum sonitum tuba fundet Olympo,  
 O rbis grande malum rugieus , & damna futura.  
 T artareumq; Chaos monstrabit terra dehiscens.  
 E t ventent omnes reges Magni ante tribunal.  
 R esluet & cælo tunc sulphuris amnis & ignis.  
 S ic Sanctorum hominum fiet manifesta sepulchra.  
 T unc fidis lignum , cornu atq; optabile fiet.  
 A tq; piorum vita hominum , nocumenta que mundæ  
 V ndis lustrabunt bisseño in fonte vocatos.  
 R ex Pastoris erit nobis & ferrea virga.  
 O mnipotens Deus est præscriptus versibus istis.  
 S ervator nostro æternus Rex passus amore.

Erythraean Sibyl, which foretold the coming of Christ, and his sufferings." Among the representations of the sibyls by de Bry, the Erythraean Sibyl rests her left hand upon the Agnus Dei and with the forefinger of her right hand she points to a vision scene of the resurrection of Christ attended by angels. The Greek historian Pausanias tells us that the actual name of the Erythraean Sibyl is Herophile.

The best information available would indicate that the term *Cumaean Sibyl* was conferred upon a succession of prophetesses dwelling in Cumae, a Greek community facing the Bay of Naples. Dr. Manas notes that the cave in which this sibyl and those who followed her lived and prophesied was exactly located by archaeological excavations carried on between 1925 and 1932 by the Italian government. The work was done under the direction of Professor Amedeo Maiuri. The oracular shrine was positively identified in 1932, and Dr. Manas reproduces photographs of the interior of the oracular chamber. The cave had been carefully carved out of the living rock; several galleries were traced. Dr. Maiuri's discoveries are detailed in his publication *Itinerari dei Musei e Monumenti d'Italia*. The principal gallery is about 431' in length and many passageways lead from it. The innermost sanctuary where the rites of Apollo were held is ventilated by shafts cut through the rock reaching the surface of the mountain. For further details and photographs, consult Dr. Manas' book on "Divination."

The Temple of Apollo which originally formed the entrance of this Sibylline cave was preserved until 552 A.D. when the area was invaded by the Goths. During this war the emperor, Justinian I, sent an expedition, and the Temple of Apollo was destroyed and the caverns considerably damaged.

There is an interesting legend mentioned by most authors writing on the subject that one of the early Cumaean Sibyls was of such dazzling beauty that the god Apollo attempted to woo her. To advance his suit he said he would give her whatever she should ask of him. She requested that she should live as many years as she had grains of sand in her hand. He granted her wish but she declined to return his affections, whereupon Apollo withheld the gift



The Cumaean Sibyl, by de Bry.

of eternal youth and the sibyl became progressively older and more decrepit. She is often represented in art as a very aged woman.

The poet Virgil was born in 70 B.C. and died in 19 B.C. His remains were taken to Naples which had been his favorite place of residence. He was well acquainted with the area where the Cumaean Sibyl had made her prophecies. This may account for the details regarding her which appear in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* is written in a style similar to that used by Homer in his great epics. Aeneas, escaping from the ill-fated city of Troy, had been instructed to communicate with the Cumaean Sibyl. She had access to the realms of the dead and could grant his desire to contact the ghost of his father, Anchises, in the underworld. The sibyl conducted Aeneas into Hades where he consulted with his father's shade concerning the prospects for the future of himself and other survivors of the Trojan disaster. When they reached the entrance of the temple which guarded the entrance of the Sibylline caverns, the prophetess met them at the threshold; Virgil describes her in the following words: "While thus before the gate she speaks, on a sudden her looks change, her colour comes and goes, her locks are dishevelled, her breast heaves, and her fierce heart swells with enthusiastic rage; she appears in a larger form, her voice speaking her not a mortal, now that she is inspired with the nearer influence of the god." According to tradition the Cumaean seeress was seven hundred years old at that time and was fated to endure for three additional centuries before she could be released from Apollo's gift of years. Most of the sibyls delivered their predictions while in a state of ecstasy or frenzy and Virgil's description was typical of the divine enthusiasm (from the Greek *En-thos*, meaning "in God," or a divine ecstasy).

There are distinct tones of similarity between Aeneas seeking the ghost of his father and King Saul desiring to converse with the ghost of the prophet, Samuel. (See I Samuel chapter 28) Desirous of learning his own fate, Saul sought the assistance of the Witch of Endor. She was afraid to practice her mystic art because the King himself had issued an edict condemning all wizards and witches to death. When Saul promised her immunity, she caused the shade



Aeneas conducted through the underworld by the Cumaean Sibyl. From Virgil's *Aeneid*, translated by Dryden, 1697.

of Samuel to come up out of the earth and the prophet spoke to the King, predicting the disasters that were to follow because God had departed from the people. In religious art, the Witch of Endor is depicted in tattered raiments and huddled in a cave. She might well be considered among the Sibyls for she spoke saying: "I see a god coming out of the earth." Saul's message had the same doleful warnings that Anchises gave his son, Aeneas.

The Delphic Sibyl should not be confused with the Pythia or virgin priestess who gave her prophecies from the tripod of the Delphic Oracle. Some reports tell that the Delphic Sibyl served an altar of Apollo centuries before the establishment of the Delphic Oracle. She gave her prophecies from the top of a rocky outcropping in the town of Delphi, and an earlier seeress had followed the same procedure—even before the time of Orpheus.

The celebrated Delphic Oracle was sacred to the Pythian Apollo, because it was on this site that he slew the serpent Python and cast its body into a volcanic vent. From this crevasse fumes arose continuously and these vapors had a strange effect upon both human beings and animals. A wall was built around the immediate area as a protection against these strange exhalations and later a shrine to the Pythian Apollo was erected there.

In the course of time it was observed that under the influence of the volcanic fumes, persons entered a state of trance and made prophetic utterances. A priestess was appointed to serve as an intermediary between Apollo and the inhabitants of the region. To protect her a tripod was set up on which was a special seat or throne directly over the vent. Originally there was only one Pythia or priestess, and the oracle was consulted once a year. As its fame spread, however, the rites became available monthly, and at the height of its influence was consulted daily. For a long period three young priestesses served the oracle. It was required that they be virgins. Later, however, this rule was changed and only a woman over fifty could be sanctified as a Pythia. Incidentally, the father of Pythagoras consulted the Delphic Oracle and he received a prediction for the career of his illustrious son which proved to be correct. The father is said to have named the child Pythagoras in honor of the Pythian Apollo.



The Delphic Sibyl, by de Bry.

The prophetic books of the Old Testament have much in common with the Sibylline revelations. The earliest of these Jewish prophetic books date from the eighth century B.C. or shortly thereafter and include Amos, Hosea, parts of Isaiah, and Micah. Others are somewhat later, but all were written before or during the second century B.C. Two verses of Isaiah are held to predict the birth of Jesus. Chapter 7:14 reads: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Chapter 9:6 was well-known during the lifetime of Jesus: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Matthew 1:23 is taken almost verbatim from Isaiah and Jesus is referred to under the name *Immanuel*.

Of New Testament writings, the Revelation of John is most closely reminiscent of the Sibylline prophecies. In fact, it has remained as an enigma to most scholars who are inclined to assume that it foretells things to come in the mortal world. St. John is said to have lived on the Isle of Patmos when he wrote the Book of Revelation. In this day the Phrygian rites were practiced in this area. It is obvious that he was either initiated into the Phrygian Mysteries or was well acquainted with their doctrines. The Phrygian Sibyl prophesied in Ancyra, an ancient Phrygian town. It is supposed that she wore red garments and held in one hand a naked sword and in the other a laurel branch. Like the Cumaean Sibyl, she was subject to similar ecstasies. The Phrygian Sibyl predicted the birth of Christ and that the Annunciation should be heralded by an angel sent from God. De Bry, in his engraving omits the sword and the laurel branch and places the prophetess between two trees. Behind the tree on the left is a small scene of the resurrection of the dead. She wears a curious headdress ornamented with a cross.

The Phrygian rites included elaborate symbolic ritualism for which no dogmatic explanation was given. Initiates of the rites were expected to discover the hidden meanings by means of the



The Phrygian Sibyl, by de Bry.

intuitive power within themselves. Most higher education in ancient times followed this procedure. Our word *education* is derived from the Latin *educere*, meaning to draw out something potential or latent. This is exactly contrary to the procedures now in vogue. Arts and sciences equip the individual to release the soul power resident in himself. They bestow the skills necessary for adequate self-expression so that the degree of genius locked within the soul has proper physical means to make the best use of natural resources. This procedure was common to both hemispheres and is still prominent on the higher levels of Oriental thinking. Higgins was convinced that there were sibyls in Asia in remote times who also taught by emblems, both verbal and pictorial.

