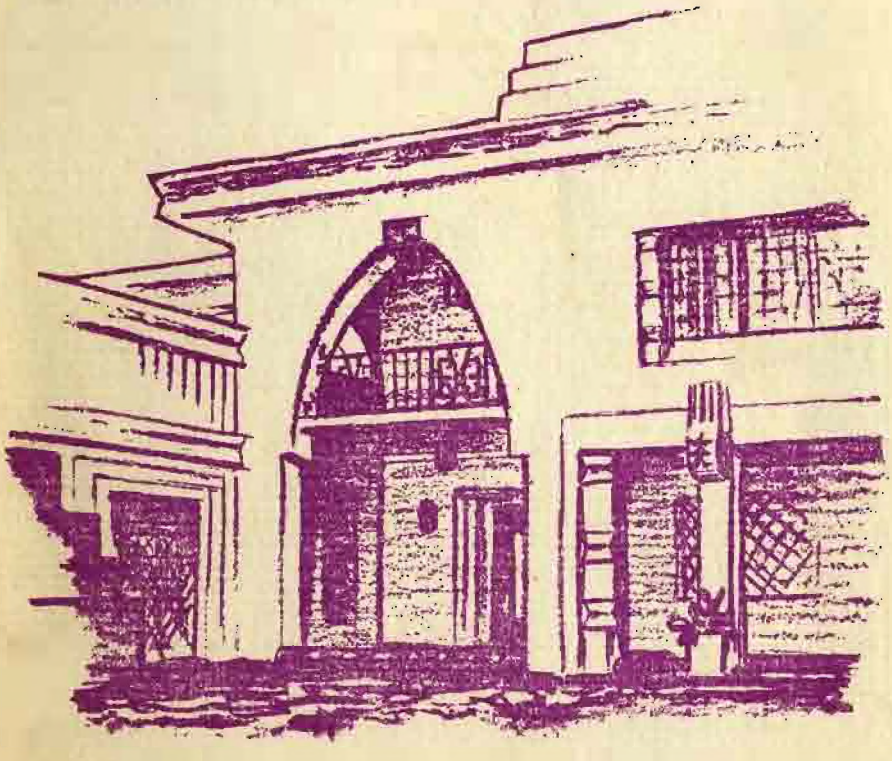
# HORIZON



JOURNAL OF THE
PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

SUMMER 1955

HORIZON

Published quarterly by Horizon Publishing Co., 3341 Griffith Park Blvd., Los Angeles 27, Calif.
$1. a Copy, $3. a Year. Two Subscriptions, Your Own and a Gift Subscription, $5.
Foreign Subscription $4. a year. Two Subscriptions $7.

Subscribers ordering a change of address must observe the requirements of two week's notice.
Please give both the new and old address.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMER 1955 — Vol. 15, No. 1

Unless otherwise identified, the reproduction of early books, manuscripts, and objects of art which appear in this magazine are from the originals in the collection of The Philosophical Research Society. A list of the publications of the Society will be mailed upon request.

---

(All unsigned Articles are by Manly P. Hall)



Many subscribers are requesting additional copies for their friends. As the supply of magazines is limited we suggest that you make reservations for extra copies in advance.

# HORIZON

SUMMER
1955

ISSUED
QUARTERLY
VOLUME 15 No. 1

**Journal of**
**The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.**

HORIZON LINES
AN EDITORIAL

## Building a Personal Philosophy

WE are inclined to think of philosophy and religion as powerful systems and creeds with numerous sincere and devout followers. More careful examination must cause us to amend this concept and recognize that groups are finally composed of individuals, each with distinct and personal reactions in matters of learning and faith. We all interpret basic ideas in the terms of our own requirements, and in no two persons' lives are these needs exactly the same. Although we may be in broad agreement on fundamentals, we always reserve the right to mold and reshape the codes under which we live. In fact, we exercise this right subconsciously, and assume that our point of view is correct. It seldom occurs to us, however, that we may be living in a private universe, the laws and rules of which have been adjusted in accordance with our opinions. We wonder why the rest of humankind can be so strangely divided when it is obvious that our own understanding has solved all mysteries.

To be secure in this world, each person must unfold and define his own philosophy of life and living. This becomes not only a guide to conduct, but a justification for existence. Man is completely defeated if his internal standard of values does not sustain his outer conduct. Life is purposeless to those who lack philosophical integration. Such integration, however, requires more than schooling or experience. The individual must strengthen his own power of discrimination, and

devote the same care to the organization of his own mind that he would bestow upon some project in the economic sphere. It is unwise simply to allow convictions to accumulate until they burden the personality with a variety of inconsistent concepts. This is one of the most common faults of our time. We believe that we will graduate from the school of life with honors simply because we have lived.

It is flattering to be considered broad-minded, but it requires considerable skill and a deep sense of values to reconcile and organize a variety of unrelated ideas. How does the average person build his intellectual and moral codes? All too often he simply permits himself to become a low pressure area into which flow whatever conditioning influences are present in the immediate environment. We may start the day with the morning paper. Under the broad head of journalism we may read the profound observations of authorities on scores of subjects. We have no way of knowing the actual value of the remarks and preachments, but we are inclined to give them a measure of importance because they are associated with famous or distinguished persons with reputations for knowledge and erudition. We find ourselves agreeing with one of these pronouncements and disagreeing with another. This is not because we are well informed, but rather because of instinctive response from within ourselves. It seldom comes to our mind as we read along that we are not justified by our own real attainments to have any opinion at all on many of the subjects presented for our consideration. Usually, the newspaper itself has a political policy, and the articles which it publishes are slanted toward this policy. The paper is seeking to convert us rather than to inform us.

Our friends and associates are also a strongly opinionated lot. They speak with utter conviction, but with slight regard for truth. They believe what they say, and they want us to share the belief. If we are impressionable, we will gradually accumulate a fearful and wonderful assortment of notions. Later, when we express our own preferences with equal forcefulness, we forget to note the circumstances which have influenced our selections. We enthusiastically endorse the candidate for high office recommended by our favorite columnist, purchase the brand of soap repeatedly advertised over television, select the automobile glowingly endorsed by our friends, eat in the restaurant suggested by a neighbor, and repeat the financial advice gravely expounded by our banker. In all these matters, we seem to be revealing a large measure of thoughtfulness, but actually we have exercised no part of the brain except the faculty of memory. We have heard and we repeat what we have heard, and are suspected of wisdom.

One reason why we can proceed through life in this way is that we never trouble ourselves about the inconsistencies that disfigure our

opinions. We do not even know that we are continually contradicting ourselves. On Monday morning, we are impressed with an editorial which warns us about the pernicious effects of patent medicines, and on Tuesday we phone our local radio station to send us immediately a bottle of the cure-all vitamin pills just announced over the air. If some friend or acquaintance is unkind enough to remind us of our previous stand on radio commercials, we merely change the subject, laugh a little sheepishly, or insist that the new product is obviously above suspicion. It is not remarkable, therefore, that the human mind grows weary trying to adjust to the caprices of its lord and master. There is an old saying that a straight line is the shortest distance between any two points. Straight thinking is life's surest guide and rule, but very few mortals think in a straight line. They curve and twist about until the diagram of their mentations would be more complicated than the famous Gordian knot.

We can be generous of everyone's beliefs, but as persons we cannot believe everything. We cannot addict ourselves to the convictions of all men and try to follow the countless paths that others choose without complete disorientation. We must, for our own protection, establish a center from which we can radiate, and around which the phenomena of living can rotate. Without a center, we have no refuge in time of trouble and no strength of purpose with which to face difficulties and uncertainties. In the world of philosophy, for example, there are decisions that must be made. This does not mean that we should never change our minds, or outgrow our intellectual limitations. It is one thing, however, to depart consciously from error, and quite another thing to wander away from a notion which we have never actually weighed or examined. If we used our minds more wisely, we would not be placed in the embarrassing position of being forced to change them so often. What we call changing the mind is usually merely substituting one notion for another.

If we really desire to build a pattern of internal values, we must first of all examine our convictions on fundamental issues. Let us assume for a moment that we are convinced that we need a philosophy of life. It is not likely at this stage that we have sufficient knowledge and training to choose wisely between the numerous schools and systems which have flourished around the world and through the ages. A general survey of the subject would seem to be indicated. This, however, also implies considerable mental labor, and at this point the tendency to inertia creeps in. My advice has frequently been solicited in this problem, and I have pointed out that no sensible person will entrust his life and character to doctrines which he has not thoroughly weighed and considered. Nine times out of ten the person consult-

ing me is completely overwhelmed at the prospect of settling down to an organized plan for self-improvement. One exclaimed in terror, "but it will take me years of study." If you wish to play the violin well it will also take years of study, and the art of living is not easier than the art of music.

The wisdom seeker must also realize that while there are many schools of philosophy, most of them are branches, divisions, or subdivisions, of a few major systems. Most of the world's essential thinking was done at least two thousand years ago. The old concepts have been revised and amended, and not infrequently misinterpreted, by recent exponents. It is a mistake to become involved in those innumerable minor movements, most of which are fragmentary and highly opinionated. If you expect to depend upon immortal ideas for your personal security, you cannot afford to depend upon popular interpretations or contemporary expositions. Assuming that you are seeking a philosophical system deep enough and broad enough to meet the changing needs of your own living, I would recommend either Buddhism or Platonism. Both of these systems have stood the test of time, and have proved themselves on countless occasions. They have contributed much to the cultural history of our race, and a sufficient literature of source material is available so that the student is not dependent upon opinion or hearsay. What is even more important is that the two systems themselves can be reconciled and there is no real conflict on the level of essentials. I am not suggesting that you become a Buddhist or a Platonist by formal allegiance; rather that you begin to think in patterns so large and so deep that it is impossible for you to outgrow them by the exertions of your mind. Both strongly emphasize the need for discipline and self-direction. They are founded in a conviction of universal integrity. They invite honest people to live honestly in an honest world. Emerson has said that all Western philosophy is substantially Platonic, and the best of Eastern philosophy is incorporated in the Buddhist system. You can rest assured that if you study, understand, and obey the basic principles of either of these schools, you will not live foolishly, or find it necessary to revise your thinking with each new problem that confronts you.

It is unfortunately true that you can study Buddhism and Platonism for many years without experiencing the practical benefits of your own labors. No one has become enlightened merely by becoming well read. Reading is useful, but only to the degree that it stimulates within you a strong desire to unfold your own eternal potentials. When Buddha taught the law of cause and effect, he was emphasizing a universal fact. To know this fact to be true, you must make use of your own observational and reflectional faculties. If you believe in a world

of law and order, you have countless opportunities to prove the integrity of your own belief. Gradually, you will come to realize that you exist as part of a purposeful plan, and that it is your opportunity and your privilege to discover this plan and live according to its rules.

In this way, philosophy will become a dynamic force in the molding of your character and in the clarification of your conduct. Because you make fewer mistakes, there will be less sorrow and misfortune. By degrees, your insight will mature and you will discover the secrets of peace and security. Your inner life will be strong and your career will be purposeful. Both Buddhism and Platonism relieve man of regrets about the past, uncertainties about the present, and fears about the future. Understanding sustains faith, and faith, in its turn, releases the human soul from fear and doubt. This is why we recommend that you build your philosophy of life upon the solid foundation of one of the world's great systems. If you do so, you will be relatively safe even though your wisdom is imperfect. If you choose some unproven doctrine, you must face the uncertainty of possible disillusionment.

Once you have made a basic decision, you can expand your interest as broadly as the maturity of your judgment will permit. You can admire the teachings of all the world, of great saints and sages, but you will not be tempted to make your life a sequence of affiliations. You can love and admire the good and build it into your own basic pattern. Neither Buddhism nor Platonism is an exclusive system. Principles must be true, and therefore they cannot conflict with themselves or anything else that is factual. Plato's opinions on government are as valid today as they were twenty-four hundred years ago. Time has no effect upon truth. It can only change the forms under which that truth will appear. We do not recommend these two great schools because they alone teach the truth. Such an attitude would be bigoted and intolerant. Confucius, Lao-tse, Pythagoras, and Zoroaster, also taught the truth. We like Buddhism and Platonism, however, because of the broad unfoldment of basic ideas and the almost diagrammatic manner in which these doctrines are presented. Also, the necessary texts are more accessible and more immediately understandable than in some of the other systems. Ultimately you will understand all philosophy better and have a deeper appreciation for the inspired teachers of the world and the service which they rendered.

The basic principles of philosophy are not numerous nor are they especially complicated. Each can be extended into an abstract world of ideas where the average person cannot function securely. They can also be extended, however, into a concrete world of everyday condi-

tions, and it is here that the utility lies. Your philosophy must clarify your immediate decisions by the authority of universal realities. What are the great troubles for which philosophy is the proper medicine? Buddha said that ignorance is the great sickness. All that is ignorant must live without peace and die without hope. Ignorance is the root of all the evils from which men suffer, yet they suffer not because others are ignorant, but because of the ignorance in themselves. What are the proofs of ignorance, and in what way can we be certain that the individual is lacking in true knowledge? The first proof of ignorance is selfishness, which includes what we term self-centeredness. To be selfish is to violate the basic principles of our kind. Yet, for ages the majority of mortals have considered selfishness a virtue. Those who are selfish then reveal a further degree of benightedness because those who are ignorant and selfish are also possessive. The desire to control, own, accumulate, and overshadow, is a common fault. It is unfortunately true that a common fault does not become a virtue merely because it is frequently indulged. If men were not selfish and possessive, there would be slight cause for war, crime, and poverty.

The unphilosophic may insist that without selfishness and possessiveness life would lose most of its zest. What would we have to live for if we were satisfied and contented? It may be thrilling to consider our mortal span as an opportunity for schemes and conspiracies, but Nature disagrees with this program and punishes us with sickness, sorrow, and death. Philosophically speaking, we may choose our destiny. We can obey the rules of the game and be happy, or we may disobey the rules and be miserable. After all, could anything be more fair?

With possession there is added cause for fear. To have much means to exist continuously on the verge of loss. As the Buddhist says, "The man who has nothing spends his nights bewailing his poverty, and the man who has much spends his nights guarding his goods—both lose sleep." It seldom occurs to the human being to realize the disasters that have plagued human history since the beginning. This noble species which we call the human race has been burdened with war, crime, sickness, poverty, and fear from the beginning. It is only reasonable to assume that something is wrong with man's way of life. Other creatures are not afflicted with so many disorders. Philosophy insists that until men moderate their ambitions, temper their desires, subdue their passions, and correct their intemperances, they cannot enjoy the proper destiny for which they were intended. Up to now, however, only a few have recognized the truth. The rest have continued on their way, willing to suffer heavy penalty for a few brief moments of what they regard as success and achievement. Each person must

choose for himself, but he cannot expect to reap what he has not sown, or benefit from graces he has never cultivated.

We like to believe that our troubles are due to the unhappy states of our environments. We could live much better if the fear of atomic warfare were not hanging over our heads. Our goods would be safe if we could trust our neighbors. We might even succeed in being moderately selfish if our associates were not immoderately selfish. If we lived in an honest world, we could enjoy security without a general reformation of personal character. That is what everyone else thinks, and so we have a dishonest world. Actually, philosophy teaches us that we do not suffer from the mistakes of those around us. This is an appearance—an illusion due to our inability to interpret phenomena correctly. Before men knew that the earth moved around the sun, they were convinced that the sun moved around the earth. The phenomena of day and night seemed to be complete proof that it was the sun that moved. We make precisely the same kind of mistake when we say, "I am miserable because of what others have done to me." We can prove conclusively that they have been unkind and unpleasant; their action was followed by our discomfort, and the facts seem irrefutable. The one weak point that most have overlooked is that some people are not injured by their friends, enemies, or relatives. Happy and contented individuals are not those who have escaped the usual misfortunes of living. If one man who has been mistreated can still be happy, and that man is at the same time an intelligent and reasonable person, this is an important discovery. It simply means that peace of mind does not depend upon what is done to us, but rather it depends upon the degree of internal enlightenment with which we react to the pressures of existence. The moment we realize that we can live serenely even in a most unsettled environment, we begin to appreciate the utility of philosophy.