Modern critics of oracles in general assume that these prophecies were an ancient priestly contrivance and were worded obscurely so that it was virtually impossible for them to be discredited. The original words attributed to the deities were translated into hexameter verses by special scribes, but it does not necessarily follow that the meanings were altered. The obscure phraseology was intended to stimulate thoughtfulness and the psychic faculties of the supplicants. Each found the meaning most suitable to his own needs. The history of prophecy shows us clearly that the prophets of old were seldom inclined to cater to the whims of princes or the ambitions of tyrants. Many seers have been persecuted and some suffered martyrdom. Their advice was nearly always given to advance the morality and ethics of their time. A certain oracular statement might be fulfilled more than once and through succeeding ages. As Oswald Spengler pointed out, events are cyclic and whenever certain causes arise their consequences can be prophesied with reasonable accuracy. In the days of the sibyls religious life was considerably less complex than it is today. The wisdom of the folk was widely diffused, but had not been subjected to the opinions of higher intellectualism. We are justified, therefore, in examining the oracles of the past without prejudice or conceit.

## LIFE-DEATH/MIND-BODY: NEW INSIGHTS INTO AN ANCIENT QUATERNITY

by STEPHAN A. SCHWARTZ



physician sits near the bedside of a patient who has recently died—and been brought back to life. As he gently draws the patient out, having done this now many times before, he is unsurprised as she describes, in minute detail and with what he knows to be great accuracy, exactly what happened in her room while she was dead. As usual the perspective from which she saw things, including her own body lying in the bed, is that of a balloon floating on the ceiling.

Nor does he find unusual her statements of feeling only great peace, acceptance, and love enveloping her or her subjective sensation of passing through a tunnel and then coming out into a great white light. From many such interviews the doctor who, in this case, happens to be Dr. Raymond A. Moody at the University of Virginia's Medical School and author of the best-selling book *Life After Life* has come to believe that, with some minor variations, there is a universal experience undergone by all who die. But Dr. Moody is still puzzled by the questions which remain unanswered: What survives when the body is dead? What was on the hospital room ceiling looking down on the body and the medical team below? Where was the tunnel that almost all patients go through? What was the light at the other end and where was the location of the place which all recently-dead people seem to go to so that they can *judge their own acts, thoughts, and words*?

These questions, and they are ancient ones which have long been at the core of metaphysical teachings, have been asked again and again over the ages. Only now, when a considerable number of individuals have been restored to life, have metaphysical teachings and Western science been able to blend. For the first time modern medical technology has provided a way to gain *evidential* insights into realms previously invisible to all but the very few who have successfully pursued the inner way—insights which, although help-

ful, were so subjective that it was impossible to integrate them into the mainstream of Western science so that they might have a moderating influence.

But in considering the issue of death which is being studied by Moody, Dr. Kubler-Ross, and others, it is important not to become so fascinated with the phenomena of transition that we miss their major message for the living. For questions about death are really questions about life and, more fundamentally still, questions on the ultimate nature of consciousness. Looked at from this perspective, the essence of the death experience is not one of ending but a reaffirmation of the reality of continuity. From that reality, it is suddenly possible to gain some illumination into the mind's relationship with materiality, particularly its conduit of expression, the brain.

This concern with the quaternity of the life-death, mind-body relationship is an old problem. Without question the Egyptians were interested in these issues, as their ritual for the dead makes clear. Other cultures also wrestled with the puzzle and some, notably in the East, produced individuals willing to spend a life working on themselves to discover answers.

Their efforts and the conclusions they produced supported by practical disciplines would be at the heart of most of the Earth's philosophies. In one most extraordinary period, the eighth to the sixth centuries B.C., Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Jainism began, each, although unique, sharing certain common assumptions arrived at, in part, through a study of death's relationship to life: the body is an extension and creation of the mind, *at least that part of the mind which lies beyond the purely mental activities which are based on input from the five senses*. Death is merely another birth—a transition for the body, but a part of the total continuum of consciousness. The mind is, itself, the creature and servant of what is variously called *the higher mind, the superconscious, the soul mind*, and other terms—all of which allude to a level of cognition lying beyond the limits of personality. It is this portion of each entity which is the ultimate survivor, this portion which is the true self.

On the basis of these assumptions and the enormous body of evidence produced by those willing to give their lives to the quest, mankind in the East made a psycho-spiritual evolution comparable to biological evolution. A stage was reached from which the certainty arose that reality of time and space was only one of a continuum of realities and that the body, even down to the smallest part was totally controllable by, and a servant to, what was seen as a higher mind.

For the West this period was also a fertile one with the foundation of Greek Democracy and the development of the great schools of Greek thought. But in the Mediterranean the eighth to sixth centuries took a different turn; there the emphasis gradually moved from the more esoteric interests shared with the East to questions about the intellect, its powers of knowingness, and the qualities provided by our senses.

This is not to say that there was no attention focused on the mind's potential awareness of what might be called psycho-spiritual realities; there were certainly individuals concerned with this topic, the secret Pythagorean School being perhaps the best example of those who saw the body, mind, spirit triune as central to any inquiry into man's true nature. However, in terms of their effect on the future development of Western thinking on the life-death, mind-body puzzle these efforts were subordinated to the exoteric concerns which laid the groundwork for the intellectually oriented efforts—as opposed to the more subjective intuitive approach of the East—which culminated in the rather primitive behaviorism of Aristotle.

Unlike his teacher Plato whose own thinking inclined towards the foundations laid by Pythagoras and who by some reports became almost mystical as he grew older, Aristotle saw the mind as essentially a portion of the body, although in certain instances he was willing to consider the intellect as, in some way, separable.

It is difficult for even a trained historian to look back now and comprehend the influence this single man had on Western thought, or to trace how pervasively his concepts concerning the mind and the body affected the development of Western science. In the

period after the fall of the classical cultures, for example, when the rigidly restrictive religiosity we call *Scholasticism* dominated European thought, Aristotle's writings became virtual extensions of the Church's dogmas. And it was not until the first decades of the seventeenth century that the Church's repressive force began to lose its hold on Western man's philosophic and scientific development. Even then, when its powers of censure were no longer absolute, its ability to warp and harm were still great, as Galileo learned to his sorrow.

In the midst of this, however, there arose a Frenchman whose thinking would not be trammled, René Descartes. Although observing what happened to Galileo caused him to moderate his writing and made him careful to avoid a frontal confrontation with the Church, relying instead on nibbling away at old convictions, Descartes' thinking about the mind and the body, as well as a wide range of other issues, would eventually sweep across Europe. His words alone would cause a restructuring of the nature of scientific and philosophical inquiry, an effect felt to the present day.

Descartes, perhaps significantly, began his work after a dream or vision which came to him while he was wintering, probably in Neuberg, Germany. There on St. Martin's Eve, November 10, 1619, "a wonderful discovery" and a "marvelous science" were revealed to him. All his future efforts were bent to realizing the insights given him that night.

Ultimately, Descartes would conclude that the mind and body were separate things. Unfortunately he also came to believe that the universe was a closed system and that all things could be explained by physical law.

These conclusions were to prove a critical factor in the development of exoteric western science and the materialistic thinking which dominates much of scientific thought today. Researchers, trained either to materialistic humanism or, at best, a view of man as a damned creature whose life was to be spent propitiating a judgmental God, chose to accept the idea of reality being totally explicable by physical laws. This caused a distortion of Descartes' mind-body duality such that the mind became, in some never

successfully explained manner, an extension of the brain.

From this flowed the abandonment by science of research into the nature of the true self (one of the saddest results of this abandonment being the grotesque misinterpretation of Alchemy as a get-rich-quick scheme of gold making). As a mirror to the perversion of the mind-body relationship, the other side of the quaternity, the life-death issue also suffered. Death became a thing of fear and loathing, an abyss which could be spanned only by the dispensation procured by the practice of specific rites offered by specific organizations. In the face of science's complete abdication of research into such areas, as being the realm of theology alone, and the suppression of the kind of individualistic insights which permeated Eastern and Western mysticism, the terror of death became fixed as a major nightmare of the living.

This situation would prevail until, almost in spite of itself, science reached the limits of materialism and found itself, again, forced to deal with questions on the nature of consciousness. Take, as an example, the field of neuro-physiology.

After a lifetime spent in research on the brain culminating in general recognition that his contribution to neuro-surgery and neuro-physiology was without peer in his generation, the late Dr. Wilder Penfield looked back on his work and in 1974 wrote:

"The challenge that comes to every neuro-physiologist is to explain in terms of brain mechanism all that men have come to consider the work of the mind . . . And this he must undertake freely, without philosophical or religious bias . . .

"Can the brain explain the man? Can the brain achieve by neuronal action all that the mind accomplishes?