Among the many possessions over which we must renounce the sense of ownership is a mass of accumulated opinions. Many persons find it far more difficult to detach themselves from their prejudices than from their worldly goods. A prejudice is nearly always negative and destructive. It injures the one who holds it far more than those against whom it may be directed. We should weed out, through constant watchfulness, all such habits of the mind as are detrimental to inner peace and tranquility. Wars between nations are perpetuated by ancient grievances which men have not had the wisdom and courage to outgrow. Private strife is often perpetuated in the same way. Forgive your enemies, and you will be rewarded by peace of mind and better health.

When you build a philosophy of life, you must have a clear concept of the things you wish to accomplish in the future. We cannot live well unless we have a goal worthy of effort and attainment. It is not practical to think in terms of ultimates, nor should our dreams be so vast and intangible that they bewilder our minds and overwhelm our emotions. We must, however, be moved forward by an internal power which reorganizes the essential merit of our motivations. No one will ever build a good philosophy whose principal ambition is to retire at sixty with an ample supply of funds. It is not what man possesses, but what man becomes, which brings lasting personal satisfaction. A good life recognizes the importance of constant growth and self-improvement.

As we wander along through the years, we all become aware of our own limitations. We discover, at considerable cost, that we lack clear insight and sound judgment. We are frequently deceived by appearances, or are led astray by emotional intensities. Some of us are improvident, and others penurious. We make bad investments and manage our responsibilities improperly. Each time we make a serious mistake we are penalized, and pay for ignorance or thoughtlessness with loss and sorrow. The intelligent individual therefore recognizes a pressing need for greater knowledge and should be inspired to unfold his virtues and correct his faults. If his decisions are based upon a proper understanding of the laws governing life, and of the moral and ethical patterns which are imposed by Nature upon the conduct of human beings, there is little likelihood of disastrous mistakes. Philosophy provides a rule for action, which, if followed and obeyed, results in personal security. If your beliefs do not provide such inspiration and guidance, they are not suitable for you, and should be immediately revised.

The early Greek philosophers created a number of brief aphorisms which they declared summarized the experiences of mature living. According to Solon, "The happiness of the outward life arises from honest action and temperate living." Here is a simple statement which can solve a wide variety of perplexities. Periander, Prince of Corinth, observed that "Pleasures are mortal, virtues immortal." Periander declared that he had inherited a disease from his father. This disease was ambition, which he sought in every way to cure. As a statesman it was his conclusion that "Love, and not armies, must guard the persons of the great." Love, and not strength alone, must guard the happiness of every individual. The philosopher Chilon said "Three things are difficult: to conceal secrets; to make use of leisure; and to bear the injuries of the unjust." No man can be happy who does not solve these difficulties. Simple statements like these reveal the depth

of the ordered mind, and your own philosophy can also be simple, if it is established in basic truths. We all know the rules of right living, but we forget them in our haste to satisfy our inclinations. A wise man once said, "Let not the tongue run before the mind." And this might be enlarged to convey the importance of never permitting desire to escape from the control of reason. Be ever thoughtful of the consequences of action, and you will live without fear and die with a good hope.

Learn to use leisure well, for within the quietude of detachment from the pressures of the day, you can commune with the muses of great art and learning. Build your character in leisure, and reveal it through labor. Let all your actions arise from within a well-tempered character, and find within yourself the everflowing fountain of the eternal good. Philosophy will then be no longer a branch of learning, but a way of living.

*In passing*

Amazing fragments of wit and wisdom ornament the stones in old graveyards. What could be more factual than the following simple inscription? "He's dead."

In Georgia, the following neat tribute appears on a stone: "He was honest, even though he was a Republican."

Just what sentiment inspired a wife to inscribe the following on her husband's tomb is not entirely clear. "Tears cannot bring thee back—therefore I weep."

An old California cemetery has the following gentle and practical thought: "Sacred to the memory of James J. ...., who died August 6th, 1900. His widow, who mourns as one who can be comforted, aged 24, and possessing every qualification for a good wife, lives at 140 .... Street, this village."

---

*Health hint*

Diogenes used to say, "As houses where there is plenty of meat are full of mice, so bodies in which overly much food is stored are full of disease."

---

*Ready for the shearing*

Seeing a rich man who had risen to a high position, but was without learning or interest in higher mental pursuits, Diogenes pointed to him contemptuously saying, "Yonder goes a sheep with a golden fleece."

---

*The ill wind*

Life is full of trials—and the lawyers are most grateful.

# Forward To McGuffy

A RATHER unusual and stimulating book recently came to hand. It is entitled "Why Johnny Can't Read," and was written by Dr. Rudolf Flesh, Ph. D., Columbia. Dr. Flesh was born in Austria, where he was educated in law; he then took up residence in the United States. Obviously, the doctor is a man of intellectual attainments, and was therefore unpleasantly surprised when he learned that his twelve-year-old son was required to go back to the sixth grade in school because he was unable to read. Loath to assume that his boy was mentally retarded, Dr. Flesh made a thorough examination of the situation and came to the conclusion that junior Flesh could not read because no one had showed him how. To test the situation, Dr. Flesh showed his son the word *kid* and asked him to pronounce it. The lad struggled with the difficult word for several minutes and finally, in what was obviously a wild guess, said "kind." This was too much and, under the pressure of this inspiring circumstance, Dr. Flesh wrote his book.

To make certain that his findings were substantially correct, the doctor attended school in the primary grades, listening and watching, and as time went on his wonder grew. He then read the available literature on the subject and the solemn pronouncements of leading educators. In the end, wonder changed to righteous indignation. He was convinced that the present methods of teaching reading, writing, and spelling, are hopelessly inadequate. He also found that the prevailing program was not supported by adequate research or experimentation, but had been forced upon the public school system arbitrarily. His book contains a wealth of information dealing with this mysterious situation. He found that the good old traditional way of teaching children their ABC's was regarded as obsolete and was only called upon in special remedial classes for children who were unable to learn by the approved fashion.

In substance, the present technique may be called sight-reading. The child is taught to recognize words by their shapes, lengths, and peculiarities of appearance. These words are associated with appropriate pictures, and the bright youngster learns that a word of a certain shape means dog, and of a different shape stands for boy. Dr. Flesh believes that the approach is dated to a period in which picture writing and hieroglyphics were in vogue. He considers this bright new idea as peculiarly applicable to the reading of Egyptian hieroglyphics


LEAF FROM AN EARLY READING BOOK FOR CHILDREN

Works of this kind were in use in the early years of the 19th century, and were prepared for children between the ages of 4 and 8. Most such books contain stories emphasizing moral virtues. Note the touching lines of the poetry for the edification of the young.

and Chinese ideograms. With luck, the Doctor believes, the child may learn to identify four hundred of these English word patterns during his first year of school, and his vocabulary, if we can call it such, will increase to eight hundred words by the end of the second year. Spelling, reading, and writing, are therefore advanced by the student's ability to remember and perpetuate groups of letters with which he has become familiar through repeated usage. Through this process, the child is limited hopelessly to the textbook he uses, and suffers a long delay

before he can cope with even the simplest version of Cinderella or Rip Van Winkle.

This is not intended as a book review; therefore, we would like to point out the philosophical trend that is implied by Dr. Flesh's researches. The child's mind is directed immediately toward form. He is taught to cope with surfaces and not with depths. It is most likely that this early familiarity with a surface concept will influence his thinking throughout life. It is another way of saying "judge all things by appearances." Certainly this cannot be regarded as a sound policy for education. Even from the beginning, the thoughtful-minded seek for a central meaning and for the key by which they themselves may unlock the inner meanings of things heard and seen. The sight-reading method deprives the child of a basic knowledge of the machinery of his language, and may be responsible in great measure for difficulties in self-expression so noticeable among our young people.

By the time the average child enters school, it has a considerable vocabulary. Simple words have already been associated with objects and circumstances. *Yes* and *no, do* and *don't, father* and *mother*, have been accepted and their meanings at least partly understood. It is vital that the child learn to recognize these words not only in their written form, but should come to understand that each word contributes to the understanding of many other words and ideas. The adventure of learning is important to the young, and each new victory of the mind over mystery is a happy triumph. There is only one basic method by which the mystery of the written language can be adequately solved, and that is through the use of phonics. This term is a simplification of phonetics, which reveals to the child that all words are composed of a certain number of letters, each of which is associated with one or more sounds. Even admitting the irregularities of the English language, a simple grasp of the alphabet opens the door of language. Trained by the phonic method, the average child of twelve can read almost anything. He may not comprehend the meanings of all the words, but he is able to pronounce them and to associate their usage with the spoken forms which he hears every day. Even more important, he recognizes the principles of language and realizes that on this level he is living in a universe of law and order. He also knows that all words are parts of language, and not isolated fragments. He learns that reading is not guessing, but an increasing familiarity with orderly sequences of sound represented by letters and syllables.

After he has been taught to recognize the letters *b o y* and sort of slurs these sounds together, he does not need a definition. He is already playing with the little boy next door, and he realizes that he can read and soon will be able to write a fascinating and familiar word. Using

his alphabet, he now has available the elements of several words. If he changes the *o* to an *a* and sounds the compound, he has *bay,* a word he may likely already have heard. By changing the *a* to a *u,* he grasps the sound of buy, and he remembers that his mother often buys things and mentions them. He therefore slowly transforms his vocal vocabulary into written equivalents. He can make any of these discoveries himself without the aid of parent or teacher. There will be some difficulties, but they are not insurmountable. Is not this much wiser than trying to become familiar with such words by remembering that *boy* is a picture of three letters with the one in the center having a hole in it? It is assumed, of course that after *boy* is remembered, the child will ultimately come to the conclusion that there is some reason why *buy* looks very much the same except that the circle has been changed for an open loop. It would seem, however, that this is the long way around.

According to Dr. Flesh, the United States is the only country of importance that teaches reading by the hieroglyphic method. He is also rather dismayed to find that the deficiencies of this method are attributed to parental interference, abnormal psychological influences in the home, or neurotic tendencies on the part of the child. He feels that the deficiencies are glaringly obvious and are due directly to the efforts to force an unsatisfactory and unsound system upon the theory of education. I know the case of a high school student who has developed considerable psychological tension because she has been branded as an intellectual. She feels that for a young lady this is a misfortune. She was taught to read before she entered school, and at the ripe age of seventeen can use such words as *fantastic, incredible,* and *eccentric.* She is surprised to learn that her best friends do not know what she is talking about, and look at her with mingled emotions of awe and envy.

As Dr. Flesh points out, his son could not go on because he was unable to read the lessons assigned to him. Words not immediately familiar were completely beyond his comprehension. He could not pick up a book and read it because it contained word forms which he had not memorized. We can imagine his troubles in geography when he struck *Constantinople, Mediterranean,* or *Mesopotamia.* Not being able to pronounce them, he would be forced to search in a dictionary for the picture of the words and hope that the definition included word forms which he already knew. There is no doubt that a percentage of precocious youngsters solve the mystery for themselves, but there seems no reason why schooling should not assist more effectively.

The child of twelve to fourteen years lives in an environment of word power larger than we generally imagine. In daily conversation

with relatives and friends, he is exposed to from fifteen to forty thousand different words, depending somewhat upon the educational level of his associates. He learns to use many of these words properly but he cannot recognize them on a pretty face, nor can he spell them if he hears them, as is proved by the productions of our secretarial schools. A large company has been forced to modify its filing system because young clerks do not know that, in filing, Ab follows Aa; neither do they know in what part of the file to look for the letter *M*. They just keep on looking until the proper shape appears.

Even if we assume that the average child, either with parental assistance or by personal ingenuity, finally becomes aware of the alphabet, he is deprived of much of the joy of youthful reading. The familiar classics are closed to him until he is beyond the age when they could stimulate his imagination. Perhaps there is a general belief that the importance of reading and spelling is diminishing. With radio, television, and motion pictures, ideas are transmitted orally or visually, but the process now in vogue must ultimately discourage direct contact with the written records of the race. Most dangerous of all, however, is the effect of the sight-reading methods upon the student who plans to go on to the college or university. Here he will be confronted with foreign languages and with technical material which he must comprehend through the written word. Even if he succeeds, he must waste a lot of energy struggling with the deficiency in his earlier training. If reading and writing are a catch-as-catch-can procedure, a valuable lesson in orderliness is lost, and there is lack of self-assurance in attacking word problems.

As semantics has so clearly demonstrated, we are already using words ineffectively and often incorrectly. Certainly we do not wish to become wordbound or to mistake letters for ideas, or written compounds for thoughts, yet we must communicate, and effective communication keeps the essential ideas of mankind in circulation. The English language is rich in useful words which will help us to learn, to share, and to teach. By the time the student reaches high school his word-grasping mechanism should have become automatic. The adult no longer reads letters, he grasps the totality of words and phrases, but the child is not an adult. He is not sufficiently strong in his associations to gloss over the surface of a sentence with comprehension. He must pause and examine and reflect, and most of all, when approaching words, he must not guess, for the context is not always sufficient. Also, there are words, the most important ones, which have no visual equivalents. It is impossible to draw an adequate picture of hope, faith, or charity. This was the great problem with ancient languages. There are plenty of Egyptian hieroglyphs, all nicely

arranged in pictorial sequences, but they were a locked mystery to Egyptologists because there was no alphabet. For the same reason, the more than ten thousand arbitrary glyphs of the written Mayan language cannot be deciphered. This simile is especially pertinent because the Mayan language is still spoken. There is no bridge, however, between the vocal and written forms. The sight-reading technique presents the same difficulty. Bridges are built, it is true, but there must be a separate bridge for every word.

The old McGuffy reader began with the ABC's, and before that children had a small paddle-like board on which the letters of the alphabet were written. This cherished possession was the first challenge toward learning. It is not optimistic to face the situation that the only solution to English is to discover a modern equivalent to the Rosetta Stone. As we noted earlier, methodologies all have psychological overtones. The way we learn to do something influences the way we learn to do everything. True success requires thoroughness and an adequate basic knowledge of the tools of a craft. What the scale is to music, the alphabet is to reading and writing. Some popular musicians have never learned to read music. They are content to play by ear or to depend upon some simple theory of chording. This may suffice under certain conditions, but would scarcely be advocated as an adequate foundation of musical technique. By ear and chord the dilettante may amaze himself and amuse his friends, but he will never become a master of his art. All this sums up the modern attitude toward life. The policy is to get by, and there is very little pride in doing things well. Reading, writing, and spelling not only contribute to education, but they help to sustain a way of life. If they fail and we produce generations of persons who read, write, and spell by eye and ear alone, it will be ever more difficult to preserve the cultural depths associated with learning and knowledge. In the end, we will live and die by eye and ear, and the meanings which create incentive, broaden understandings, and deepen insights, will be lost.

Even with the rich language that we have, it is still difficult to transmit essential ideas. Through popular usage, most words have been reduced to an economic or industrial level. They have become the instruments of the personal fulfillment of physical purposes. A thorough kowledge of language, however, and the skillful arrangements of word patterns make it possible for abstractions to be transmitted. Even transmission comes to nothing, however, if the reader or the listener is left to guess the significance of the message. Complete transmission can only take place when the reader is as skillful as the writer. We would consider it a grievous misfortune to be born blind or deaf, but if our ears do not understand what we hear or our

eyes what they see, our faculties have slight value. There is no reason why, in a literate country, the normal child of fourteen should not possess a working knowledge of several thousand words. He should be able to pick up the Bible and understand most of its moral and ethical implications. He should be able to read almost any book aloud and be able to spell the majority of simple words, whether he has heard them before or not. Thus equipped, he is free to explore meaning, to enrich his understanding of words and not merely to fumble with unfamiliar combinations of letters.

The sadness of it all is not merely the immediate confusion which exists. The sooner the child learns to read and write, the more rapidly he gains mental independence. The mind reaches out naturally and eagerly into every field of knowledge, picking up smatterings of art, history, philosophy, religion, politics, and economics. We will not get very far if we can only recognize the word *money* because the end of the last letter ends below the line, nor do we solve much when a child first confronted with this combination of letters guesses for a while and then announces hesitantly "mammy." We guess about living, we guess about the atomic bomb, we guess about God and Nature, and we guess about our political institutions, and now we must guess about words. In most things we have guessed wrong, and a world founded upon guess-work will not long endure. Young people should be taught from the beginning, not to guess, but to think, and they should be supplied with the means to think as accurately as possible. Our compliments to Dr. Flesh.

◕

*Once upon a time*

On a very cold winter morning, a small snail began to climb up the frozen trunk of a large cherry tree. As he slowly toiled upward, a beetle stuck his head out of a crack in the tree and said, "You surely are wasting your time—there aren't any cherries up there." "I know," replied the snail without halting his march, "but there will be by the time I get there."

---

*From the wisdom of Josh Billings*

There are two things in life for which we are never fully prepared—twins.

Mice fatten slow in church. They can't live on religion any more than the ministers can.

If virtue did not so often make herself repulsive, vice would not be half so attractive.

A fib is a lie painted in water-colors.

# Thomas Taylor, The English Platonist

IN England, a protestant who disputes the authority of the Church of England is called a Dissenter, or a non-conformist. In the 18th century, these Dissenters were subject to numerous indignities, and special abuse was reserved for Dissenting ministers. The father of Thomas Taylor was such a minister and, as a result, was impoverished by his convictions. He was described as a worthy and god-fearing man, but it also appears that he was set in his ways and strongly opinionated. He was one of those good souls who made life difficult for himself and others. Into this meager and frustrated atmosphere, Thomas Taylor was born in London, on the fifteenth day of May, 1758. Early admirers referred to this event with philosophical elegance, declaring that on his natal day the soul of the philosopher "descended into this mundane sphere." While Thomas was still in his trim, his reverent father decided that his son should follow in his footsteps and become a Dissenting minister. It seems, however, that the muses and those tutelary spirits which attend such matters decreed otherwise.

When Thomas reached his ninth year, he was sent to St. Paul's school, a proper atmosphere in which to absorb theology and non-conformism. Even at this early age, the boy gave indications of a contemplative turn of mind. He also revealed a strong spirit and a profound aversion to pedantry and pedagogy. He disliked to listen to the opinions of those whose wordiness indicated no depth of personal understanding. A certain Mr. Ryder, who was one of the masters of St. Paul's school, became interested in the serious and penetrating mind of young Taylor. When the lesson involved some especially grave or meaningful passage by a classic author, Mr. Ryder would turn to Thomas, saying "Come, here is something worthy the attention of a philosopher." After remaining three years in this school, young Taylor became so thoroughly disgusted with the superficial manner in which classical languages and sciences were taught that he finally persuaded his father to take him home. There were then further family councils and Thomas suceeded in convincing his father that he was not designed by natural endowments for the ministry. This was a great blow, for it seemed to the good man that the career of a Dissenting minister was the highest, noblest, and most enviable employment which the world could offer.

PORTRAIT OF THOMAS TAYLOR, THE GREATEST OF THE MODERN PLATONISTS

Young Thomas was an impetuous fellow, and shortly after his twelfth year he fell deeply in love with a Miss Morton, the eldest daughter of a respectable coal merchant in Doctor's Commons. She must have been an extraordinary person, for it is recorded that she was younger than Thomas and he had recently passed his twelfth year. Miss Morton, the coal merchant's daughter, was already highly and technically educated with a profound interest in the most advanced subjects of philosophy. Young Thomas sang her praises constantly,

and declared himself to be as much in love as any of the famous heroes of romance and chivalry. His greatest joy was to converse with his beloved or to describe her charms and attainments to any who would listen. It was considered almost incredible by his biographers that this boy, scarcely in his teens, should have been so deeply and lastingly smitten, but future events seemed to indicate that destiny had decreed this association.

Taylor's father found difficulty in deciding a new direction for his son's future. He was not overly enthusiastic when young Thomas indicated a strong preference for higher mathematics. As a Dissenting minister, the senior Taylor was deeply skilled in modern theology, but was hopelessly deficient in the classical sciences and philosophies. It seemed to him that the boy had chosen a difficult and unpromising field of endeavor. Thomas found it necessary to study at night and to conceal his books, and the long and constant sacrifice of sleep may have contributed to the delicacy of the young man's constitution.

In 1773, when Thomas was about 15 years old, he was placed under his uncle who was one of the officers of the dock-yard at Sheerness. This worthy uncle believed in keeping young people as busy as possible. Leisure hours were few, but these were used to advance the speculative parts of mathematics, for Thomas was early of the opinion that those sciences were degraded when applied to practical affairs. Thomas was also reading Bolingbroke and Hume at this period. Young Taylor remained with his tyrannical and uninspiring uncle for about three years and, unable to endure longer what he considered a state of abject slavery, sought liberation by returning to the Church. He left Sheerness and studied for two years with the Reverend Mr. Worthington, a celebrated Dissenting preacher. Here he recovered his basic knowledge of Latin and Greek. He did not advance very rapidly, however, because the text with which he worked did not challenge his mind. While he was a pupil of the Reverend Mr. Worthington, Taylor renewed with increased ardour his acquaintance with Miss Morton. It would seem that he maintained a rigorous program. He studied Greek and Latin all day, courted his fair lady in the evening, and read the Latin Quarto of Simson's *Conic Sections* at night.

In some way, Taylor found it possible during these congested years to approach the study of modern philosophy and, armed with the subtler parts of mathematics, he attacked Newton's *Principia*. He never finished the book, however, because he regarded a number of Newton's Propositions to be plainly absurd. He particularly disapproved of Propositions VI, VII, and VIII in the Third Book. The biographers have noted that up to this point, Mr. Taylor's life had flowed "limpid

and unruffled." They meant that in comparison to his future adventures, his childhood was scarcely noteworthy.

Conspiracy now entered the picture. It was time for Thomas to enter the university, so he bade Miss Morton an impassioned farewell. Her father, the respectable coal-merchant, intended during Taylor's absence to marry his daughter to a wealthy man who was also courting her most ardently. The young lady, who returned our hero's devotion with full measure, seeking to protect herself from the tyrannical weight of parental authority, consented to marry young Taylor secretly, under the condition that the marriage would be only a formal one until he had finished his studies at Aberdeen. And so it came about that these remarkable young people were indissolvably bound in the bonds of matrimony.

The secret was soon discovered, however, and a series of distressing parental outbursts followed. Fortunately, the times were such that even the most desperate and embittered parent would scarcely think of divorce. In time, the rages subsided, and the young couple attempted to establish themselves in a home of their own. It was then that young Thomas discovered that his selection of interests scarcely fitted him for successful employment. For nearly a year, the two young people lived on seven shillings a week. Mrs. Taylor was cheated out of her inheritance by a relative who was left the executor of her father's estate. The young couple was abandoned by both friends and relatives and, in an emergency, could not borrow ten shillings and sixpence. Finally, Mr. Taylor secured a position as usher in a school at Paddington. He did not earn enough money so that his wife could be with him, and he was permitted to see her only on Saturday afternoons. He later found the situation of a clerk in Mssrs. Lubbock's bank in London. This paid him 50 pounds a year, and he received his money quarterly. He was unable to take care of his wife and keep enough funds for his own living. On a number of occasions when he reached his room in the evening, he fell senseless on the floor from malnutrition. At last, he managed to rent a house at Walworth through the assistance of a schoolmate, and here, for the first time, the Taylors were able to experience a frugal family existence. Already, however, Thomas was showing serious impairment to his physical health and, in the years that followed, there was no remedy for this impairment.

Settled in his new home, Taylor directed his attention to the study of chemistry, but his selection of texts indicated an inclination toward alchemy. He remained true, however, to mathematics, and having given much attention to the quadrature of the circle, which he believed could be verified geometrically, he published, in 1780, a pamphlet entitled "A New Method of Reasoning in Geometry." A very

small edition of this little work was printed and it attracted slight attention. Later, the substance was incorporated into the first volume of Taylor's translation of *Proclus on Euclid.*

Up to this time, Taylor's studies were merely preparing him for the specialization which was to establish his reputation in the literary world. He became acquainted with the treatise of Sir Kenelm Digby *On Bodies and Man's Soul.* Digby was a celebrated physician and philosopher of 17th century England, and is remembered especially for his famous theory of "the weapon salve," a method of treating wounds by placing the medication on the weapon that caused them rather than upon the injury itself. The remedy was startlingly successful, but one factor in the cure had been generally overlooked—Digby insisted that the wound be kept scrupulously clean. Taylor considered Sir Digby to be a great logician, metaphysician, and universal scholar, whose name should never be mentioned but with reverence for his unparalleled worth. Through Digby, Taylor's attention was directed to the philosophy of Aristotle, and he had no more than read Aristotle's *Physics* when he determined to make the study of parapatetic philosophy the principal work of his life. He was so enthusiastic that he soon fitted himself to read Aristotle in the original, and later remarked that he had learned Greek through Greek philosophy, rather than Greek philosophy through Greek.

All this time, Taylor labored in the banking house from early morning to seven o'clock in the evening, and when business was pressing was expected to remain until 9 or 10. He was therefore obliged to do most of his studying at night, and for several years seldom retired before two or three o'clock in the morning. He trained his mind to free himself from all interruption during those precious hours which he devoted to the classics. Neither poverty nor daily responsibility interrupted his dedicated pursuit of knowledge.

It was said that, like Penelope of old, Taylor's ability to pursue his studies under the most trying circumstances was due to the mental discipline which he imposed upon himself. He organized his daily employment so efficiently that he was able to satisfy the exacting requirements of banking and at the same time carry on philosophical reflections during working hours. As he made out bills, balanced accounts, and interviewed depositors, his mind was busily engaged in expanding Aristotle's categories. It is remarkable that he carried these two lines of thought without making mistakes in either.

Through Aristotle, Taylor passed naturally to the contemplation of the works of Plato. As these researches unfolded, Taylor came to the conclusion that the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato might be

likened to the Lesser and Greater Mysteries of the Greeks. It was only a step from Plato to Plotinus, whose mystical apperception brought a new and deeper light to Taylor's soul. He also studied Proclus' "On the Theology of Plato," a work so abstruse that he observed that he did not thoroughly understand its full meaning until he had read it three times. While Taylor was reflecting upon the writings of Proclus, the celebrated Miss Wollstonecraft lived in his home for nearly three months. Taylor considered her a very modest, sensible, and agreeable young woman, and she referred to the little room where Taylor studied as "the abode of peace." When Taylor published his little book "A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes," he declared that he had been induced to this particular labor because Mr. Thomas Payne had convinced thousands of the rights of man, and Mrs. Wollstonecraft had indisputably proved that women are in every respect naturally equal to men.

After Taylor had served nearly six years in Lubbock's Bank, he found it necessary to make an important decision. His health had been so undermined by long hours of uncongenial employment combined with his intensive program of reading and research, that he could no longer continue this double life. He therefore resolved to find a means of creating a career in his chosen field. His first effort was most curious. He attempted to construct a perpetual lamp such as is reported to have been found in ancient tombs. He used phosphorous, and exhibited his creation at the Freemasons Tavern. Due to circumstances beyond his control, the experiment was not a success, but it did attract several devoted and influential friends through whose assistance he was able to sever his connection with the banking world.

Next, at the suggestion of Mr. John Flaxman, the distinguished sculptor and artist, Taylor composed twelve lectures on Platonic philosophy, which he delivered at Mr. Flaxman's house to a respectable and distinguished audience. His lectures were enthusiastically received and a Mr. Bennett Langton was so impressed that he mentioned Thomas Taylor to the King of England. His majesty, though reminded several times of Taylor's work, went no further than to express his admiration, although it was hoped for a time that he might become a patron of the scholar. During his lectures, Taylor also met and formed a lasting friendship with Mr. William Meredith, a man of large fortune and liberal mind. Meredith became a staunch supporter of Taylor, and assisted him financially in the publication of several of his books.

In 1787, Taylor became acquainted with Dr. Floyer Sydenham, a learned Platonist, who died in prison because he was unable to pay a debt which he owed to the keeper of a restaurant. Dr. Sydenham,

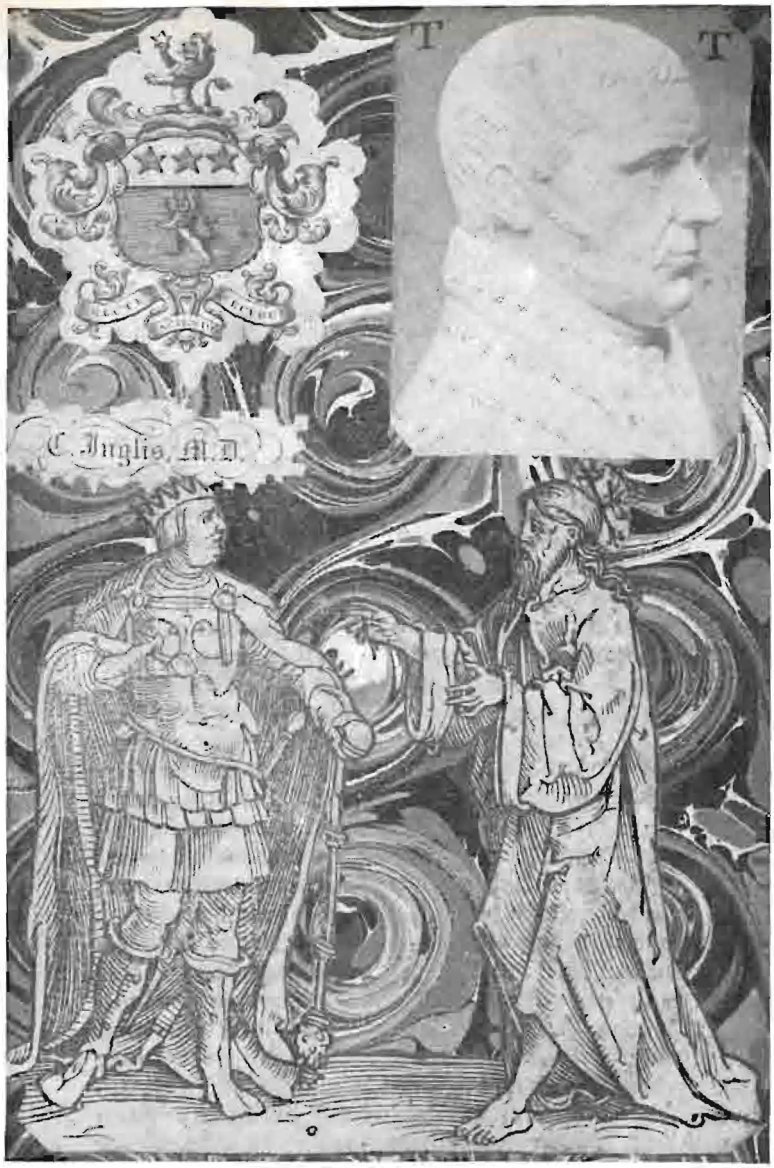
had come to the study of Plato late in life, but might have advanced to a greater knowledge had he not been so limited by infirmity, poverty, and a tragic death. On April 1, 1787, Taylor composed an eloquent panegyric dedicated to Dr. Sydenham, which appeared in seven journals and was reprinted, with some changes, in Taylor's *Miscellanies.*

According to the outline in *The Platonist,* Taylor's life after his attaining the support of a few devoted and enthusiastic friends was largely devoted to his literary work. In 1787, he published his translation of *The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus,* and this was followed in regular order by most of his other translations and original writings. To conserve space, a check list of these important books will be found at the end of this biographical outline.

In 1788, the Marquis de Valadi, a French nobleman with philosophic inclinations, visited England in search of Pythagorean lore. He presented himself to Thomas Taylor and, with true French enthusiasm, is said to have thrown himself at the master's feet. He presented Taylor with a small sum of money, which constituted his entire fortune at the moment, and begged with great humility to become a disciple. Taylor received him most graciously, and for a time instructed the Marquis in the essentials of philosophy. In due course, however, Valadi decided that the contemplative life was not for him, and he returned to France to take part in the political commotion then agitating the country. He bade adieu in full military attire, remarking, "I am going back to Alexander."