"Because it seems to me certain that it will always be quite impossible to explain the mind on the basis of neuronal action within the brain, and because it seems to me that the mind develops and matures independently throughout an individual's life as though it were a continuing element, and because a computer (which the brain is) must be programmed and operated by an agency capable of independent understanding, I am forced to choose the proposition that our being is to be explained on the basis of two funda-

mental elements. This to my mind, offers the greatest likelihood of leading to the final understanding towards which so many stalwart scientists strive.

"I conclude that there is no good evidence . . . that the brain alone can carry out the work that the mind does."

These words, written after his retirement as a neurosurgeon and Director of the Montreal Neurological Institute of McGill University were a return to Descartes and others who went before. But with a difference.

Until the work of English physician John Hughlings Jackson in the late nineteenth century the understanding of the neuro-electrical nature of the brain was very primitive. Indeed, in Penfield's eyes Hippocrates' fifth century B. C. statements "to consciousness the brain is messenger" and "the brain is interpreter of consciousness" constituted as fine a presentation of the relationships between the mind and the brain as any made until well after the discovery of electricity. But even Jackson's work would very soon appear as gross in its approach.

By the 1930s research in neuro-anatomy had reached a point where Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung felt he could speak out against those, including many researchers in medicine, who still felt the mind was merely the result of some neuro-electrical activity in the brain. Writing in a German professional journal Jung stated in 1936 that, "In spite of the materialistic tendency to conceive of the soul [the operator who programs the computer in Penfield's terms] mainly as a mere result of physical and chemical processes, there is not a single proof of this hypothesis. On the contrary, innumerable facts show that the soul translates the physical processes into images which frequently bear hardly any recognizable relation to the objective process.

"The materialistic hypothesis is much too bold and oversteps the limits of experience with metaphysical presumption."

These statements, although far in advance of his time, are very similar to the conclusions of Dr. Penfield and others today. They still suffered, however, from the same flaws charged to the materialists; the research upon which they were based was still not

unequivocal. Neuro-physiology was still a new field, crude by the standards Penfield would establish—using electronic probes which could actually stimulate, without doing harm, specific areas of the brain. It is the sophistication and subtlety of this and other of his techniques which makes Penfield's words so significant.

His conclusions that of seeing man as a motivating mind and the body as a secondary creation is another order of conclusion from the more usual philosophical or psychological speculations. Penfield was speaking after having mapped and explored the living brains of well over 1,000 people—awake individuals answering questions as he worked. Nothing, he discovered, as Jung framed it, "put the psychic processes in the test tube."

Nor was Penfield alone in his field. Another pioneer in neuro-mapping, the Australian research physiologist, Sir John Eccles also came to this same conclusion after a life of research. In 1976 in an address to the Parapsychological Section of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, he put these thoughts on record even more firmly than he had in earlier books and papers. To Sir John the case was a clear one: "I do believe that the mind has got its own existence, its own independence, apart from the brain. It works intimately with the brain, but is superior to the brain. It wasn't something from the brain that gave me the feeling I had the intention to move my finger; it came from the mind. And this is, I think, essential to any understanding of human action and responsibility. . . . This is a tremendous change from the old materialist monism where at best they would say that there are things going on in the brain which give you some mental action, but they would deny that the mind is an independent self-subsistent, existent entity. We have to realize that each human being in a way has something infinitely precious, infinitely mysterious."

But by the time Sir John and Penfield spoke, it was not only neurophysiologists who were reaching such conclusions. Botanists and biologists were suddenly faced with the very real possibility that plants and other life forms had consciousness of a far more sophisticated level than previously thought and that, even more

significantly, they were capable of communicating. Geologists and archaeologists found they could use the higher powers of the mind to locate sites and ore deposits. Through all these fields of research there coursed a new concept of the mind and its capabilities.

It is in physics though, that most demanding of sciences, in which the most profound changes have occurred. Beginning in Germany just prior to this century and continuing down through Niels Bohr of Denmark, Einstein, Walter Heisenberg, Louis de Broglie, Erwin Schrodinger and Paul A. M. Dirac (to name a few of the most powerful lights), a new vision, a new world view of space, time, matter, and mind has emerged, bringing with its development the promise of a scientific revolution even more cataclysmically disorienting than Copernicus' demonstrations that the solar system revolved around the sun and not the Earth. Like the major shifts in perspective dictated by the works of Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, or Harvey's observations that the blood circulated throughout the body in a closed system, this non-materialistic world view presented by physics has met with extraordinary resistance. Even today, although firmly based in mathematics and certain laboratory demonstrations, so profoundly does it shake comfortable patterns of the past that almost half a century after much of the major work was done, most scientists—to say nothing of laymen—still cannot bring themselves to accept what cannot be denied; and so they simply ignore it. Mind is mind, matter remains matter, and time and space are the parametres of reality.

Yet as early as 1933 Sir James Jeans, an English mathematician, physicist, and astronomer, wrote: "In so far as science now draws any picture at all of matter, it is one which seems in every way closer to the mind."

Nine years later in 1942 he added to this, saying, ". . . the physical theory of relativity has now shown that electric and magnetic forces are not real at all; they are mere mental constructs . . . It is the same with the Newtonian force of gravitation and with energy, momentum and other concepts which were introduced to help us understand the activities of the world—all prove to be mere mental constructs, and do not even pass the test of objectivity. [and] much

of what used to be thought to possess an objective physical existence now proves to consist only of subjective mental constructs . . ."

Suddenly even the new dualism suggested by Penfield's work falls away, or at least undergoes a further evolution—one which he may have anticipated but did not wish to comment on. Space and time now appear not as the foundations of nature and reality but as mere subjective reactions of our sense perceptions. There is no body, or at best it is the creation of the mind—and by mind, it is ultimately meant what esotericists call *the soul mind or the super-conscious*.

It is not a question, then, of left brain-right brain or even new brain (the cerebral hemispheres)-old brain (higher and lower brain stem) anymore than a computer's electronic relays are its program, although this four way integration may well have to take place as a properly formulated program closes the right circuits before the full potential of the mind can be realized. Postures, drugs, breathing exercises, the whole range of things man has done to contact another reality—or maybe just reality as it truly is—actually may do nothing in themselves except to change us slightly physically to a point where we break down our inhibitions enough to become *who we really are*.

Certainly the work of physician and altered state researcher Dr. Andrew Weil suggests this is the case. As he explains it, "Nothing in either drugs or yogic disciplines could physically account for the effects achieved. Fire walking, the raising and absorption of tumours, on command, the suspension of vital signs, to name only a few of the more flamboyant examples recently witnessed by trained observers; these and a dozen other phenomena can only be explained in terms of a universe in which the mind is primary and matter its extension and subordinate."

With research of this kind and the statements it leads scientists like Eccles, Penfield, Jeans, and Weil to make, the answers to Moody's question: "At death what floats above the body?" and other queries begin to emerge and the fearsome nature of the transaction recedes. And if this new science and what it has to say about

reality, life and death, and the mind-body puzzle sounds like mysticism, perhaps it is. At least one physicist, Dr. Fritjof Capra, at the University of California, Berkeley, has seen this as an open parallel and felt it was important enough to write a book, *The Tao of Physics*, which compares Eastern teachings with quantum physics and finds the two more alike than apart. In fact, it is not Eastern teaching alone but that most misunderstood of Western studies, Alchemy, which suddenly begins to make sense, just as the old materialism fades away. The transmutation of the Alchemists was not lead to gold as the materialists would have it, but the man trapped in time and space fearing death—to a mind freed of anything but its own potential, to discover the causal self, the final timeless, spaceless mind of the soul.

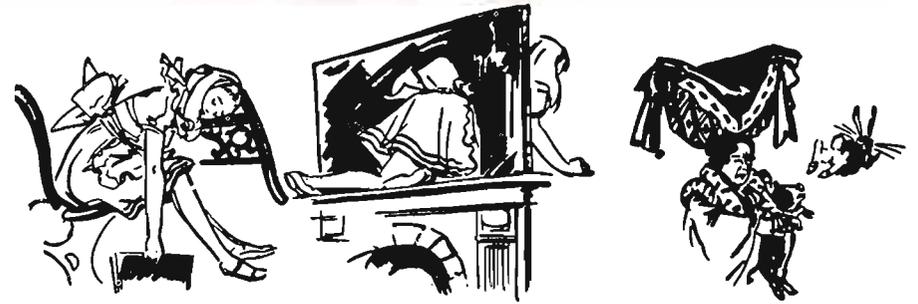
But it is not a comparison with old roads previously discarded and now seen as valid or culturally bizarre practices which suddenly reveal true promise that really matter. That would restrict the issue to a simple historian's pleasure. Nor should this new research be perverted so that, as Manly P. Hall observes, "We get man out of the prison of matter only to lock him away again into a prison of the lower mind."