About 1791, while working in the British Museum, Taylor discovered a remarkable Hymn of Proclus to Athena. Taylor was fortunate in having the facilities of the Museum at his disposal, for while it was not the institution it is today, it was rich in ancient works, most of which were unknown to 18th-century scholars. It was Mr. Samuel Patterson who recorded the incident which led to the translation of *Pausanias, The Description of Greece,* which appeared in 1794. Patterson was present, and remarked that the assignment was "enough to break a man's heart." The bookseller replied easily, "Oh, nothing will break the heart of Mr. Taylor." The work was completed in ten months, including all the notes and addenda, and for his labor Taylor received sixty pounds. The strain of this assignment was so great that when the manuscript was finished Taylor lost the use of the forefinger of his right hand, which he never regained.

As may be expected, the critics attacked the translation of *Pausanias,* intimating that Mr. Taylor was no scholar. He answered his principal critic, Mr. Porson, as follows: "I only add that their invidious insinuation that I do not understand Greek is too contemptible to merit a




The inside front cover of a rare first edition copy of Taylor's translation of "The Arguments of the Emperor Julian Against the Christians." Pasted on to this cover are the book-plate of Dr. Ingals, one of Taylor's personal friends, a rare portrait of Thomas Taylor, and two figures representing Julian and Christ.

reply, unless they mean that my knowledge of Greek is by no means to be compared with that of Mr. Porson, because I am not, like him, unable to do anything without accents; for I confess, that in this respect I am so far inferior to him, that I can read a philosophic Greek manuscript without accents with nearly as much facility as a book written in my native tongue."

During the six years between 1795 and 1801, Taylor translated the remaining dialogues of Plato which had not been completed by Dr. Floyer Sydenham, and continued his work upon the writings of Aristotle. During this period also, he contributed to several periodicals, where some of his most important writings first appeared. About 1799, Taylor became assistant secretary to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce. Through the exertion of his friends, he secured a large majority of votes for this office, but he was forced to relinquish it because his health would not permit the additional exertion. Soon after this, he engaged in a philosophical controversy with Dr. Gilles, whom he vanquished to the satisfaction of everyone except Dr. Gilles. About this time also, Taylor paid a special tribute to William and George Meredith to whom he expressed deepest friendship and the most profound gratitude for their continuous assistance and inspiration. He also answered Dr. Gilles in a pamphlet published in 1804. The *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse,* which appeared in 1805, is especially interesting because it contains Taylor's original summary of Platonic philosophy under the title "The Creed of the Platonic Philosopher."

At this time, Taylor was also at work on his original translation of the complete Aristotle in ten volumes, which is the most rare of his productions. He said that only fifty copies would be printed of each volume, and that they would be distributed according to his own discretion. Unfortunately, this monument to erudition has never been reprinted, and complete sets are almost unobtainable. Mr. Bridgman, the critic who reviewed this work, was as unpleasant as possible; but he is forgotten, and Taylor's memory remains green. In 1809, the audacious Mr. Taylor published anonymously his *Arguments of the Emperor Julian Against the Christians.* This book had the distinction of being rigidly suppressed and most of the copies destroyed. We are fortunate in having an original copy of this book, which belonged to an intimate friend of Taylor's, in our library.

In 1818, Taylor was heartened by a very pleasant letter which he received from Dr. Copleston, provost of Oriel College. This letter paid high tribute to the depth and dignity of Taylor's translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* which enjoyed a second edition. Such encouragement was cherished by the scholar because it was rare, espe-

cially coming from an advanced authority in the field. After 1818, Taylor gave special consideration to the Neo-Platonic philosophy, and in 1822 he produced his well-known translation of the philosophical works of Apuleius, from the original Latin. This is probably the most often reprinted of Taylor's translations. The last of his works appeared in 1834, and consisted of several treatises of Plotinus. It is noteworthy that there was no indication that his faculties or powers were diminishing.

Thomas Taylor passed from this life early on Sunday morning, the first day of November, 1835. The Reverend Alexander Dyce, the distinguished editor of Shakespeare, was with Taylor the day before his death. He recorded this visit as follows: "That he [Taylor] endeavored to carry into practice the precepts of the ancient philosophers is sufficiently notorious; that he did so to the last hour of his existence I myself had a proof: the day before he died I went to see him, and to my inquiry, 'how he was?' he answered, 'I have passed a dreadful night of pain,—but you remember what Posidonios said to Pompey,' (that pain was no evil)."

Thomas Taylor wrote his own epitaph, and it would be difficult to imagine lines more appropriate.

"Health, strength, and ease, and manhood's active age,
Freely I gave to Plato's sacred cave.
With Truth's pure joys, with Fame my days were crown'd,
Tho' Fortune adverse on my labors frown'd."

The following description of Mr. Taylor will help to complete the picture. He was described as of medium size, well-proportioned, with an open, regular, and benevolent countenance. There was a quiet dignity about him, but no intellectual affectations of any kind. His manner was such that he won the friendship and affection of all who knew him well. His dress was simple, and his conduct irreproachable. Even among friends, he would never compromise his principles, but he was free and easy, and never attempted to dominate situations. As he grew older, his appearance became memorable, but his manner was always gracious, without pride, haughtiness, or vanity. He had an extraordinary memory, which was always available, and he was an acute observer with a profound understanding of human nature. A wonderful conversationalist, he possessed an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes, and was able to entertain his associates without ever becoming personal or referring to his own joys or sorrows. Though a profound mathematician, he had none of the attributes of a traditional scholar. His abilities were diversified, but his purpose always the

service of truth. Taylor has been called the *Great English Pagan,* and it seems that he even attempted, in a quiet way, to re-establish some of the rituals of the Greek religion. Early in their marriage, he taught his wife the Greek language, and it was used extensively in their home. There is a report that in order that he might more readily comprehend the times and circumstances of the great philosophic era, he lived in a Grecian fashion, even in matters of food and clothing, but of this we can find no documentary proof.

The interest in the work of Thomas Taylor has increased through the years and his books, which have remained scarce from lack of reprinting, are highly regarded by all students who wish to understand the soul of classical thinking. A tribute to his memory is both proper and timely.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE PUBLISHED WORKS OF THOMAS TAYLOR

* In the Library of the Society

An Answer to Dr. Gilles' Supplement (London, 1804)
*Arguments of the Emperor Julian Against the Christians (London, 1809)
*Aristotle's Great Ethics (1811)
*Aristotle's Metaphysics (1801)
The Commentaries of Proclus on the Timaeus of Plato (2 vols., 1820)
*Cratylus, Phaedo, Parmenides, and Timaeus of Plato (London, 1793)
*The Description of Greece, by Pausanias (London, 1794)
*The Dissertations of Maximus Tyrius (London, 1804)
*A Dissertation on the Eleusinian Bacchic Mysteries (Amsterdam,—)
*A Dissertation on the Philosophy of Aristotle (1812)
*The Elements of a New Arithmetical Notation, and of a New Arithmetic of Infinites (London, 1823)
*Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries (New York, 1891)
*Extracts from the Scholia of Olympiodorus on the Phaedo of Plato (1793)
*The Fable of Cupid and Psyche, To which are added A Poetical Paraphrase on the Speech of Diotima, in the Banquet of Plato; Four Hymns, &c. &c. (London. 1795)
*Five Books of Plotinus (London, 1794)
Fragments of Porphyry, Julian Celsus, and Others Against the Christians (1830)
*Fragments of The Lost Writings of Proclus (London, 1825)
Fragments of a Work Written by the Emperor Julian Against the Christians, preserved by Cyril Bishop of Alexandria—A part of the third book of Proclus on Plato's Theology (1789)
*The Hymns of Orpheus. With a Preliminary Dissertation on The Life and Theology of Orpheus. Contains also The Initiations of Orpheus and An Essay on The Beautiful, from the Greek of Plotinus (London, 1792)
Iamblichus on The Mysteries (London, 1895)
*Iamblichus on The Mysteries of The Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians (1821)

*Life of Pythagoras by Iamblichus (London, 1818)
*The Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass, and Philosophical Works of Apuleius (London, 1822)
*Miscellanies, in Prose and Verse: Containing The Triumph of The Wise Man Over Fortune, The Creed Of The Platonic Philosopher; A Panegyric On Sydenham, &c. &c. (London, 1805)
Miscellaneous Extracts in one Vol. (n.d.)
Mystical Hymns of Orpheus (London, 1896)
*Ocellus Lucanus on The Nature of The Universe. Taurus, The Platonic Philosopher, On the Eternity of The World. Julius Firmicus Maternus of The Thema Mundi; in which the Positions of The Stars at the Commencement of the Seven Mundane Periods is Given. Select Theorems on the Perpetuity of Time, by Proclus. (London, 1831)
*Phaedrus of Plato (London, 1792)
Philosophical and Mathematical Commentaries of Proclus (London, 1788)
*The Platonist. Periodical, ed. by Thomas M. Johnson. (St. Louis, Mo., 1881—)
*Political Fragments of Archytas, Charondas, Zaleucus, and other Ancient Pythagoreans, Preserved by Stobaeus; and also Ethical Fragments of Hierocles (Chiswick, 1822)
*Pythagoric Sentences of Demophilus (London, 1804)
*Rhetoric, Poetic, and Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle (3 vols. London, 1818)
*Sallust on The Gods And The World; And The Pythagoric Sentences of Demophilus, Translated from the Greek; and Five Hymns by Proclus (London, 1795)
*Select Works of Plotinus (1817)
*Select Works of Porphyry; Containing His Four Books on Abstinence From Animal Food; His Treatise on The Homeric Cave of The Nymphs; and His Auxiliaries to the Perception of Intelligible Natures. With an Appendix explaining the Allegory of the Wanderings of Ulysses. (London 1823)
A Selection of Arguments Against Modern Astronomy, and also Theological Questions with Their Solutions (n.d.)
*The Six Books of Proclus on The Theology of Plato (2 vols. 1816)
*Theoretic Arithmetic (1816)
*Treatises of Plotinus: Viz. On Suicide, to which is added an Extract from the Harleian MS. of the Scholia of Olympiodorus on the Phaedo of Plato Respecting Suicide, Accompanied by the Greek Text; Two Books on Truly Existing Being; and Extracts from His Treatise on the Manner in which the Multitude of Ideas Subsists, and Concerning The Good (London, 1834)
*Two Orations of the Emperor Julian (London, 1793)
Two Treatises of Proclus, translated from the French (1833)
*A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes (London, 1792)
*The Works of Aristotle (8 vols. London, 1812)
*The Works of Plato (6 vols. London, 1804.)

◕

*An Ancient Adage*

An unknown philosopher said: "Take life as you find it, but never leave it so."

# Mark Twain's *Mysterious Stranger*

AS is so often the case in the lives and temperaments of outstanding humans, there was a side to the nature of Samuel L. Clemens that was decidedly "unfunny." During a period of personal tragedy, he wrote his extraordinary story of "The Mysterious Stranger." In this short work, he introduced to the reader an angelic being by the name of Satan, directly related to the Fallen Angel of Christian theology. Clemens conceived of his young and sprightly Satan as a handsome and ingratiating youth who had left his own invisible region to wander the earth for a while in the guise of a mortal. This Satan was neither good nor bad, he wished neither to injure nor to assist; rather he took a detached and arrogant attitude toward human beings, whom he considered to be foolish and ignorant creatures of no importance to themselves or the universe in which they existed. Through this charming figment of his imagination, Clemens expounded several of his own opinions, which at the time were decidedly ironical.

The scene of the story is an Austrian village during the medieval period in European history. It was a superstition-ridden community, languishing under the heavy spell of demonology and witchcraft. The villagers were a nondescript lot with the so-called normal virtues and vices of human nature. It is obvious that a radiant young angel totally unable to adjust his point of view to the limited perspective of an unlearned and unlettered villager would have little patience with the foibles of small minds. It is not the purpose of this article to retell the story of "The Mysterious Stranger," as this is available to interested readers everywhere. We limit ourselves to the consideration of two interesting philosophical concepts which are introduced into the book and about which the story turns.

The first of these concepts deals with the operation of the law of cause and effect. Young Satan, strangely wise beyond mortal years, explains that living is made up of a sequence of related incidents. This sequence is so exact that a single and apparently trivial action performed at any moment can change the entire destiny of a person. He goes so far as to insist that the slightest alteration in the pattern of human conduct may change the length of life 20 or 30 years. Because he is an angel, and because he understands the laws governing human activity and can foretell the future, Satan has it within his power to re-

arrange action sequences. To please some earthly friend, Satan can rescue an endangered person from an immediate emergency. To do so, however, may condemn that person to years of madness, misery, pain, and violence. Conversely, the young angel can precipitate what appears to be a disaster which will, in turn, result in future peace and security. Occasionally, he performs these miracles without any consideration for the consequences. The ultimate joys and sorrows of mortals are of no importance to him. He is merely a spectator, and the world is a laboratory where experiments of all kinds are in process.

The philosophical problem involves the possibility of man being capable of a definite action contrary to his own destiny pattern. At any given moment, the individual has an inevitable destiny based upon the complete state of himself at that moment. In fact, however, the person does not pause at that moment, but continues to exert his initiative. For this reason, his future state is in a condition of perpetual change. On the physical plane, change continues until death, which divides action from reaction and thus clarifies the destiny of the person. This corresponds, in part at least, with the Buddhist doctrine of karma. In the early centuries of Buddhism, the law of karma was held to be inflexible. Man must work out his own salvation with diligence. He must cause within himself his ultimate liberation from the wheel of mortal existence. Every cause produces an effect similar to that cause. and each effect, in turn, becomes another cause, and so ad infinitum.

It became apparent that this ended in a vicious circle and the Northern Buddhists conceived the possibility that by the pure exercise of the spiritual will man could break this sequence of causation. To earn the right to accomplish this dynamic experience within himself, the devout Buddhist disciplined his nature and sought with vigorous sincerity the way of enlightenment. It was only by the ascent of his own internal center of awareness that the disciple could transcend the wheel of the law. He escaped cause and effect by freeing his internal being from both the illusion of action and the illusion of the result of action. Man living under the concept of time must also suffer the tyranny of time, but if that man experiences eternity, he can no longer be held by the concept of time or the sequence of events which can have no existence apart from time. This issue is not clarified in the story, but we gain the feeling that it is bound to the second essential concept unfolded by Satan in his discussions with his mortal friends.

In *The Tempest,* Prospero, the magician, is made to say, "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." This is the burden of Satan's argument. What men call living is a kind of dream that frequently is little better than a nightmare.


PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL L. CLEMENS

Creatures move about in a daze, groping like somnambulists along the familiar paths that lead from the cradle to the grave. Some are rich, some are poor, some are respected members of society, and some are outcasts. A few appear to be wise; many are obviously foolish. Yet

the wisdom of the wise and the foolishness of the foolish are both confounded by the very unreality of the dream itself. A fool can dream that he is wise, and a wise man can dream that he is a fool, yet the nature of neither man is essentially altered. From the perspective of the angel and Samuel L. Clemens, life is circumscribed by a sovereign foolishness which can be examined and re-examined, analyzed and classified, without increasing or decreasing any of the elements involved.

Medieval man believed in witchcraft; therefore, there were witches, and thousands of innocent old women were burned at the stake. Modern man does not believe in witches; therefore, there are no witches, and we turn to the more pleasant pastimes such as perfecting the hydrogen bomb. Satan laughs as the villagers unfold their philosophies of life, explain their religions, interpret their political inclinations, and perform their several chores. One is good from hope of heaven, another is good from fear of hell, and each doing his best is totally unaware of the nature of good. This may be amusing to angels, but besets men with countless difficulties. Satan cannot understand why the people in this little Austrian village want to be alive, and why they struggle so desperately to perpetuate their concept of living. According to him, everyone would be happier, including the angels, if this strange and precocious breed called humankind were simply erased by a gesture of the divine hand.

But, as Satan also observes, perhaps angels do not understand mortals. Can anything that is superior really comprehend that which is infinitely less than itself? Can the human being, for example, ever really appreciate the consciousness of the separate cells that make up his body? Can he share the life incentive of a tiny cellular structure in an area of his epidermis? Yet molecules and even atoms live and vibrate and energize according to their own, to us insignificant, requirements. No doubt to them their way of life is not only significant, but the only reality. And in their own estimation they are a unique order of beings destined to ultimately gain sovereignty over the universe. They know nothing of man, in whose body they exist, and less still of space, in which man exists.

In a subtle way, Satan invites his mortal acquaintances to experience, if they can, his strange detachment, which at first appears cruel and arrogant. Satan simply is not under the glamour of the human perspective. He cannot share his understanding with those about him because they have never been free of the tyranny of their mortal minds. To them, Satan is a tempter, a destroyer, a disillusioner. He lacks sympathy, warmth, compassion, and mortals regard him with a mixture of fear and fascination. They fear because they do not understand, and they are fascinated because they know he has come to them

from a world beyond their own little empire of sleep. He is like a man awake among those sleeping. He tells them there is nothing but thought—your thought—and space. Space is the infinite receptacle of thought. Men fill space with their own thought and, having populated eternity with the figments of their own imaginations, bow humbly to the shadows they have fashioned. Some of these shadows they worship; others, they despise. But they never realize that escape can only come by breaking the bonds of sleep.

Here, again, are traces of Eastern doctrine. The illusion of worldliness results from the sleep of the soul. In that psychic sleep, what dreams may come? Satan finally announces that he must depart for other places, and because his project will require more time than mortals have to space, they will not live to see him again. He has given them a first-hand report on things observed and examined by a traveler from another sphere. Clemens becomes a rather doleful prophet; he makes Satan predict the future of mortal beings as merely the continuance of their present troubles and delinquencies. In their dreams, they will make war and seek peace, and then war about the peace. He cannot understand why such patterns should prevail, but it is obvious that it is because of a dismal characteristic which men share in common and which they call "human nature." Satan considers the term synonymous with stupidity because even those with a ray of understanding should know better. The subtle purpose of the story is certainly to assail the complacency of foolish persons who have neither learned from experience nor reasoned through the inconsistencies of their own conduct.

Assuming that the angel Satan in this case is making a negative statement of a positive formula for human regeneration, the gist of his conclusions is profoundly philosophical. To escape from the limitations of mortality and share in the large vision of creatures inhabiting a superior sphere, man must energize and clarify his resolution. He must take hold of his own destiny and break the little circle which limits those who let tomorrow take care of itself. There must be courage to assume responsibility for one's own destiny, and strength to go against the streams of popular error. To attain this liberation, man must re-evaluate the reasons for himself and the purposes behind the things he does. He must create a destiny which he can inhabit without fear. For such a labor, he must also cultivate discrimination. This is the power which assists him to awake from the sleep of ignorance. He must realize that he is a minute particle of the universal and, as such, has a universal destiny. He is a being, not a machine. Men die and leave machines behind them, but in his departure from this life, man takes with him a mind and a soul. The moment he

departs from his earthly environment, he leaves behind the only world with which he is familiar. Cities and towns fade away; his neighbors, friends, and enemies vanish in a gathering gloom which also obscures his lands, his properties, his goods, and his bankbook. Even the great globe itself is no more. According to Satan, death, therefore, awakens man from the dream into which he is born by the mystery of birth.

The radiant angel from life's other side cannot conceive with his own unfolded faculties why this dream state of man should ever be besieged by phantoms of hideous shapes. Why not live happily for the duration of this insubstantial pageant? Why worry who rules the world? Why debate religion, or persecute races, or intimidate minorities? Why should families wrangle and dissent, and individuals live out their years under the fear of death and sickness, crime and poverty? It is all so foolish, when all that is really necessary is to realize that none of these worldly things mean anything. It costs no more to sleep well than to sleep fitfully. Mortals are small children whose triumphs and defeats will soon be forgotten as childhood verges toward maturity.

Satan is neither patient nor impatient over it all, for actually it is none of his business. But then again, one has a right to his observations and, no doubt by curious coincidence, Satan's opinions coincided very closely with those of Samuel L. Clemens. A bright young angel straying from a universe of law and order entered an unpleasant and chaotic region and was surprised to note that it was inhabited by a backward and underprivileged people to which it might be more than advisable to send missionaries and such forms of aid and assistance as the natives would accept.

# *Pythagoras:* Life, Science, and Mysticism

## PART II

By Henry L. Drake
*Vice-President of the Society*

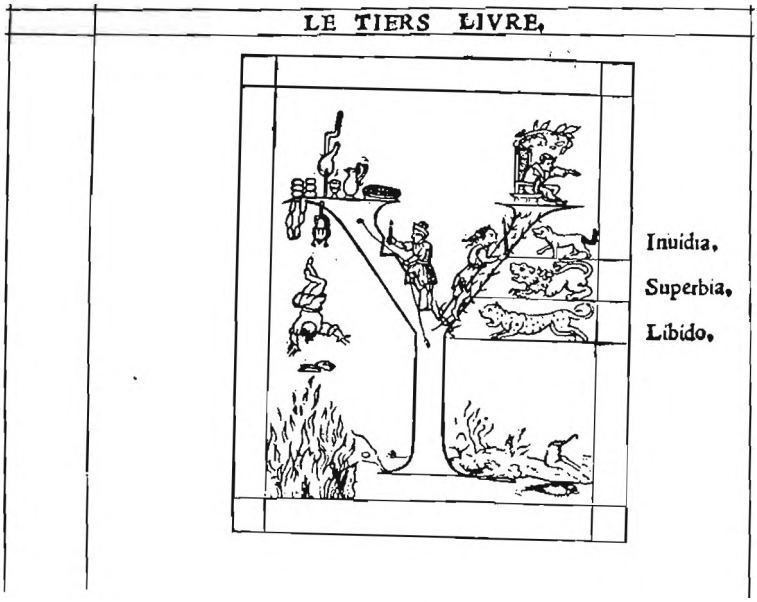
HAVING considered Pythagoras' life and Brotherhood, it is appropriate to observe his theory of number, which comprises the fundamental concept of his scientific research. Heraclitus remarked that he pursued the study of Nature more exhaustively than did any other thinker of his day. Pythagoras first acquired an intimation of the importance of numbers from the relations between musical notes. He observed that there is a harmony of tones if a certain numerical ratio is maintained between notes as they are struck. This harmony he found to be expressed by such relations as the octave, the law of which he discovered. Because the Pythagoreans applied mathematics to music, they may be regarded as the founders of a scientific theory of sound, which entered so deeply into their systematic speculations. Pythagoras concluded that inasmuch as music could be stated in numerical symbols, everything might be so stated. Thus, after learning about the physical world by mathematical deductions, he then put his discoveries to scientific test, as exemplified by his experiments with music.

It should be observed, however, that Pythagoras did not regard numbers as we do; for he universalized his discoveries in the field of number theory. Being a scientific mystic, he declared that number is the essential element of all life and that all activity in the universe is regulated by number. In regarding number as the principle of reality, he went beyond the Greek physicists, for he sought a supreme law of harmony which might be expressed in number. This doctrine, in its deepest import, also goes beyond modern mathematical concepts. Number, for Pythagoras and his followers, had a far more significant meaning. They did not apply the science only to place phenomena under quantitative relationships, but respected it as the qualitative essence of everything. T. Gompertz, a leader in the modern school of natural philosophy, agrees with the Pythagoreans, saying that "Everything that is real . . . has become this out of numbers, or, more strictly speaking, every Real is absolutely nothing else than number."

The typical way in which the Pythagoreans investigated their theory of number was to analyze the properties of number as a key to the expanses of Nature. The most distinctive doctrine of this philosophy contends that number is the being of everything that exists. Aristotle interpreted this to mean that the Pythagoreans saw in numbers the form or proportions of all things, since they held number to be prior to everything in Nature. In his *Metaphysics* he says, "These philosophers evidently regarded number as first principle both as being the material cause of things that exist and as describing their qualities and states as well." Thus, number becomes the first proportion, and the entire universe a harmony of number. This makes it evident that mathematical truths exist independent of and prior to the minds that think them. They are not invented by human minds, but discovered by them. Hence, the Pythagoreans describe number as the law of the universe, and as that which restrains it from breaking asunder. The power implicit in number rules over gods and men alike, and provides the conditions of knowledge and of definition. It is, in fact, the nature of number as limited and unlimited which affords the constituents of all forms.

In their own special way, the Pythagoreans correlated number with the arts and sciences. They did not leave off with applying digits to the values of reality, but endeavored to derive objects directly from them. They identified the point with one, the line with two, the plane with three, and the square with four. The reasons which they offered for these associations are that the point is an indivisible unity or oneness, the line is bounded by two points, the first rectilinear figure—the triangle—has three lines, while the square has four. In this way, the basic geometrical forms of all things were derived from numbers. By means of the number five, they deduced physical qualities. Reason, health, and light were correlated with seven. Love, friendship, prudence, and the inventive ability, were said to result from the number eight.

The Pythagoreans also distinguished between numbers and the objects which were derived from them. This was especially true as between unity and that first number—namely, one—which arises out of unity. Yet, on this point, a part of Pythagoras' school came to consider number as but the measure of the physical world, while another group of the Brothers maintained that number, in addition to being a measure, is the essence of world phenomena. This latter theory holds that all is from the original unity, from one being, and that creator is God. In the philosophy of Philolaus, "God embraces and actuates all," and is unity in its complete expression. Those who maintained this theory, therefore, held that all numbers, in varying degrees, carry




THE PYTHAGOREAN "Y" FROM AN EARLY BOOK ON ALPHABETS

This traditional symbol, identified with the teachings of Pythagoras, pictures the dividing of the way of life into two paths—the one on the right leading upward along a difficult and perilous road to the security of the philosophic life. The left hand path ascends more easily, but terminates in emblems of sensory gratification. Those who take this path ultimately fall into sloth and luxury. Note the early use of the term *libido* in connection with this 16th-century drawing.

a certain vibratory power, or essential form, which they derive from God, the complete unity.

The problem of the one in relation to unity caused a duality of philosophic viewpoint to develop in later Pythagoreanism. The admittance of the number one into their philosophy allowed the entrance of the number two, and therefore, of a multiplicity of relative numbers. This way of thinking may have originated with the founder himself.

In his poem *On Nature,* Parmenides, who was influenced by Pythagoreanism, clarifies the two positions held by the Brothers. The section of the poem on "The Way of Seeming" describes duality, which is the limited, sensory, and illusory world of plurality. In the section devoted to "The Way of Truth" the poem gives an account of the sphere of unity, comprising the unlimited world of unified reality. These

phases of existence comprise the two aspects of the dualism which existed in the Pythagorean school.

The contrast between these philosophic positions is tremendous. The former belief insures that all properties of the world may be constructed out of numbers, that is, out of the limited. Those who use number chiefly to measure the physical world tend to adhere to this doctrine. The other view contends that no process, not even that of reasoning, can ever result in the creation of relative objective realities out of the basic and unlimited nature of unity.

This philosophic dualism cannot, however, be considered as either complete or permanent. The concepts of duality and unity, limited and unlimited, were finally brought together in a harmony which the Brothers determined numerically. "They, therefore, regarded Unity as efficient cause, and Duality as passive matter, and supposed not merely numbers, but also figures, bodies, elements, and the world itself, to originate from the cooperation of the two principles." Thus, they held it to be possible for the human intelligence to conceive of these two principles operating at the same time so as to produce the cosmos as known to man in its relative aspects without destroying its causal unity. According to this interpretation, the world is ideal and objectively real at one and the same time.

In order to better understand this important concept of difference within unity, we note further that the Pythagoreans held the number one to be uneven, masculine, and ordered; the two, which is opposed to the one, they called even, feminine, and unordered. They expressed these number relations by means of a symbol called a tetractys, which, for them, portrayed the eternal nature, and also the diversity which exists within unity. It therefore expressed their belief in a whole supporting a multiplicity of parts within itself without being destroyed. Literally, the tetractys represented first cause with its aspects diffused throughout the entire universe. They believed this causal unity, in its fullest meaning, to be unknowable; but insofar as it was knowable, it was by means of its revealed self, as it became manifest in the world of objects.

All oppositions, and all differences, arise out of unity, and are ten in number. The Pythagoreans employed the perfect number—the number one, which comprises unity—as a basis on which to erect their theory dealing with contraries, which were: 1. Limited and Unlimited 2. Odd and Even 3. One and Many 4. Right and Left 5. Male and Female 6. Rest and Motion 7. Straight and Curved 8. Light and Dark 9. Good and Evil 10. Square and Oblong. Of these ten pairs, five deal with arithmetic or geometry, one with me-

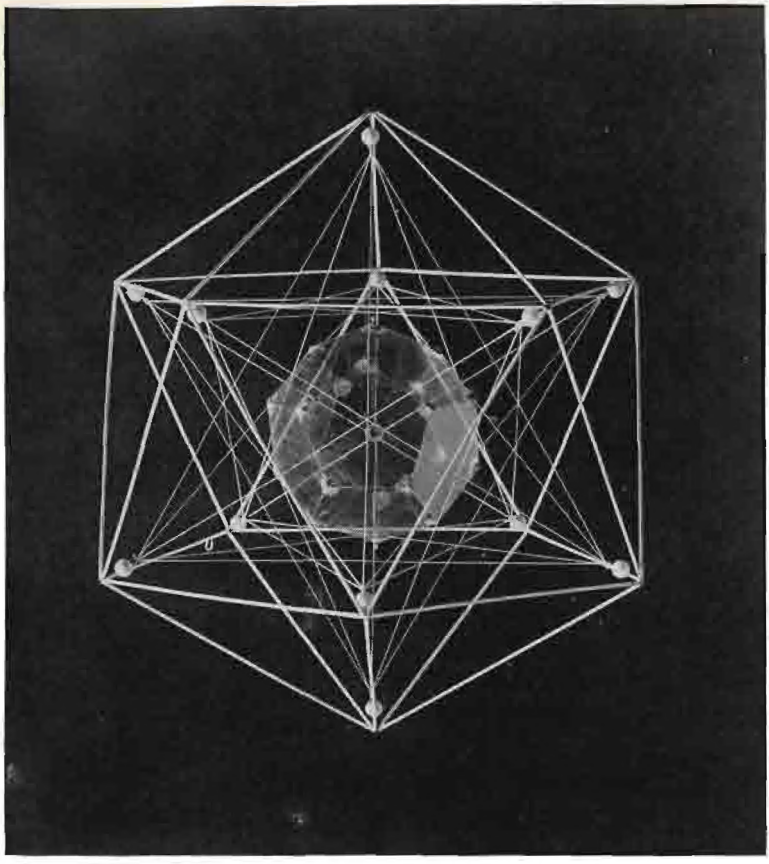
chanics, one with physics, and three with anthropology or ethics. As evidenced by the ten points within the Pythagorean tetractys, only the numbers from one to ten were regarded as primary and generative. All others were but parts or compounds of the decad. And out of the ten pairs of opposites, everything else is compounded. These opposite principles, however, being dissimilar, require harmonious unification as the means of their becoming productive. It was the realization of this necessity which finally bridged the differences within the school regarding the problem of unity and duality.

Other concepts which grew out of Pythagoras' doctrines and were developed by members of his school included the belief that not four, but five, elements comprise the substance of all number form. The members of the Order made a special effort to understand these several elements comprising the world and assigned them the following forms: To earth, the form of the cube; to fire, the tetrahedron; to air, the octohedron; to water, the icosahedron; and to the fifth element which embraces all others, the dodecahedron.