Instead, we should take our lead from what Sir James Jeans so clearly saw. In considering the implications of this conjoining of exoteric science with the hidden work of the Inner Way he concluded that at last we have "a universe which looks as though it might conceivably form a suitable dwelling place for free men, and not a mere shelter for brutes. . . ."



We are intelligent beings; and intelligent beings can not have been formed by a blind brute, insensible being. There is certainly some difference between a clod and the ideas of Newton. Newton's intelligence came from some greater Intelligence.

--Voltaire



## Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

### BEAUTY HINTS

There seems to be little agreement as to what constitutes beauty. Adornments of various kinds have been used to enhance physical appearance ever since the Stone Age—probably earlier. Very few persons appear to be completely satisfied with their natural allotments of grace or symmetry; the majority of mortals is constantly attempting to enhance their natal looks in one way or another. After surveying the scene one must conclude that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It is quite probable that cosmetics formed an early partnership with magic and witchcraft. Various markings on the face and body protected the wearer from the perils of a world infested with malicious spirits. In some countries a person who believed himself destined to some evil fate changed his appearance so that he would not be recognized by some pursuing spook.

While the trend today is toward the improvement of personal appearance by artificial means, there have been times when individuals actually mutilated themselves so that unhappy ghosts would not be jealous of extreme comeliness. The Olympian divinities turned vengeful eyes upon handsome youths and fair maidens who might threaten to excel the divinities in nobility of form or charm of person. The Grecians, though much given to physical beauty, recognized its transitory nature and urged the young to cultivate moral and psychic graces and not to depend upon physical appearance alone for a happy or successful life. It has been noticeable that those men and women most honored for character



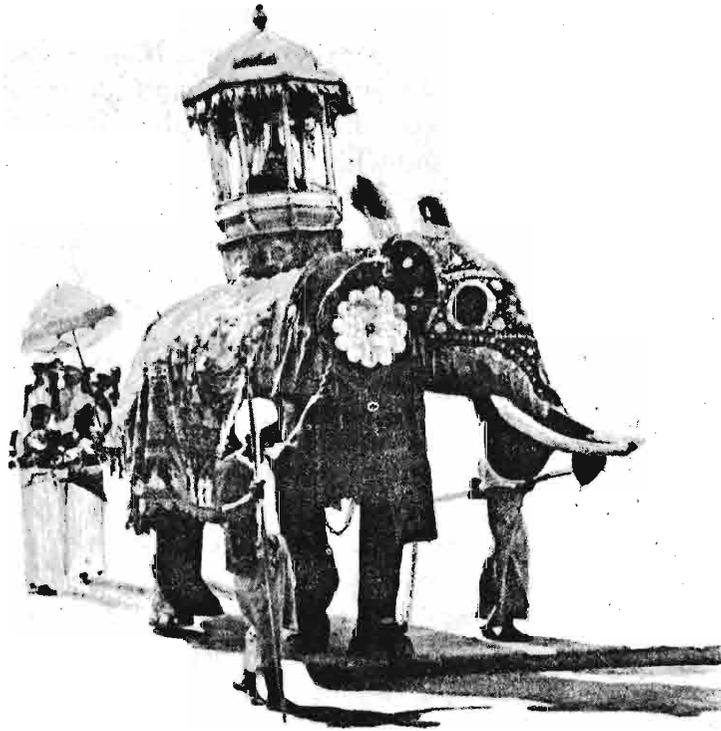
and accomplishment have seldom been beautiful. Psychologists looking into this have come to the opinion that physical attractiveness can be a serious handicap, disinclining the mind to strive valiantly toward a significant career.

Cosmetics were in general use throughout the civilized world six thousand years ago. They included eyebrow pencils, mascara, rouge, various oil and water base make-ups, lipsticks, and special dyes for the hair, skin, and even for teeth. Blackened teeth were at one time regarded as extremely chic and when fillings were needed precious or semi-precious stones were inlaid neatly into the appropriate cavities. Obviously ointments, unguents, salves, and pastes suggested appropriate odors, and the Egyptians became masters of floral fragrances, bath oils, and enamels for use on finger or toenails. The results were rather more colorful than those approved for today, but were appropriate to the sumptuous fabrics worn on festive occasions.

There are complete volumes devoted to Greek hair styling—for both men and women. Even beards were not left to their own devices. The Spartans, however, favored the clean-shaven man because in battle an enemy could not grasp him by his beard. It was probably in Greece or Syria that cosmetics became associated with the theater. When the actors impersonated deities or strange composite creatures they depended heavily upon masks or partial masks supplemented by make-up. It soon became apparent that cosmetics could change the moods of persons using them and could also affect beholders. Improvement of appearance resulted in a psychological lift and improved self-confidence.

One aspect of the subject that is seldom referred to in the classic texts may be described as beauty hints for animals. The outstanding example is the decoration of elephants in Burma and India. These immense animals are not only gaily caparisoned but may have elaborate painted designs on various parts of their bodies. Gilded knobs are added to the tusks, the toenails are dyed and polished, and garlands of natural or artificial flowers contribute to the general effect. Add to these details a golden howdah and heavily jeweled drapery and it is obvious why the elephant exhibits appropriate mannerisms. If one of these huge pachyderms fails to receive the beauty aids to which it has become accustomed, it is surly, indignant, and obviously humiliated.

It is difficult to estimate the expansion of the cosmetic industry in modern times. It has been assumed that American people alone



spend more than two and one-half billion dollars a year on their public images. This does not include various subsidiary factors such as health spas and programs involving special nutritional support. There is also considerable cosmetic surgery, hair implants, and skin treatments. The number of hours and dollars spent in beauty parlors is difficult, if not impossible, to estimate. It all adds up to a kind of self-confidence—a psychic sense of security with which we can face the critical scrutiny of our associates. The program as we know it today began in fourteenth century Europe. Since that time the only major changes have been in packaging and distribution. Several inventions, such as the toothpaste tube and the electric hair dryer, have played their parts in promoting beauty culture. After travel increased and more Europeans visited Asiatic countries, the numbers and types of cosmetic preparations increased rapidly. Africa continues to lead in varieties of hair arrangements; Asia has a wide reputation for its chemistries, floral scents, aromas, sachets, and incenses. The old ways of creating perfume according

to family recipes have faded away and huge laboratories cater quickly and eagerly to prevailing whims.

Nor should it be forgotten that magic and alchemy have contributed to the eternal quest for personal beauty and charm. Nostradamus invented a number of cosmetics, some of which were reasonably effective, but so far as is known the recipes have not survived. The mysterious Comte de St. Germain claimed to possess an elixir of eternal youth which, incidentally, was one of the primary objectives of alchemical research. According to the French memoir writers, St. Germain shared his knowledge of cosmetics with a number of the great ladies of the French court who enjoyed extraordinary reputations for youthful appearance.

In all this search for the secret of eternal youth, a number of tragedies have been noted. Even today governments keep a watchful eye on cosmetics which may prove dangerous to both the individual and the community. Users of doubtful preparations are seldom discouraged by the warnings that are given. There is a trend, however, toward a more natural system for the improvement of appearance. It is becoming obvious that perpetual youth cannot result from merely obscuring the visible symptoms of age. As the Greeks fully realized the human soul is the ever-flowing fountain of true beauty. The more perfectly we express the nobler convictions of our own nature, the more attractive we will appear. The inner part of the nature is the true source of appearance; a good disposition dominated by kindly and constructive motives can do very well with a minimum of beauty helps. We should strive to use natural products, avoid dangerous chemicals, and dedicate the mind to useful and important accomplishments.

The Egyptians were among the world's best wigmakers and nearly always wore artificial hair in their public ceremonials. The Egyptian queens wore false beards at the time of their coronations; many customs now associated with beauty go back to the esoteric lore of antiquity. The symbolism is largely lost today, but the search for beauty continues as part of the esthetic heritage of the human race. When the Egyptian priests and priestesses went to sleep in their tombs in the Valley of the Kings, an adequate supply of beau-



QUEEN HATASU.

ty preparations were buried with them. It was assumed that in the afterlife, human vanity would continue and that the spirits of the dead would wish to look their best when they entered into the presence of the great gods who govern all things.

## In Reply



## A Department of Questions and Answers

**QUESTION:** Dear Mr. Hall: When you lecture so interestingly and meaningfully, and without notes for about an hour and a half, **HOW DO YOU KNOW** what to say next?

**ANSWER:** As this question has been asked on a number of occasions, this might be a good opportunity to clear up the mystery. Many public speakers prepare their lectures in advance or at least work from an outline in which the more important topics are arranged sequentially. In days of leisure ministers completely memorized their sermons, including appropriate pauses and gestures. It always seemed to me that such a procedure was far less effective than extemporaneous presentation and a complete waste of time. Except in small town churches, the time consumed preparing sermons interfered with the minister's pastoral duties.

One important factor is to have a larger basic knowledge of the chosen subject than can possibly be used in the time allotted. Through the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and esthetics, certain truths underlying all branches of knowledge and uniting them (insofar as their essential ideas are concerned) become available. The law of analogy is a valuable aid in interpreting the operations of universal law in all aspects of human life and culture. The fundamental framework of my approach to learning is derived from the Grecian systems of Pythagoras, Plato, and the Neoplatonists, and the Oriental cosmology and ethics of Hinduism and Buddhism. It requires only a moderate amount of research to discover the parallel between the Eastern and Western schools; in many cases they complement each other, not only in their theories but in the ethical implications of their doctrines.

Actually, the grand scheme of the world's unified wisdom is comparatively simple. Much more labor has been spent in attempting to separate the systems than to establish their essential unity. I have always preferred to work with established convictions rather than to introduce personal opinions or conclusions. I am not an innovator and I have carefully avoided abstract metaphysical speculations. It has seemed wiser to provide truthseekers with a working knowledge of their heritage of wisdom rather than to confuse the mind with intangible beliefs derived from unknown or uncertain sources. For this reason I have carefully documented the sources of various beliefs and allowed the listeners to arrive at their own conclusions. Whenever doctrines appear to be irreconcilable I state both sides of the question and try not to emphasize personal opinions. Another point which I believe to be valuable is to avoid dogmatic points of view. I do not want to be considered as the originator of a system, defended at all costs. It seems also best to avoid direct preachment or assuming the status of a reformer. Many of the beliefs which I attempt to explain have both theoretical and practical aspects; it is my inclination to emphasize utility in the presentation of my material.

In the beginning I devoted much time and thought to theogony, cosmogony, and the invisible structure which supports the visible manifestations of nature. Gradually my point of view shifted from abstract speculation to the more concrete application of the cosmic pattern to the constantly changing panorama of social conditions. The basic principles are always used, but it seems wise to show their application on levels of common sense. This emphasis has seemed to provide many persons with useful and acceptable keys to self-improvement. The intention is not to disparage spiritual revelations, either ancient or modern, but censor them with the aid of logic and reason. If a philosophy for living is sound and has been properly matured, it is self-justifying. Instead of bewildering an audience with wondrous revelations which may be essentially unprovable, we cling to a form of presentation in which important beliefs become self-evident.

A sincere teacher must also carefully analyze the workings of his own mind. He should never reason from strong conclusions but

toward them. We are not here to sell our own ideas but to share doctrines which have stood the test of time and have been of enduring value to all humankind. If the mind is captured by some fascinating concept, there is a subconscious inclination to propagandize that which we personally prefer. This is especially true in the case of religion. Both the speaker and the listener are theologically oriented to the teachings of some venerated sect and are apt to react according to such allegiances. It has seemed wiser, therefore, not to interfere with prevailing religions, but to attempt to show the numerous areas in which they contribute to each other and provide all believers with improved frames of reference.

The positive approach is non-critical and therefore does not create unnecessary resistance in the minds of average persons. I have never downgraded the spiritual convocations of sincere individuals. We are searching always for that which is good, regardless of source; if something constructive cannot be said, silence is usually desirable. I have been accused of deliberately overlooking defects in human character or the shortcomings of celebrated teachers. One does better, however, by building upon the good rather than wasting time dissecting the idiosyncracies of human nature. The attitude of higher criticism is now regarded as essential to sound scholarship, but one learns from experience that it is neither wise nor charitable to offend the sincerity of those who find their spiritual consolation in simple faith and kindness.

It usually requires considerable time to present a major lecture subject adequately. Through the years we have received many requests to shorten the talks. It has been pointed out that most churches favor the thirty-minute sermon, but brief discussions must assume that the congregation is already in general agreement with the minister as he presents a more or less general statement of theological or moral sentiment. It requires more time than this to lay a proper foundation for a solid philosophical inquiry. On the other hand, it is quite possible to fatigue an audience which is unacquainted with most aspects of philosophical inquiry. To meet this almost inevitable situation, there must be considerable emphasis on the familiar, the appropriate inclusion of anecdotal ma-

terial and, if possible, actual evidence that a certain concept has immediate utility. My background has done much to provide interesting sidelights bearing upon a principal theme. I have traveled extensively, visiting many of the world's centers of spiritual and philosophical culture. Most of all, travel helps to gain a better estimation of foreign nations and their ideas. It helps to establish a one-world point of view. I have read moderately in the fields of my interests, and in this way I have tried to overcome that provincialism which narrows perspective. In various capacities I have counseled with thousands of persons and in this process have probably learned much more than I have taught. At least I have realized that it is useless to expect the impossible.

Humanity is a vast organic structure—it inevitably moves slowly. While change is continuous, progress is gradual, and over-optimism about the solution of the world's major problems is a source of great personal grief and discouragement, unless philosophical insight tempers hopes and aspirations.

So-called spiritually-minded people have a tendency to evade or avoid the attitudes of those regarded as less enlightened. A cloistered lifetime, either physical or intellectual, usually limits perspective. The broader the area of human experience and understanding, the greater the potential contribution that an individual can make to contemporary society. My excursions into art, music, mythology, folklore, symbolism, and handicrafts have been of the greatest value in writing and lecturing. The observant person is quick to notice the deeper meanings behind the creative genius of humankind. My many and diversified interests have contributed much to my principal objective. All hobbies help us to broaden our appreciation of the potentials of man's inner life. The Etruscan vase tells us much about the ancient Greek Mysteries; the iconography of Tibet reveals archetypal symbolism existing beneath the surface of all religions; and the wonderful engravings of the alchemists and cabalists constantly stimulate both imagination and reason. The more widely we can experience the diversity of mankind's achievements the better our teaching ability becomes. We may sacrifice something in terms of depth, but it is the breadth

dimension that helps us to communicate with those around us. The ever present danger of religious neurosis cannot be ignored and is most likely to afflict those who consider everything that is not obviously religious as trivial and unimportant.

Under this same classification, personal experience is one of the most valuable assets that a teacher can possess, he must share in the responsibility of the mistakes he has made; he must have his sorrows and his joys. Most of all, a teacher must live close to the humanity he hopes to serve. Perfection is not in this world and no one is fully equal to every emergency. Through experience he becomes more patient, and patience is indispensable to those who hope to build careers in religion or philosophy. All valid projects are slow of accomplishment. Trivial things may come to pass quite rapidly, but the true educator is a long time planner. He must accustom himself to the idea that he will never live to see the completion of his purposes. He is a builder and he places one thin layer of masonry upon the eternal foundation. On that which he has achieved, others will make their contributions in due time. Many artisans have contributed to the great cathedrals and monuments of the past; those laboring today prepare the way for the splendid achievements of the future. It is a mistake for any individual to regard himself as indispensable. If he is arrogant enough to believe that he alone is qualified to change the course of history, he must face the inevitable hardships and disappointments which will certainly follow.

Suppose for a moment that we are preparing a lecture. We must certainly select a subject within the scope of our abilities. There are two important factors—one that the discussion will be instructive and the other that it will be entertaining. One might choose to summarize the symbolism of the great pyramid of Giza in Egypt. In selecting the subject, I would naturally bring to mind such information as is stored in my memory. In this case I would think naturally of the description of the pyramid given by the great historian, Herodotus, sometimes called the Father of History. To think of Herodotus is to remember old Egyptian symbolism, and this calls to mind that the Great Pyramid has been described as the tomb of Hermes.

In a short time, recollections arise of the hours which I spent crawling through the internal chambers of the Great Pyramid. Here, the native guides passed on some fascinating details, some of which unfortunately were imaginary. Outside again, I looked up at the great sides of the pyramid and noticed what might at first be considered the results of water erosion of some past age. A French Egyptologist suggested strongly that this could have been sand erosion due to the storms of the desert. I noticed the Egyptian hieroglyphics in a panel near the forced entry to the pyramid made by Al Mamun, the Caliph of Baghdad, in search of the lost treasure of prehistoric giants. Investigation proved, however, that the inscription was modern and was placed there by the pioneer Egyptologist, Karl Richard Lepsius.