The eternality of the world is explained in a fragment from the Pythagorean writings which relates that the universe always was, and always will be. In this way, the Brothers asserted that the elements which comprise the superstructure of the world, and likewise, of the central fire, are eternal. The philosophers correctly contended that the earth is round, that it revolves, and, like other heavenly bodies, has an orbit. This movement they regarded as most perfect, inasmuch as it is the only motion which returns to itself. Solar eclipses were accounted for by the passage of the moon between the earth and sun; and lunar eclipses were explained as an interposition of the earth or other heavenly bodies between the sun and moon. These investigators also established a universal year, based upon the revolutions of the stars. For them, all heavenly bodies were inhabited, and, like other early philosophers, they too believed in the divinity of the stars.

The Pythagorean concept of a central fire and its relation to the heavenly bodies is another interesting theory. This fire was first formed in the heart of the universe, and is designated the monad, or mother of gods, because it is the cause of life. This fiery power brought the elements of the heavenly bodies, and hence, the planets themselves, into being; and round it all mundane bodies revolve. How this first cause itself came to be is not explained, for every philosophic system must commence with an unproved first premise.

After the formation of the central fire, the unlimited was constantly attracted by it. The cosmos gravitated to the center of the fire and, as a result, became limited. In this manner, the heavenly bodies and



RECONSTRUCTION OF A PYTHAGOREAN SOLID

While in Egypt, Pythagoras was instructed by the philosopher-priests in the sacred art of creating symmetrical geometric solids as symbols of the creative powers of the various divinities. These solids were used in the meditational disciplines of the Pythagorean school, and served the same purposes as the Oriental mandalas. It was believed that those constructing these solids gained certain spiritual experiences by which the powers of the soul were stimulated and released.

all that is, came to have motion and existence. The central fire provides the warmth and light which pervade the universe, which, for the Pythagoreans, meant five planets, the moon, and the earth.

The respective distances between the heavenly bodies interposed around the central fire were determined by numerical laws, their velocity around the fire being proportionate to their distances from each other. This view further holds that each planet emits a specific tone,

which differs from that of every other planet as its motion differs from the velocity of the others. This is the source for that unusual doctrine of a harmony of the spheres, which asserts that out of the collective tones of heavenly bodies a certain harmony arises. The Pythagoreans believed it to be unnoticed by man only because it surpasses his faculty of hearing.

Pythagorean views of a central fire lead to an investigation of one of the most important phases of their philosophic-psychology—the doctrine of soul and its reincarnation. Since the heavenly fire diffuses itself throughout the universe, everything, including soul, is not only caused by it, but partakes of it to some degree. Soul, in a sense, may even be equated with the central fire. The Brothers held that soul is evolving from a lesser toward a greater good. This growth takes place within the soul itself, and thus reflects in its relations with the world. In this process, consisting of four levels of soul development, the soul is aided by the central fire. Each evolvement of life, expressing through these levels, is so constituted that the higher levels include all the capacities of each lower grade.

As one might suspect, Pythagoras and his followers regarded soul, first of all, as a number. They said that souls are placed into their bodies by means of a harmonic relation; according to this relation, the soul must form its body. The school also taught that differences in the number quality of souls must become obvious as differences in character. The highest goal in life is to live so as to free the soul from the limitations of corporeal affinities, for only then can it return to its native realm. The *Golden Words* say, "While thou seekest to purge and free thy soul, use judgment, and reflect on everything, setting o'er all best Thought as charioteer."

The Pythagorean theory of reincarnation was an outgrowth of the conviction that psychological life continues after physical death. This belief maintains that departed souls return to earth, entering into new bodies in order to establish appropriate harmonies, for souls must return in order to work out certain problems associated with their destinies. Only in conjunction with a body is the soul capable of functioning on the objective plane of existence, since the body is its organ of sense cognition. The entrance of a soul into its body is in no sense accidental, and the body must be appropriate to the soul which enters it. All conditions of reincarnation are such that a soul will be capable of generating the circumstances most advantageous for its further development. In each new life, retribution for evil and reward for good which a soul has enacted in the past, takes place.

The human soul, containing the life principle of man, has a sublime destiny—to become wise. Irrespective of temporary failure and neces-

sary readjustment, every one, by keeping the goal of existence before his mind's eye, will eventually attain the victory for which man was created. This, however, cannot be accomplished by evading material responsibilities, but by mastering them, for this is the will of Nature.

Pythagorean considerations have had social import. Their tradition clearly shows that every action is to be regarded from an ethical viewpoint, since every act affects man's future in either a positive or negative way. According to Aristotle, these thinkers were the first to attempt a philosophic statement of ethics. It is doubtful, however, if they ever established anything like an ethical doctrine of the supreme Good. They did designate virtue as an integral part of social and personal life, but as to their teachings concerning particular virtues, there is but meager account. Justice they regarded as a similarly similar number, meaning that with justice everyone receives according to his exact due. They thought, too, that man must consider both the past and the future with an aim to what is ethical, insisting upon control of anger. Generally, they held that man's life is under the direction of gods; therefore, suicide was a crime. The order in the world expresses a harmony responsible for virtue and wisdom, and this, man is to follow.

The *Golden Words* give a further idea of the moral disciplines that the members of the Society followed, and of the reward for following them.

> What next I say in every act observe:
> Let none by word or deed prevail on thee
> To do or say what were not best for thee.
> Think ere thou act, lest foolish things be done; —
>
> For thoughtless deeds and words the caitiff mark; —
> But strongly do what will not bring regret.
> Do naught thou dost not know; but duly learn.
> So shall thy life with happiness o'erflow.
>
> Be not neglectful of thy body's health;
> But measure use in drink, food, exercise —
> I mean by "measure" what brings no distress.
>
> Follow a cleanly, simple mode of life,
> And guard against such acts as envy breed.
> Then, if, when thou the body leav'st, thou mount
> To the free ether, deathless shalt thou be,
> A god immortal, — mortal never more!

The teachings of Pythagoras' school lived on long after him, his theories and findings being carried on by the Brothers of his Order. Of these, in addition to Philolaus, should be mentioned Lysis, who went to Thebes to teach the Pythagorean philosophy. Also, there was Archytas, who perpetuated the political tradition of the Society in his native city of Taras. The names of Empedocles, Lucania, and Appolonius of Tyana may also be mentioned as among those who were influenced by Pythagoras. The endurance of Pythagoreanism was certainly the result of the spiritual inquisitiveness and practical lives of such scholars as these.

To what extent religion and mysticism are indebted to the Pythagoreans, we will probably never be able to estimate. But they were certainly the first Western philosophers to attempt to advance man's understanding of the world. As the centuries passed, however, a considerable part of what had been worthwhile Pythagorean investigation degenerated into superstition and magic. Yet, the more penetrating and highly trained minds among the Pythagoreans continued to carry on their investigations in a serious manner. Considering not only their number theory, but also their other scientific contributions, they may be accepted as among the first to comprehend and then to master some of Nature's complexities. Their attitude of inquiry aroused an extreme interest as to the real cause of Nature's operations and resulted in a conquest of Nature, which still continues.

Pythagoreanism, then, may be summed up as comprising a philosophic, scientific, and religious Order with a mystical orientation, offering a tradition to its members which had as its purpose purification and unfoldment. We may conclude with the *Golden Words,* which prescribe a way of life, and what may be expected when its admonitions are followed.

Let never sleep thy drowsy eyelids greet,
Till thou hast pondered each act of the day:
'Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done?
What duty shunned?'—beginning from the first,
Unto the last. Then grieve and fear for what
Was basely done; but in the good rejoice.

These things perform; these meditate; these love.
These in the path of godlike excellence
Will place thee, yea, by Him who gave our souls
The number Four, perennial nature's spring!
But, ere thou act, crave from the gods success.

These precepts having mastered, thou shalt know
The system of the never-dying gods
And dying men, and how from all the rest
Each thing is sundered, and how held in one:
And thou shalt know, as it is right thou shouldst
That nature everywhere is uniform,
And so shalt neither hope for things that lie
Beyond all hope, nor fail of any truth.

*A lingering illness*

According to Plato, "The disease of the soul is folly, of which there are two kinds—ignorance and madness."

---

*The old wisdom*

It is said that Triptolemus, the founder of the Eleusinian Mysteries, was the most ancient lawgiver of the Athenians. Three of his laws were preserved in the Sanctuary of Eleusis. They were as follows:

1. Honor thy parents.
2. Sacrifice to the gods with the fruits of the earth.
3. Injure not animals.

---

*Something new in definitions*

The philosopher Pascal defined man as "the glory and the scandal of the universe."

---

# In Reply

## A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *Will you give me some practical suggestions as to how I can be a successful mother-in-law?*

ANSWER: The fact that you have sent in this question leads me to suspect that you are already well on your way to success. Unfortunately, those who really need advice on this matter seldom inquire. The first and most important point to remember is the fact that before we can become well-adjusted relatives or friends we must be well-integrated persons. The emphasis should not be upon our associations with others, but upon our ability to get along with ourselves. Nearly all persons in difficulties are, in one way or another, difficult persons.

If you have raised several children to marriageable age, you have most likely already divided your affections among them. You are interested in their careers, and you still have a considerable sphere of influence. As a wise and loving parent you have remained contemporary. You have educated your children, but in some ways they have educated you. When they build their own homes, it is perfectly right and proper for them to seek new experiences and to handle the problems of personal living in their own way. You may not always approve, but it is likely enough that your parents did not endorse all your thoughts and actions. You have already learned that it is not possible to save even those whom you love from a certain amount of difficulty, confusion, or sorrow. Your children must also develop their own internal resources, and to overshadow them is to resist their sovereign right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

If, however, you have reared an only child, the situation may not be so easy; especially if that child is a son. If you have a home of your own, and your husband is still alive, you have a proper center for

personal orientation. You are independent, able to live as you please, and with a reasonable number of personal responsibilities. If, however, you are widowed or divorced, you will almost certainly be tempted to transfer too much possessive affection upon an only child. Without realizing it, you may become over-demanding and selfish. While you believe fondly that mother knows best, it will be wise to inquire quietly and deeply into your own motives. Do you dread the thought of losing the companionship of an only son? Has this association come to mean so much that you will go to unfair lengths to prevent this young man from creating a personal life? You may fall into the illusion that no girl could possibly be good enough for your boy. You may deny this, and insist that it is only the young ladies he has met that lack the necessary qualifications. Of course there are two sides to this problem. It may well be that from your own larger experience you are sincerely convinced that your son is only a victim of glamour. In moments of this kind, you must be very honest with yourself or you may be contributing to a tragedy. I have known of several cases in which a romance frustrated by parental interference has ruined lives.

A widowed mother with an only daughter can also become an unwitting cause of great sorrow. Such a parent, by constantly impressing the child with her duty to her lonely parent, can ultimately transform a prospective wife and mother into an aging spinster whose chances for personal happiness become fewer with the passing of the years. When mother finally departs from this mortal sphere, she leaves behind a woman in her fifties who will most likely continue a lonely existence. Many such cases have been brought to my attention. The daughter has gained a reputation for being a noble, self-sacrificing soul, but she has paid for this small glory with frustration and neurosis.

The average mother with recently married children is still a comparatively young woman. She has given many years to the problems of the young, and when they are settled in life, she is actually free. She is in a position to do whatever she wishes. The great question, therefore, is: What does she wish to do? One mother I knew, looked around, realized that her brood had scattered, and decided that the moment had arrived when she could fulfill the great desire of her life. She went to Paris, became a sculpturess, gained an enviable reputation in the world of art, won prizes, and exhibited in the Luxembourg galleries. If her children needed her, she was available, but she had no intention of settling down to worry about their futures. As a result, she was popular with all her in-laws, who genuinely insisted that she should visit them more often. She was pleased, but just could not afford the time.

Not long ago, I met a woman who had graduated from medical school at fifty-eight. She had always wanted to be a doctor but had been restricted to nursing members of her own family through their childhood diseases. When she finished her internship, she intended to do a residency in a large hospital and become a specialist. Best of all, several medical groups were in competition to secure her services. She told me with a laugh that she expected to live to see a dozen grandchildren and, in these times, a doctor in the family is a real economy. I asked her what she thought of her children's marriage partners. She smiled and remarked drily that she loved them all, but had no intentions of living with any of them. It was more fun in the hospital.

One outstanding cause for difficult mothers-in-law is that parents have a tendency to overlook the need for developing their own personalities. They have become accustomed to worrying about their children, and they have built their entire lives around these small and intimate anxieties. A parent is also a person, and it is a sad mistake to renounce personality in favor of responsibility. The home seems like a full-time employment, but each member of a successful family should look to the future. Although we may today be surrounded with countless labors and activities so that we have very little time to think about ourselves, this condition is very likely to change sometime in the future. The women of this generation are not permitting themselves to become completely submerged by home concerns. In some ways this may not be good, but in the long run, it is likely to prove beneficial. A mother can have interests outside of family. She can advance herself in any ability or talent for which she has an inclination. She may cultivate avocational pursuits which may later become important vocations. If she has no instinct to grow herself, to enlarge her own knowledge and understanding, and to contribute to society on a level above that of homemaking, or at least paralleling her domestic inclinations, she should examine herself, for something is wrong.

It sometimes happens that a mother must live with one of her children, or perhaps divide her time with two or more of them. Under such conditions, she is liable to quote the old Jewish proverb: "It is easier for one mother to support twelve sons than for twelve sons to support one mother." Young people often appear, and sometimes are, thoughtless and selfish. The tremendous economic pressure under which we must all live, has a tendency to shorten tempers and nourish irritations. Under such conditions, it is especially important that a mother-in-law have her own circle of interests. One case comes to mind. This mother-in-law asked to have a special door cut in her room so that she could go in and out without interfering with her family or explaining her own actions. She developed a strong circle of

friends and was home so little that the young people began to worry about her. She was active and social-minded, joined civic activities, and best of all, she became an excellent conversationalist. She had up-to-the-minute news to share with her family whenever they were together. She never talked about herself. She was gay and healthy, and ever ready to lend a helping hand in an emergency.

Early in the arrangement, this astute parent had a quiet talk with her daughter-in-law. She assured the young woman that she had no intention of taking over the management of the establishment. She would not spoil her grand-children, and she would not become involved in any family disagreements that might arise. She further pointed out that although she was very fond of her son, she knew he was not perfect, and no doubt had inherited some of his imperfections from his mother. It was up to the young people to live their own lives and solve their own problems. She was a guest in the house and would conduct herself accordingly. This mother gained more than the love of her children; she earned their respect. As time went on, she was a wonderful source of strength and courage to the family. Quietly and serenely she stepped in whenever the need arose, and when the need passed she just as quietly and serenely stepped out. She never permitted her children to assume for a moment that she was a servant, and they never regarded her as such. A broad plan of mutual cooperation was developed and splendidly maintained.

It is important for all members of the family to realize that the term *mother-in-law* has developed unfortunate semantic overtones. The majority of these persons are not impossible, or even difficult. Many of them have been placed in impossible situations by their own children. They have been involved in all the disagreements and difficulties of home life. The daughter, after an argument with her husband, runs to mother for consolation; the son confides in mother that he is not happily married. The young people, seeking free time for their own enjoyments, turn the home and the care of small children over to mother. They expect her to clean the house, serve the meals, wash the babies, and do laundry and mending, in exchange for room and board. Under such conditions, there can be no basic understanding. If the mother-in-law is foolish enough to carry all this burden in her own advancing years, she will be overtired, ailing, sick, and psychologically depressed. Worst of all, she is probably spoiling the very person she is trying so desperately to help. The young wife, relieved of her own proper duties, loses perspective, and becomes a less successful parent in her own right. While mother is around, home is an opportunity and not a responsibility. Bad habits develop, involving all members of the family.

A woman in her forties or fifties, and unattached, should seriously consider becoming self-supporting, if this is in any way possible. From the beginning, she should not plan to live with her children. Such intimate association should be regarded as an emergency. It may be well worthwhile for such a mother-in-law to join adult education programs and learn some useful and practical vocation. She still has the best years of her life before her, if she will believe this and act accordingly. Such a decision requires a certain amount of initiative and some resourcefulness, but the rewards more than justify the efforts. There is a wonderful sense of fulfillment in being self-supporting. The individual remains proprietor over his own affairs, and is not required to explain or apologize for the things he does. The more independent mother becomes, the more her children will value their association with her. Even a good try may change the entire complexion of a difficult situation. Incidentally, the number of older persons who have discovered the advantage of living by themselves is increasing every day.