The mind then wanders to the work at the second pyramid carried on by Guiseppi Belzoni, a circus performer who turned archaeologist. One cannot think of the Great Pyramid without remembering that such mysterious monuments exist in other parts of the world. I have also climbed the Pyramid of the Sun near Mexico City and a smaller one dedicated to Quetzalcoatl at Chichen-Itza on the Peninsula of Yucatan. Pyramidal monuments exist in other parts of the world and I recall wandering along the terraces of the Borobudur in Java and the gigantic Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon, Burma. Gradually, my thoughts turn to the meaning of pyramids and in a short time their associations with the living religions of mankind open new vistas for consideration. The word *pyramid* is based upon *pyr*, an ancient name for fire, and the sun reflected on the surfaces of these monuments caused them to appear as triangular flames. By this time, one is impelled to inquire why the apex stones are usually absent, quite possibly by intent. Here, one can devote considerable time to philosophical speculation based upon ancient evidence. Such thoughts can center on the reverse of the great seal of the United States where the missing capstone is replaced by an all-seeing eye in a flaming triangle. The talk could be concluded with a summary of the pyramidal theory of world government and the ascending levels of human society on earth and divine hierarchies inhabiting the sides of the great world

mountain—the Meru of Hinduism. Rambling along in this way, the hour and one half soon passes, and the speaker already sees further discussions that would be appropriate to the theme. It is simply a matter of thinking out loud. Instead of planning the talk in one's private study, it is more interesting to do the thinking in the presence of the audience, sharing ruminations with interested friends.

It may occur that in preparing a lecture the need for some research becomes obvious. In the realms of comparative religion and idealistic philosophy, several problems are almost certain to present themselves. There is a vast literature relating to both these topics and discrimination becomes imperative. It has been my experience that early scholarship is probably better than contemporary contributions. Modern writers borrow heavily from older sources but have a tendency to include considerable personal opinion and also to cater to current intellectual fashions. In some instances at least, there is obviously little sympathy between modern translators and the original authors. I remember one work in which astrology was involved. The new edition included the material, but all reference to astrology was omitted from an otherwise comprehensive index. In the course of time a small group of well-informed and reliable authors in the field of comparative religion has emerged; common opinion sustains the thoroughness and unbiased integrity of these scholars. Wherever possible it was best to depend upon them. The same is true in philosophy. If one is interested in Pythagoras, men of the caliber of Thomas Stanley and Thomas Taylor devoted many years to the life and teachings of this great Samian sage. It is doubtful if their findings will ever be seriously questioned, but materialistic thinkers may choose to ignore them. Wherever a religious system has an official text attributed to the founder or his immediate followers and successors, these scriptures are the most reliable source material. Reasonably accurate translations of most of the world's sacred books are now available. Some, however, are difficult reading; the temptation is to rely on digests, outlines, or encyclopedic summaries. Under such conditions, the sources of these condensations should be carefully examined to establish reliability.

In the area of esoteric teachings even the most thoughtful investigator is at a serious disadvantage. It is usually impossible to check the validity of mystical experiences, visions, and psychic reports. Here the researcher must call upon his understanding of universal laws and the manifestations of divine ethics in the material sphere. Revelations in conflict with the great systems upon which surviving faiths have been founded can only be accepted with thoughtful reservations. Literature in this area has so proliferated in the last fifty years that most truthseekers find themselves in a serious dilemma. Fortunately, however, most of the essential doctrines necessary to enlightened living were clearly stated long ago; when in doubt, the original sources are the safest guides. Many uncertain teachings clarify themselves in the course of time and, having worked with confused but sincere persons for over half a century, I am aware of the more common hazards and have a fair defense against systems of thinking created primarily to exploit the gullible.

The patient student gradually organizes his findings into a comprehensive diagram which may be likened to the Oriental mandala. The universe emerges as a vast spiritual organism, all parts of which are compatible. The basic laws governing human behavior also combine to form geometric patterns, the archetypal flowers of Plotinus. Against these divine and cosmic inevitables, many persons choose to rebel. They want to find ways to attain spiritual maturity without self-discipline or the correction of character defects. As a result they become involved in doctrines and beliefs which are not valid and can never fulfill the hopes of the gullible.

In my own work I have learned that Nature is honest and that the same laws govern spiritual progress as those pertaining to secular careers. If we are prepared to earn what we want, stand firmly on principles which we intuitively know to be true, and keep the good codes which have guided the human race from the beginning, we will in the course of time attain to that better destiny which is our proper heritage.

Those who wish to become teachers of their brethren should avoid certain common mistakes. We recommend that no teacher

should discuss psychic or metaphysical experiences pertaining to himself. He should make no claims to infallibility and when there is a question he cannot answer that he admit this fact simply and directly. Solutions should never be contrived or justified by means which are incomprehensible and which cannot ultimately be verified by the listener. If we have a flash of inspiration we can subject it to the censorship of the world's accumulated wisdom and will generally find that it has already been stated many times. If it is too original, it is generally best to hold it in suspension for a moment. Some feel that spiritual teachings do not require documentation, but I have found that it is better to give credit to the sage or system by which it was originally, almost perfectly, given to mankind. It permits seekers after knowledge to trace the unfoldment of a valuable concept with the assurance that it has influenced constructively millions of other human beings. All truths originate from the essential nature of truth itself. We are at best pens in the hands of a ready writer and, if perchance we have found an idea or an ideal that proves helpful, we should give credit where credit is due. After all, we live in a remarkable world. It is inconceivable that anyone should be bored or disillusioned in the presence of so many opportunities to enlarge knowledge and enrich understanding. It is impossible to know what common occurrence is most meaningful to the soul. Nothing exists that is not part of the Infinite Plan.

As noted before I have found my avocational interests a continuing source of immediate help in writing and teaching. I have been a collector of books and have gained much by association with the literary labors of the past. Stamp collecting is a never-ending source of discoveries. It was a delight on one occasion to find on a postage stamp a beautiful miniature engraving of the Lumbini Gardens where Gautama Buddha was born. It is the only representation of this hallowed place that I have ever seen, although, no doubt, others exist. It is never too late to develop a new interest; my most recent hobby has been the collecting of bookplates. One of these shows the Inns of Court in London. These Inns are still in legal use and include the Inner Temple, the origi-

nal meeting place of the Knights Templars, the Outer Temple, the Lincoln Inn, and Gray's Inn where Lord Bacon lived and worked for many years. The symbol of Gray's Inn is a griffin, the same which decorated the helmet of Pallas Athena, the same which is still one of the supporters of the coat of arms of the Lords of Verulum. A whole world of symbolism which I had stored up for many years was activated and an interesting new research project is now under way. Thus it goes.

As Hippocrates of Cos has told us, "Life is short and art is long." We are all seeking an inclusive insight into the expression of human consciousness. There are great emotional experiences such as the Wagnerian cycles of the Ring and Parsifal. The music of Scriabin, the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, the dance, classical and folk rhythms and harmonies, sculpturings of primitive people, the rock-hewn temples of India, and the mystic mazes of the Southwest American Indian tribes are not merely passing moods or fleeting fancy. They all contribute to the victory of soul power over the materialistic factors of living. In one way or another I have shared them with my listeners and readers and, if they have found this material meaningful, I am grateful. Once, years ago, I decided to work out in detail a study of classical architecture. I planned a six-hour lecture, but was finally induced by my friends to present it in three sections.

Spiritual forces when manifested in man exhibit a sequence, a succession of steps. It follows, therefore, that when a man at one period of his life has omitted to put forth his strength in a work which he knows to be in harmony with the divine order of things, there comes a time, sooner or later, when a void will be perceived; when the fruits of his omitted action ought to have appeared, and do not: they are the missing links in the chain of consequences.

—Friedrich Froebel



## Happenings at Headquarters



Dr. Henry L. Drake began the Fall Quarter Sunday morning lectures with *The Meaning and Development of Consciousness—Its Transformation and Ultimate Direction* on October 2. Mr. Peter Puraty, an anthropologist specializing in Egyptian history and ancient myths, presented his views on *Atlantean Egypt, Myth or History?—Its Meaning for Modern Man* on October 9. Manly P. Hall's theme on October 16 was *The Importance of God in the Practice of Psychotherapy*. Dr. Robert Constatas spoke on October 23 regarding *Understanding Death and Rebirth*. Mr. Hall talked about *The Mystery of the Nirvana—When and How Does Growing End?* on October 30 and on November 6 he spoke of *Why? The Eternal Question*.

*Mysteries of the Mind—Ancient Teachings and Modern Science Now Share a Common View* was the subject on November 13 of the talk given by Stephan A. Schwartz. Mr. Hall discussed *The Oration of the Emperor Julian on "The Mother of the Gods"* on November 20. The president of the Thomas Jefferson Research Center in Pasadena, Mr. Frank Goble, presented *Principles of Personal Success—How to Improve Your Performance as a Person* on December 4. *The Beginnings of the Christian Faith—The Story of the Apostolic Age* was Mr. Hall's topic on December 11 and on December 18 his subject was "*In My Father's House Are Many Mansions*"—John 14:2.