The time to begin the study of the art of being a good mother-in-law is early in life. A long-range plan is the most practical solution to this probability of things to come. Many young women, before marriage, have had business or professional training or experience. Some have even fitted themselves for professions or careers. Under the glamour of marriage and motherhood, these young women renounce all else except home and family. Emotional pressures overwhelm mental resolutions and, by degrees, a housewifely state sets in. The husband may contribute to this. He may still be dominated by the mid-Victorian attitude that his wife shouldn't work or continue any of her previous economic activities. She should be thinking only of home, family, and *him*. If he prospers, she basks in the sunshine of his affluence and gradually loses most of her own individuality. The wise husband today makes sure that his wife retains her own strength of character. In these uncertain times, it is important that the survival of the home should not rest entirely upon one person. A wife should know her husband's work, understand his investments, and be in a position to take over every responsibility at any time. This means she must be an alert and capable person and not merely a decoration or an untutored homemaker.

By keeping in touch with her own interests, a woman can say, as several have said to me, "In five years my children will be fully grown. I shall then continue with my former career." A school girl said to me not long ago, "I hope I can raise my family while I am young, so that when I am forty, I can continue with the profession for which I am now being educated." With this kind of thinking, there will

not to be so many unhappy mothers-in-law in the future. It would also help a great deal if more women would become interested in hobbies, and not just in hubbies. Men find great relief from pressure and tension through their strong inclination to avocational activities. Many hobbies are highly educational, and some require unusual skill and accuracy. Such training, accumulated for enjoyment, has many practical outlets if the need arises.

With many women, the idea of being a mother-in-law causes strange psychological disturbances and forebodings. They feel themselves dated as middle-aged, and they feel that the world belongs to the young. Many of them slowly go into a dry rot; they feel that they are too old to be interesting to themselves or anyone else. They think of the future as a long span of dependency which they must endure with injury to their pride and self-respect. They often age before their proper years, and have little to look forward to which inspires confidence or self-assurance. This is all wrong, and the effect upon the disposition is appalling. They are not pleasant to be with, because they are not pleasant. They are a burden because they make burdens of themselves. Under the delusion that they must think about nothing but home and children, or grandchildren, they become over-possessive and over-emotional.

It would be a good thing for youngish mothers-in-law to think seriously of remarrying. There is no law that says that anyone must grow old in graceful forlornness. I suggested this to one lady and she replied wistfully, "But no one wants to marry an old woman." I found out later that she was forty-eight, but from her conversation I would have guessed fifty-eight. Certainly no man in his right mind wants to marry an old lady of forty-eight, but there might be a charming widower or bachelor who would take a real fancy to a young woman of sixty-eight. Many years ago I married a couple; the bashful groom was ninety-two, and the blushing bride was eighty-six, and they lived happily together for a number of years. There were great-grandchildren at the ceremony. The moral is: never settle down to be a mother-in-law; consider it incidental, and keep on seeking and finding a good and natural way of living.

If you happen to belong in the advanced age group, and it is obviously impossible for you to step out into a new world of your own, you can still be the most valuable member of your family. You have the experience of long living. You have the wisdom that comes from years, and you have the internal maturity of a rich inner life. You have your books, the philosophies that interest you, and the consolation of your spiritual convictions. You can be a serene and happy person, and sometimes your cheerful smile and deep abiding courage are more

than enough to compensate for the things that others must do for you. You can gain nothing by complaining and faultfinding. Don't forget that you have found much of your happiness in life by serving others. You must not deny your children the right to find happiness and peace of soul through serving you. They will be better men and women if they give you a true and practical token of their esteem and affection. It is easy to give graciously, but difficult to receive graciously. In most cases, if you are a fine happy person, your children will not grudge you comfort and security. It all depends on you. When you ask much, you may receive little; but if you ask little, and are a gracious human being, you may receive much. I know many mothers-in-law who are deeply and genuinely loved, but they have earned this affection by being fine persons, intelligent, and thoughtful.

In closing, then, I would say that to be a good mother-in-law you must be fair and honorable. You must not come into a home with a secret hope of disrupting it. You must put the happiness of your child and the mate he has chosen above your own. You must help this home to be a good and proper place. Get out of your mind that it is the duty of your children to take care of you. Duty rests too heavy on the young; they will not accept it without at least internal rebellion. It is their privilege and their joy to have you with them as long as you deserve this attitude. When children grow up, they are no longer our property who must do our bidding or experience our dissatisfaction. All mature human beings are persons, equal before God and Nature. Your son or daughter is yours only by ties of blood, and these can be very weak. Among adults, relationships are based upon affection and friendship. If you are a good and sincere friend, you will be a successful mother-in-law. As a friend, you will also enjoy the natural respect we feel toward our friends. If we are honorable persons, we do not impose upon them, nor are we demanding of them. Your grown son or daughter must be bound to you by no stronger tie than natural and simple love. If you love them in a mature and honorable way, it is most probable that they will have a similar regard for you. I have seen this too many times not to know that it is true. So I say to you—good luck, but remember the words of Faust: "How closely linked are luck and merit, doth never to the fool occur."

QUESTION: *Why do sensitive and serious persons seem to have so much trouble making friends and maintaining social activities?*

ANSWER: It is inevitable that thoughtful persons should be more discriminating in the selection of acquaintances. It is equally inevitable that the higher the standard of our living and thinking, the more difficult it becomes to select companions of similar interests. We can be

comforted, however, by the realization that it is better to have a small group of enlightened acquaintances than a larger circle of comparatively meaningless associates. The philosophic concept that our friend is our other self sets a standard for relationships difficult to meet and maintain. It does not follow, however, that persons interested in cultural programs should live lonely and isolated lives.

If you are sensitive and feel that this is separating you from a happy and normal existence, it might be well to examine your own temperament rather closely. Is what you call sensitivity another name for a critical attitude? Are you trying to measure others by your own standard of convictions, accepting only those who agree with your pattern of thinking, and rejecting empirically all who disagree? Why do you want a friend? Is it because you honestly want to understand the life patterns of others, or is it merely because you want others to understand and appreciate you? Do you take an attitude of superiority among your acquaintances, trying to convey the impression that you are above them mentally or spiritually? Do you have a mistaken idea of what constitutes basic friendliness?

A young lady brought a number of complaints to my office one day. She considered herself an attractive and normal person, but was badly unadjusted socially. She insisted that she had a real need for friends and wondered why she was not able to attract and hold congenial acquaintances. She admitted she was serious and had little time for trivial and frivolous occasions. She considered herself far too advanced in her intellectual and philosophical pursuits to simply waste her time in meaningless chit-chat. A little investigation showed that she enjoyed only the most advanced types of music and, in art, was a classical purist. Dancing bored her; she had no inclination to sports; had cultivated no hobbies; was indifferent of her appearance; despised public gatherings of all kinds; and considered her fellow employees in a large office as a worthless lot of uncultured creatures. Outside of these slight peculiarities, she regarded herself as a perfect friend for somebody.

The old saying that to have a friend you must be a friend applies to this case. Everyone in the world is interested in what he is doing, and likes to be appreciated. Very few enjoy being told, either directly or by subtle implication, that they lack good taste or proper judgment. One of the quickest ways to ruin a beautiful friendship is to take a parental or professorial attitude toward an acquaintance. He may well resent being saved from the things he wants to do, or being deluged with advice which he has not solicited. Never make a friendship in an effort to reform someone. The chances of failure are too great. While you are flooding him with your choicest observations and opin-

ions, he may be secretly wishing that he could explain a few of the facts of life to you.

If you wish to make friends and influence people, a certain amount of basic education in social adjustment may be necessary. Some persons are instinctively social; others gradually unfold social graces; but there are many who require considerable tutoring. First of all, to have friends we must be likeable. We must have the kind of disposition that appeals to the normal humanity in others. We cannot force other folks to like us, or demand their admiration. We should analyze our own temperaments, for somewhere lurking in the fabric of our disposition is the secret of our loneliness. Perhaps we are tense, and because we are a little desperate to be liked, we force situations unreasonably. If we become a burden to our friends, we will certainly lose them after a time. If we are not happy by ourselves, we will not be happy with other people. A quiet, internally peaceful nature, quickly sympathetic, but not aggresively emotional is a valuable asset. If we are tense, this fact will be communicated to those around us, and they will not be comfortable in our presence. The typical introvert must first solve his problem on a psychological level. He must learn to turn his attention from himself and focus it in a larger sphere of mutual interests.

Among the famous men and women of the world, some have gained recognition for their kindliness of spirit, whereas others, although honored for their ability, have been condemned for their dispositions. It has long been proved that really great persons have been able to enjoy the companionship of simple folks. I remember visiting the home of a distinguished Asiatic diplomat. He was a powerful and forceful man, a brilliant specialist in both the art and science of human relationships. He was considered as unapproachable on a professional level, but I found him down on his knees in the garden of his home, riding his children on his back. He was completely and blissfully happy, laughing and playing with his eight-year old son and ten-year old daughter. This is the quality in the strong which preserves their humanity. They can close the doors of their minds upon burdens and responsibilities and recapture the joy of childhood. Man loses most of his charm and much of his authority if he falsely believes that he has outgrown his own "child heart."

There is nothing heretical or unphilosophical in being happy, so long as the pleasures which bring us rest and contentment are essentially natural and normal. It is good for the devout to pray together, but it is good for all of humanity to play together. When we can no longer play, we are not likely to find consolation in friendship. Of course there are two schools of thought on this subject. One school holds that our future security rests upon a constant display of dignity;

we will be taken seriously if we take ourselves seriously. But who wishes to face the future with such a code? Could there be anything more boring than to wander around indefinitely in a cloud of dignity? The second school feels that we go far in this life by simply loving and being lovable. If we remain true and find deep principles within ourselves, and at the same time radiate kindness and consideration, we will not sacrifice any natural dignity. If we really want to be happy, it is far better to be loved than to be feared.

Persons with very restricted minds, whose interests have become deep but narrow, are seldom socially successful. Even if they find someone who understands them, the result will be two lonely persons. The breadth of our interests makes it possible for us to take a more vital part in the activities of those around us. We appreciate what we understand, and we enjoy what we appreciate. If we have developed many phases of our own personality, we can adjust more easily to the demands of conversation, and will be less tempted to turn attention to ourselves. If we are one-tracked, even though that track be interesting, we soon exhaust our conversational resources. Our friends are not likely to include us in their gatherings if they know beforehand exactly what we are going to say.

The chronic complainer continually reproaching society is about as popular these days as the parlor communist. I have watched countless persons talk themselves into a state of isolation. In this world, a good listener is far more popular than a polished speaker. So often the individual who is forever telling what he believes and thinks, is a bad example of his own convictions. His words are so inconsistent with his conduct that it is difficult to be patient with him. If we make few pretensions, we may be suspected of the best, but if we talk too much, we shall be convicted of the worst.

Genuine skill and ability often bring strangers together in a close communion of interests. It is therefore a good idea to be genuinely proficient in something. Those who enjoy your ability will like to have you around as often as possible. Be interested in others, and be interesting yourself, and it is unlikely that you will be lonely. Many friendless persons have a background of being over-indulged as children. It is easy to pick out, even in a crowd, the man or woman who has been spoiled, pampered, and catered to. They usually refuse to be part of any group that they cannot dominate, or in which they do not show off to immediate personal advantage. They may be tolerated for one reason or another, but they are never genuinely liked.

Another class often in trouble is made up of those who have not realized that friendship, like security, must be earned. If you are desir-

ous of making friends within some special group or class, you must fit yourself to move in that circle. I have known of several friendless souls who have changed their entire patterns by joining adult education movements. In the effort to improve themselves, they contacted many others with similar motivations, and this was a solid basis for mutual understanding. It is better to build friendships upon the things we do in common than upon abstract ideas about which there may be so many differences and conflicts. If you want to really know people, join them in the things they are doing and remember, with Emerson, that there is no person living in the world who cannot teach us something. One of the most interesting natural philosophers that I have ever met was a bricklayer. He was born in Ireland, and had certainly kissed the Blarney Stone. His rare wit and priceless wisdom endeared him to the entire community, and there were few functions to which he was not invited. He made no pretenses to a grand manner; he was always himself, and no one wished to change him.

It has been observed that many folks who are much too preoccupied with weighty matters to mingle with the throng seldom make any valid contribution to the weighty matters. It is a mistake indeed to be so busy that we cannot relax and contribute to the happiness of others. Sometimes we feel that we are of immense service even though our labors are unrecognized. It is good to serve a real and vital cause, but we serve best if we retain our own natural optimism. Our work suffers when we have no time to play. It may be that important obligations leave us only a minimum of leisure. We cannot spend as much time with our friends as we might wish to do, and we can only hope that they will understand; and if they are real friends, they will understand. This is very different, however, from an artificial isolation originating in pride and prejudice.

Do not permit yourself to fall into negative generalities of thinking. There are many old clichés which we cannot afford to accept. The idea that the era of real friendship has passed is a mistake. Another convenient excuse—that we do not wish to partake in the intemperances of our acquaintances—is no excuse for loneliness. The fact that some of our acquaintances have imposed upon us, deceived us, or failed us in emergencies, does not justify a forlorn and friendless attitude. There are many good people in the world who are seeking friendship with complete sincerity. We can find them by being like them, recognizing them, and meeting them on grounds of equality.

Friendship is indispensable to a family. Relations of blood and marriage are not sufficient to preserve the spirit of a home. There must be a genuine friendship with all that it implies, if other ties are to be maintained with dignity. The Christianity of Jesus is based

upon the broad overtones of friendship as the noblest relationship which can bind men together. If more relatives were friends, this would be a happier world.

Always be true to the principles of friendship. Never betray the confidences that have been entrusted to you. Never gossip, or criticize and condemn. It is only when friendship is completely honest that it has the greatest chance of survival. It takes greater effort today to preserve friendships than in past generations. The permanence of social structures has been largely undermined. Our neighbors move in and move out, and we scarcely know them. The graduating class in high school scatters to the four winds, and many who have grown up together never meet again. There are also many inducements to seek pleasures outside the circle of friendships. Our ancestors lived in smaller communities; they were together from the cradle to the grave. There were no motion pictures, radios, television, and night clubs with which to fill idle hours. Friends gathered for long evenings of music, reading, and discussion. The church was a powerful social center, and the men of the family went every week to their lodge room over the country store. The small town can be both friendly and indescribably cruel. For most, however, it maintained a continuity of contacts that often led to enduring associations. There was plenty of time to write letters, and the small adventures of living contributed strongly to conversation.

On the other hand, friendships created today reflect a more positive and individual need. We choose our friends not because they are near to us geographically, but because we recognize kindred spirits. So often, however, we waste good friendships and allow them to fade into dim and meaningless associations. The tragic decline of the art of interesting conversation should be noted. Words heard on social occasions are so seldom meaningful and so often boring. One way to increase probability of a significant social life is to become an interesting conversationalist. This cannot be done by reading the dictionary or memorizing the words. Do interesting things, and you will have interesting things to say. If your life is essentially purposeless, you will babble along, content with small talk.

Perhaps from these miscellaneous remarks you will gather the idea that a friend must make a positive contribution to the lives of others. He must not only stand ready to help in an emergency; he must be a source of constructive pleasure whenever he joins with others in the communion of social contact. He is not there to argue politics, criticize religions, or devastate someone else's philosophy; he is not required to dominate the gathering, nor should he be of a temperament quickly and completely dominated by his associates. Never forget that it is

profitable to relax. All social activities do not have to have spiritual or philosophical significance. Rest, composure, and peace of mind are as important to the human being as a properly balanced diet. When we sit down to eat, we are not expecting the meal to change the course of history. We eat because we are hungry and because if we do not have proper nutrition, we cannot live useful lives. We gather socially because we have discovered over a period of thousands of years that social relations are necessary to our normal functions as human beings. If a quiet evening with our friends refreshes us, relaxes our tensions, and gives us the vitality and optimism to face the coming day happily and constructively, friendship has served a vital purpose. Laughter is a healthful kind of hysteria; it releases pressures and contributes to a feeling of well-being. We need this feeling to compensate for the stress and strain of the atomic age. Friendly meetings, therefore, should be kept on a constructive tempo, and should not be allowed to sag into some doleful pattern. If you can contribute to the over-all benefits of a social occasion, you will not lack popularity.