Dr. Stephan A. Hoeller gave two series of lectures on Wednesday evenings. The first series on *The Shamanism of Carlos Castaneda—A Psychological Evaluation of the Shamanist Renaissance* opened on October 5 with the topic of *A Time for Wizards: A Time for Shamans—The Psychic Context of Castaneda's Message*: other topics in this series were *Adepts and Impostors — Reality and Fantasy in the Don Juan Literature, Rites of Passage—Initiations True and False through the Ages*, and *Shaman Versus Theurgist*

—*Contrasting Archaic Ecstasy with Individuation*. Dr. Hoeller's second series began on November 2 on *Healing and Occult Science—A Seminar in Alchemical Therapeutics* with the talk on *Magic: The Science of the Ages—The Timeless Foundations of Occult Medicine*; other talks in the second series were *Paracelsus, The Divine Physician—Mystic Healing Arts of the "Swiss Hermes," Magnetic Healing—From Paracelsus to Mesmer and Beyond, Alchemy and Acupuncture—Occult Arts of Ancient Chinese Healing Methods*, and *The Physician of the Future—The Coming Heirs of Boehme and Paracelsus*.

Dr. John W. Ervin, a Trustee of the Society, on Saturday afternoons beginning October 8 from 1:30 until 4:00 in six sessions, presented the series *World Service and Citizenship in the Tradition of the Ageless Wisdom*. This course was given to train those who wished to prepare for the Aquarian Age by understanding its emerging institutions. Dr. Ervin pointed out how to distinguish between facts and opinion which involved an understanding of how we communicate and how opinion is formed by the use of verbal and other types of symbols. A study was made of the history of the development of democratic institutions and also of world institutions such as the United Nations and its agencies; students were advised how they could serve in the establishment, development, and growth of these institutions.

Mary Lee McNutt presided over an Art Workshop on Saturday, October 15.

The Fall Open House was held from 10:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 16. Manly P. Hall gave an informal talk at 2:00 P.M. on *Karma As It Operates in the Lives of Individuals* which drew an enthusiastic audience. Light refreshments served by the Hospitality Committee were most enjoyable. Offices, Library, and Gift Shop were open; there was ample time for viewing the exhibit in the Library.

The *Artistic Modern Bookplates* Library Exhibit, featuring the works of recent artists working in contemporary techniques, continued through October 30; bookplates exhibited included genre themes, nature studies, and abstract compositions using wood and

linoleum block printing, silk screen process and photo-lithography. On November 6 the *Christian Religious Art on Postage Stamps* Library Exhibit opened; this exhibit will continue until December 30. Featured are stamps commemorating the life of Christ and related material which were issued in recent years, many of exceptional beauty.

On October 14, Manly P. Hall, 33°, addressed the Scottish Rite Bodies of the Valley of Los Angeles at their Temple at 4357 Wilshire Blvd. The occasion was the Feast of Tishri. Mr. and Mrs. Hall brought as their guests, Mr. and Mrs. Burl Ives. Mr. Ives had recently been initiated into the 32° of the Scottish Rite at the Santa Barbara Temple. There was a large attendance, and Mr. and Mrs. Ives were given a warm welcome. The following article appeared in the official Bulletin of the Los Angeles Scottish Rite: "Illustrious Manly P. Hall, 33°, nationally known writer and lecturer on philosophy, religion, psychology and Freemasonry, will deliver the *Feast of Tishri* address Friday evening, for the October 14 dinner meeting of the Los Angeles Scottish Rite bodies.

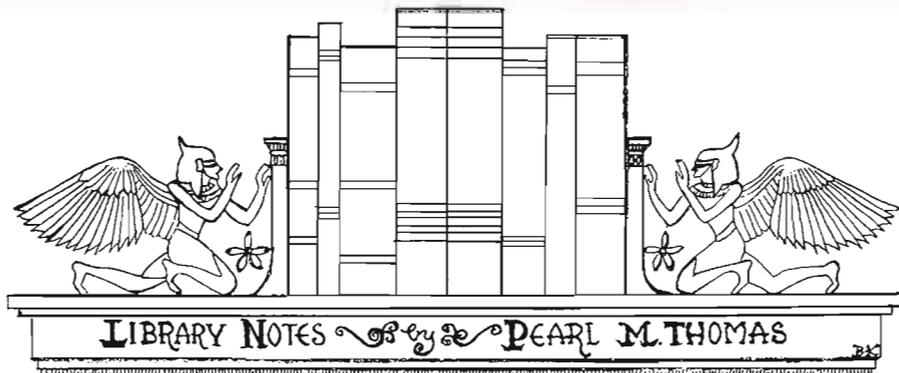
"We are most fortunate in securing such an outstanding and interesting speaker," says Illustrious Arthur Linsk, 33°, Venerable Master. "Brother Hall has written more than a hundred books and innumerable articles on Freemasonry and religion. He has been writing and lecturing for over 50 years. In 1934 he founded the Philosophical Research Society in Los Angeles and is its president."

"The great truths of Freemasonry are concealed in its rituals, rites, festivals, emblems and symbols. These originated in remote antiquity, according to our illustrious guest."



Sow peace at home, scatter its fruits abroad.

—*Talmudic Pearls*



## THREE GREAT SOULS — Part II

In the preceding Library Notes entitled "Three Great Souls," Gautama Buddha, Shankara, and Ramakrishna were considered. Buddha was lightly glossed over, for his background and teachings have been extensively studied and are well known. Of Shankara, who lived a thousand years after the Buddha, little information is actually available and much of this was expressed in the recent Library Notes.

Of the modern mystic, Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) and his followers, there has been considerable biographical data written so it becomes necessary to sift through the findings to select the data which seems most appropriate to our present needs. One of the best sources of information is the fine biography by Romain Rolland which helped to make the name Ramakrishna well known both to Europe and in America. Like many other noted mystics, Ramakrishna did not put his teachings into writing. Ramakrishna spent fully half of his time in a state of ecstasy and needed, literally, to have someone with him continuously as a protection to his health and well-being. This exalted state was frowned upon by some who were associated with him. A number of friends and relatives of his wife pitied her and called him a "madman of God." Many of the parents of his young disciples bemoaned the fact that their boys were so enraptured by this "God-intoxicated" little man and wanted only to be near him. It was difficult for parents to understand why their sons neglected the fine careers that had been planned for them.

Ramakrishna seems always to have known that he had a special mission in life. His parents too were aware of this. Both his parents had visions before his birth which portended the coming to them of a divine child. Ramakrishna's attitude toward formal education was a disappointment to them but with their foreknowledge of his role in society, they accepted this as a necessary evil. He grew up with a pleasant, reserved disposition.

When Ramakrishna was about eleven years old, Rani Rasmani, a rich widow of Calcutta assisted by her brother-in-law, Mathur Babu, built a magnificent garden temple named Dakshineswar which was located near the holy Ganges River. The construction took place between 1847 and 1855 and was dedicated to Kali, the Divine Mother. These fine people, locally famous for their charitable acts, their intelligence, and their devotion, were Sudras, the lowest level of the caste system. When it came time to select a priest, who must be a Brahman, they experienced considerable difficulty in finding one. In this emergency, the elder brother of Ramakrishna who had the necessary qualifications finally accepted the responsibility of serving the temple of Kali, but he died within a year and Ramakrishna took his place.

Ramakrishna, then twenty years old, loved the atmosphere of Dakshineswar and a great change took place in his life when he became its priest. The peaceful, quiet atmosphere pervaded with the influence of the Goddess Kali was conducive to further awaken in him the spirit of ecstasy and much of his time was spent in this state. Naturally, this caused considerable comment, not all of it good. Ramakrishna was examined by a group of outstanding theologians who came to the august conclusion that he was a Divine Incarnation. He became famous and people flocked to see and hear this great one. In spite of adulation, he remained a simple, loving, trusting soul intent on working with his disciples and guiding their footsteps. In fact, he heartedly disliked being called an Avatara (Divine Incarnation) and said on more than one occasion that when people started seriously calling him Avatara his earthly life would soon end. Such was the case. Followers began to call him Avatara about the middle of the 1880s and he died in 1886.

Within a few years after accepting the position of authority at Dakshineswar, the owners became keenly aware that their priest was endangering his health by his intense devotions and urged him to accept an invitation from his mother (now a widow) to spend some time with her. The general purpose behind the visit was to quietly arrange a wedding for him. To the surprise of everyone, Ramakrishna did not disagree and, in fact, asked them to find the girl of his visions; he described a little girl in a neighboring village who proved to be the right choice. Child marriages in India were the accepted arrangement and the ceremony was performed—he was twenty-three and his little bride, Sarada Devi, was five. After the ceremony she returned to the home of her parents and only visited her husband (in name only) once before her eighteenth year.

Ramakrishna continued to spend a great deal of his time in a state of divine ecstasy and further talk ensued. This came to the attention of Sarada Devi who wanted to know for herself if her husband was indeed a madman as some claimed. With her father



To explain God after merely reading the Scriptures is like explaining to another the city of Benares after seeing it only on a map.

—Ramakrishna

she went to Dakshineswar and was thoroughly convinced that Ramakrishna was truly a beautiful soul who did not preach his faith but rather lived it in his daily actions. He was imbued with the love of God in the form of Kali, the Divine Mother. This was also the outlook of his disciples who, oftentimes by a simple touch from the Master, were likewise transported into a world of essential values. To see the Master's face in this divine state was a beautiful experience and those closest to him fully appreciated his divine nature, although it is doubtful if any of his disciples were capable of comprehending the vast range of his wisdom. Yet he never took himself too seriously—he loved to laugh and make others laugh with his gentle humor.

Ramakrishna was kind and considerate to his young wife and hastened to explain to her when she came to stay at Dakshineswar (at eighteen) the role she would have to follow if she wished to remain with him. She gladly accepted her duties and responsibilities along with a continent marriage relationship. During the better than ten years she remained at the garden temple, she gradually



If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Rather learn to see your own faults.

—Sri Sarada Devi (Holy Mother)

absorbed more of the spiritual concepts and was ultimately able to carry on much of the work of the order. She outlived Ramakrishna by thirty-three years and had a lengthy period in which to exert her quiet influence. She was extremely reserved, humble, and shy, yet able to be a strong contributing influence during a lifetime of dedication and service. She especially emphasized the motherhood of God and after the death of Ramakrishna she was known as the "Holy Mother." Disciples sought her blessings and approval for activities they wished to carry on and seldom were willing to start projects unless she gave her sanction. Even Vivekananda, the accepted leader after the death of Ramakrishna, always asked for her blessings before starting any new endeavor.

Ramakrishna prayed for disciples and in time his prayers were answered. All but one of his close followers, or the "inner circle," were teen-agers who adored their master with intense devotion. He had an inner awareness of each one of his students and was known to slap people for any frivolity or profane thoughts in which they might be indulging. While he sought many true disciples, he yearned for just one on whom the mantle of his philosophy would descend at the proper time.

One evening, an alert young college student by the name of Narendra Nath Dutta, out of mild curiosity, went to listen to this new sensational teacher who was attracting much attention. Ramakrishna, however, had previously seen this young man in a vision and had the realization that here was truly the person who had the talent, the intelligence, and the gift of language to promulgate the teachings. Of all this young Narendra was totally unaware and was completely taken by surprise when Ramakrishna took him to another room in the vast temple, far from the group, and with tears in his eyes asked the young man why he had taken so long to come! After such an encounter, it is amazing that he ever returned. Whether it was curiosity that overcame him or a natural inborn inclination to respond to the eager teacher, the young man did return but allowed all of his belligerence, his sarcasm, and doubts to come forth. Ramakrishna was often hurt by the scathing remarks but he constantly defended the right of Narendra to speak

his mind. Ramakrishna seemed to know the mental and spiritual traits of each of his followers, both laymen and dedicated disciples, and consequently was able to train each one individually according to his personal needs and aptitudes. It took a considerable time for Narendra (nickname, Naren) to achieve a sense of unity with his teacher, but once it was accomplished he never deviated from the path. He became the accepted leader of the group, destined to carry the teachings not only throughout India but to other lands as well. The various disciples were given new names, most of which ended with the suffix *ananda* which signifies "bliss" or "he who has the bliss of." Narendra took the name Vivekananda which literally means "he who has the bliss of spiritual discrimination."

Before his death, Ramakrishna in a state of samadhi gave Vivekananda full initiation and his own seal, signifying complete faith in his favorite disciple and that the two were as one. In his early twenties, Narendra was in charge of the work with his special mission to carry out his master's message to the world.

In the year 1893, seven years after the death of Ramakrishna, the first World Parliament of Religions was being held in Chicago and representatives from all over the world were invited to attend and participate. Friends and associates of Vivekananda felt he should be present and donations from many sources were forthcoming, including both door to door solicitations and gifts from maharajas. At that time, traveling was a much more difficult and comparatively expensive experience than it is at present—especially for a sannyasin, a holy man, whose normal method of getting from one place to another was on foot.

Vivekananda was also a Brahman which meant that he should not leave India. At thirty years of age, he was convinced that he had a great message which he wished to reveal to a vaster audience than he had yet known. This conviction sent Vivekananda on his way and under difficult circumstances he arrived in Chicago in August of 1893, only to find that the Parliament had been postponed for a short time. He was already nearly penniless, but he placed his trust in prayer and came to the conclusion that he should go to Boston where he had been told it was cheaper to live! On



A pure and strong will is all-powerful.  
—Vivekananda

the train he met a delightful older lady who took an instant interest in the young Hindu and forthwith invited him to be her house guest while in the Hub City. There he met many of the elite of the area and talked to groups of interested persons. A Harvard professor conversed with Vivekananda for four hours and asked him if he was a candidate to the Chicago Parliament of Religions. The situation was explained, the lack of letters of introduction, the lack of funds. This was all taken care of by the Harvard man who personally knew people connected with the Parliament and sent Vivekananda back to Chicago armed with letters of recommendation as well as a railway ticket.

Back in Chicago, Vivekananda was warmly received and on the day when the Indian delegation took the platform he was there, very splendid in raiment presented to him by an Indian maharaja. Vivekananda was completely unprepared for the impact of a large audience. He soon discovered that all the delegates had prepared speeches or at least copious notes; he had none. And the sea of faces, some seven thousand in the audience, bewildered him. He

postponed his turn as long as possible, but the moment he was asked to talk, a great force seemed to guide and guard him. His first words: "Sisters and Brothers of America," spoken in his clear, musical voice thrilled the audience and they immediately gave him a tremendous ovation. He held them completely enthralled during all the rest of the conference. At the close, he was offered a lecture tour of many cities which he accepted as a means of recouping funds. He soon tired of this; his abiding interest was to promulgate the teachings of Ramakrishna. Simply to talk to audiences whose goal was sheer entertainment was not his forte. He went to New York City and attracted good sized audiences, but insisted on a free-will offering. He soon found, as other sincere speakers have found before and since, that small change and buttons do not pay the rent or take care of the necessities of life. During the summer of 1894 a group of vitally interested students met with Vivekananda at the resort home of one of the number. It was an experience of great blessing. Vivekananda was at his best and gave to the twelve fortunate students a profound summary of his work and that of his Master, Ramakrishna. Regrettably, no notes were taken. Later, back in New York, a competent stenographer was secured and forthcoming lectures were recorded.

Vivekananda made two trips to America and to Europe, bringing the message of his guru, Ramakrishna, to the Western world. He was confident that the work of the great mystic was as essential as the message of Christ had been and he felt strongly obligated to present it to as many as possible. In India, he promoted the work by establishing two great centers. The first was the Ramakrishna Math which, with its many branches, represents the educational background for the monastic life where the monks in training also carry on many cultural activities to which laymen are invited. The second center was the Ramakrishna Mission near Calcutta whose branches in the West are known as Vedanta Centers.

While in the United States, Vivekananda was prevailed upon to set up centers for the promulgation of Vedic teachings as interpreted by Sri Ramakrishna. The word "Vedanta" has a number of meanings, but as expressed by Vivekananda it signifies the teachings and practices employed by the great nineteenth century mystic

who believed that all religions are good and all lead ultimately to Universal Good. Vivekananda personally established a number of Vedanta Societies in the West, the first in New York City in 1895.

Wherever Vivekananda visited he was much admired; he was a dynamic person with genuine affection for all he encountered, and he had a tremendous command of words which held his audiences spellbound. Max Müller met him in London and was the first Westerner to recognize his ability. William James met him in Boston and addressed him as "Master." He was offered the Chair of Philosophy at both Columbia and Harvard Universities but he declined for he had a definite field of activity which he felt was of paramount importance and must consume all his time and energy.

His lecturing days extended a mere nine years, and yet a tremendous amount of literature by him is available. Five years after his death in 1902, a major attempt was made to collect his writings. It consisted of four volumes of about 250 pages each. Then more and more material became available with notes taken by students and letters Vivekananda had written to friends around the world. The original four volumes swelled to eight with almost twice as many pages in each volume.

The PRS Library has a good collection of books about both Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and lectures the latter has given, both in America and India. A number of these volumes were published at the Advaita Ashrama in the Himalayas which Vivekananda helped to establish. One set consists of seven volumes containing the addresses given by Vivekananda during 1896-1897. Other examples of his writings in the PRS collection deal with his lectures on Yoga and many of these are published by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center in New York and date from 1899 onward.

Vivekananda devotedly served his great master and stated in his writings that the message of Ramakrishna to the world was ". . . the essence of existence in each man . . . is spirituality; and the more this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. Earn that first, acquire that, and criticise no one, for all doctrines and creeds have some good in them. Show by your lives that religion does not mean words, or names, or sects, but that it means spiritual realization."



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