You must learn to overlook the faults in your friends as you hope and pray that they will overlook yours. If you sincerely believe you have no faults to overlook, you will never be a successful friend. We can like people without completely agreeing with everything they do, and we can appreciate their virtues and abilities if we keep the right mental attitude. Here positive thinking is indispensable. Look for the good, and you will find it; look for the bad, and you will lose a friend. Never be disillusioned when you observe perfectly natural faults in your acquaintances. You should have known beforehand that such faults were inevitable. This does not mean you must condone the vices in others. If their morals are corrupt, or their ethical standards are offensive, then they are not suitable for your association and confidence. It never pays to have friends who violate your standard of right and wrong. Under such conditions, it is better to remain alone. This also makes it hazardous to choose your acquaintances from among persons of doubtful reputation. Assuming, however, that your friends are approximately of your own kind, then you must cultivate a measure of tolerance and patience. Never try to buy friendship. If you are not loved for what you are, you will never be loved for what you have. This does not mean that the wealthy cannot have friends, or that the poor are singularly fortunate in this regard. It means that rich or poor, you will be accepted for your character, and not for your worldly goods. Many persons have tried to substitute elaborate entertaining for character deficiencies. The result is always unfortunate.

If you are shy and reticent, and have difficulty making friends, try to develop within yourself some purpose or some aptitude that is bigger

than you are. This will help you to free yourself because you can approach others on a ground that is not strictly personal. For example, I know one very shy woman who joined the volunteer nursing force of a large hospital. She really desired to bring a little comfort and pleasure to the sick. When she had her uniform on, she was no longer a rather introverted woman; she was a symbol of a field of service. She was on duty, and she carried on her work with enthusiasm and complete composure. Incidentally, she made several real and lasting friendships. She would never have dared to attempt this on a personal level. The moment you can forget yourself in the service of something bigger than yourself, your shyness will disappear. It is largely the result of introversion and the fixing of attention upon self. It is not necessarily egotism, but it is egoism. Many persons find themselves by forgetting themselves.

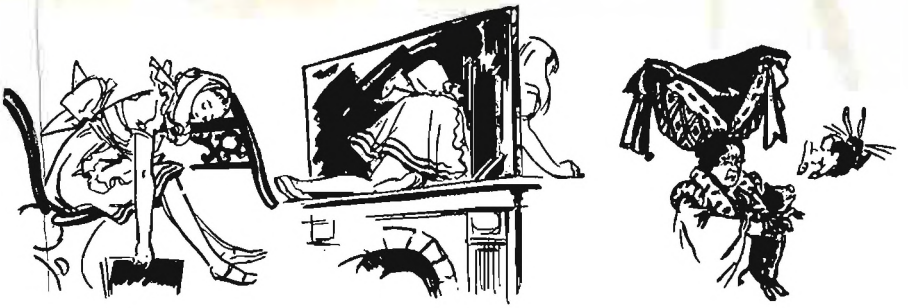
Children are friendly because they have not yet learned to be self-conscious. Often the aged are friendly because they have passed the years of self-centeredness. The mature person must mature his friendly instinct. He must be careful not to profane friendship by using it as a means of advancing himself economically. It may well happen that friendship will contribute to economic security, but this should never be the primary consideration. If we begin to exploit our friends, we not only lose them, but may destroy in them the whole concept of friendliness. By the same token, we should never try to make friends just because we are lonely. Our real motive should be that we love people and want to share our lives with them.

If friendship is genuine, it will not interfere with our emotional attachments. Love could never ruin a friendship, and in this modern world it should be perfectly possible and respectable for men and women to be good and sincere friends. It is sad, indeed, that friendship between the sexes should always be regarded with suspicion. Perhaps the suspicion is justified, but among human beings who have reached the degree of civilization that has been attained by modern man, there should be no such justification. Good friendship will strengthen and perfect love, by introducing an element of comraderie. People who live together because of love, should work together because of friendship. If you will be certain that there are no ulterior motives in your desire to have friends, you will find them more readily, and keep them longer. I hope that these words, spoken from experience, will be of some service to you.

◕

*An Arabian proverb*

The tree of silence bears the fruit of peace.



## Curiouser & Curiouser

*A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND*

# Symbolism of a Deck of Cards

It is estimated that more than seventy-five million decks of playing cards are sold every year in America alone, but very little consideration has been given to the symbolism and psychology of the designs found on these cards. There have been innumerable decks issued in various countries at different times which have deviated from the traditional form, but for the most part, the essential symbolism has not been changed since the 15th century. At this time, decks of cards were first printed and numerous embellishments may be noted. Because of the nature of the cards and their use, very few examples have descended to us, and complete collections—that is, an entire deck—may be considered as exceedingly rare. Most examples of the very early printings in reasonable condition have been found in the bindings of old books. The cards were printed in large sheets, and defective sheets were used as waste paper. The accompanying illustration shows two of these cards which were found in the binding of an early book in our library. Thus protected, they are in comparatively good condition. They are obviously from wood-blocks, the color being added by a second printing; often the more expensive decks were hand colored.

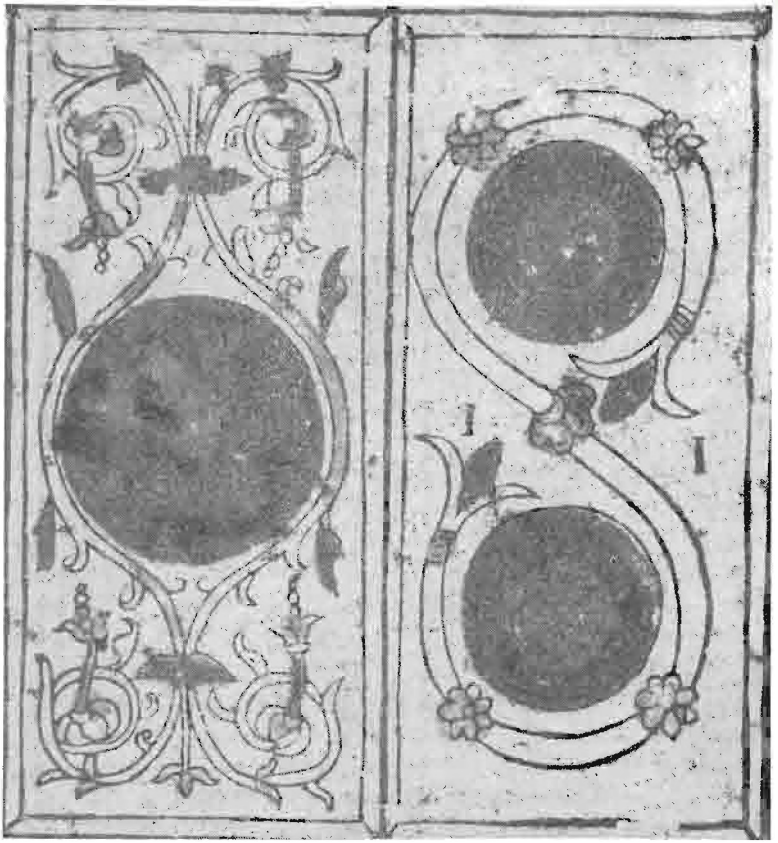
Approaching the subject symbolically, the cards immediately stimulate the imagination. There are four suits, each consisting of thirteen cards of which three are court cards, now called the King, Queen, and Jack. There used to be a fourth court card called a Page. In early decks, the Kings and Queen were frequently pseudo-portraits of illus-

trious rulers, but this procedure gradually passed out of favor. The four suits were made up of two red and two black sets. The red sets are the hearts and diamonds; the black sets, the clubs and spades. More anciently, other symbols were used to differentiate the suits. Coins were used instead of the diamonds, cups instead of hearts, acorns instead of clubs, and swords instead of spades. The older symbols are still found in many European decks of cards. The Tarot decks have four court cards in each suit and, in addition, have twenty-two pictorial cards which are called the major trumps. These decks are still popular in Southern Europe.

My old friend, Milton Pottenger, in his book on symbolism, published the results of his years of study of the deck of cards, often called *the devil's prayer-book*. He related the four suits to the four elements. He associated the heart with fire, the club with air, the diamond with earth, and the spade, or acorn, with water. He considered the two colors, red and black, as representing spirit and matter, male and female, strength and beauty. In substance, the colors suggested the polarities everywhere in Nature. In its present form, the three court cards—the King, Queen, and Jack, or Knave—were analogous to the Chinese concept of heaven (the King), earth (the Queen), and man (the Knave). Alchemically, the King was sulphur; the Queen, salt; and the Knave, mercury, or the universal solvent. The word Jack, or Knave, has come to be associated with roguery or dishonesty, and it should be remembered that the Latin god Mercury was the patron deity of thieves. Each of the sets of court cards ruled over the remaining cards of the suit which consisted of number symbols running from one to ten.

The four Kings are shown as bearded men, armed and crowned. Most often the King of diamonds differs from the others in being shown in profile, or one-eyed. He also carries a battle-axe instead of a sword. Unlike the other cards, his hands are reaching toward the pip, or symbol, of the suit. The King of hearts is the only one in which both hands are visible, and the King of clubs is characterized by an orb, a globe surmounted by a device signifying temporal power. The designs are based upon not only the ancient concept of sovereignty, but the old exposition of the person and nature of deity. It is also possible that there is a symbolic tie with the four martyrs referred to as the four kings who died for their faith in Christianity during the tyranny of the Caesars. Because he carries the orb, the symbol of temporal power, the King of clubs is called the *Grand Master* of the deck of cards.

The four Queens are crowned, presented nearly full-face, and each carries a symbolic flower representing generation and regeneration.



An undivided pair of 16th-century playing cards found in the binding of an old book.

It is believed that the flowers are associated with the Christian Mystery, and combine the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Fields. Pottenger notes that there are no emblems of death or destruction upon the Queen cards, but the Queen of spades, like the other court cards of this suit, faces away from the pip, or suit symbol, because it has long been traditionally associated with death. In the card symbolism, the Kings signify governments; the Queens, religions; and the Knaves, arts and sciences. According to the astrological arrangement, the Kings represent the cardinal signs of the zodiac; the Queens, the fixed signs; and the Jacks, the common signs.

The four Jacks present youthful appearance, courtly dress, and a princely cap or hat. The Jack of hearts carries a green leaf which Pottenger believes represents a sprig of acacia, an emblem of immortality, and the Jack of clubs has a similar wreath attached to the hat.

The Jack of diamonds carries a canthook, an instrument used in moving logs. The Jack of clubs carries a conventionalized object which may represent a gauge or ruler divided into sections. The Jack of spades holds a curious device suggesting the number eight, an ancient symbol of universal motion. Two of the Jacks are in profile, and the Jack of hearts faces the pip in the corner of the card. The general tone of these cards suggests artisans, tradesmen, and craftsmen. Pottenger sees considerable Masonic symbolism.

Of the twelve court cards, nine are full-face, and three are in profile, establishing an important division of symbolic numbers. In the Eleusinian Mysteries, there were nine degrees in the Lesser Rites, and three degrees to the Greater Mysteries. The Chinese consider a child to be a year old three months after its birth. The perfect man was represented as passing through nine months of generation and three degrees of initiation, thus completing the symbolism of the twelve spokes of the wheel of the law. It may be assumed that the four suits represent not only the seasons of the year, but the four Yugas, or great time divisions, recognized by the Hindus, and the four Ages of Greek mythology —the Ages of Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Iron. These are found in the symbolism of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. The ten pip, or number, cards of each suit correspond with the four Sephirothic Trees of the Hebrew Cabala, and the four systems of tetractes in the Pythagorean system. The power of the court cards unfolds through the numbers from one to ten, beginning with the ace, or crown, and ending with the decad, called *the kingdom,* which is the fulfillment of all the outpouring of universal energy.

The thirteen cards of each suit are associated with the thirteen lunar months of each year, and the fifty-two cards together correspond with the weeks of the year. If we count the numbers on each of the pip cards from one to ten, and number the Jacks, Queens, and Kings eleven, twelve, and thirteen respectively, the sum of the cards is 364. If the Joker be added, the total then equals the days of the year. Pottenger went so far as to suggest that the original plan for the development of the United States of America was startlingly similar to the arrangements of the conventional deck of playing cards. By his thinking, the country should ultimately consist of fifty-two states, administered by a fifty-third, undenominated, division—the District of Columbia.

This only touches the surface of the symbolism, but it is not difficult to appreciate why, from most ancient times, cards have been used, not only for gambling, but for purposes of divination. Today we commonly use a double-headed deck, but in ancient times, the cards were single, and therefore the court cards could fall either upright or in-

verted. The origin of the designs is unknown, but the learned French antiquarian, Court de Gebelin, was of the opinion that they were based upon ancient hieroglyphical pictures in one of the Egyptian temples. When the priesthood of Egypt fled from their land, they took with them the deck of cards called *The Book of Thoth,* the god of wisdom, because in the deck of cards are concealed all the mysteries of the universe. The remnants of the scattered priesthood wandered about Europe for centuries, and were called the gypsies. They used the cards as a means of releasing their psychic powers in fortune-telling. It has been noted that the whole subject is most curious inasmuch as common instruments of gambling, and often of tragedy, may well have had a sacred origin.

# Happenings at Headquarters

Mr. Hall delivered his annual series of lectures in San Francisco in March. The campaign was successful, and while in the Bay Area he gave a lecture at his Masonic Lodge under the title "The Psychology of Religious Ritual." The notes of this lecture are available (see announcement in this journal). He also spoke over the NBC radio station, giving a rather lengthy discussion of the therapeutic value of music. On this occasion, he was the guest of Miss Marjorie King, who has one of the most popular programs in San Francisco. The notes of this lecture are also available in printed form.

* * * * *

On March 8th, Mr. Hall spoke over station KABC in Los Angeles in connection with Brotherhood Week, sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The general theme was "Brotherhood Through Music," and Mr. Hall was asked to discuss the Oriental concept of brotherhood. A transcript of his remarks follows this section of the journal.

* * * * *

On April 20th, Mr. Hall gave his yearly talk at the Annual Conference of the Association for Research and Enlightenment. This association is continuing the work of the late Edgar Cayce, whose life story is told in the book *There Was a River*. The subject of Mr. Hall's remarks was "Destiny of Man." The meeting was held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel.

* * * * *

On April 25th, Mr. Hall flew to New York and delivered his second address at Town Hall, under the auspices of the First Church of Religious Science. There was a large and enthusiastic audience. On this occasion, he renewed many old friendships and received a large number of requests to consider an annual program of activities in that city.

* * * * *

Through the generosity of an interested friend, funds have been made available for the publication of twelve of Mr. Hall's Sunday morning lectures. Two are already available, and the announcements of forthcoming titles will appear in this journal. The friends on our mailing list will be notified. Incidentally, if you have friends who would like to receive our announcements, would you be kind enough to send us their names and addresses.

On the evening of April 28th, two hundred friends and students of the P. R. S. gathered for dinner at The Brown Derby Restaurant, near Headquarters, for the purpose of advancing the Building and Budget Program of the Society. This gathering was part of a broad plan to honor Mr. Hall on the thirty-fifth anniversary of his public work by assisting him to complete the project to which he has dedicated his life. Many of those present indicated their intention of supporting the program in various practical ways. The success of this occasion was due in no small part to the wonderful cooperation of volunteer workers and members of the staff.

* * * * *

The Spring Seminar of our Society is under way and is one of the most interesting we have presented. Six courses of instruction are offered as follows: "The Individuation Process of C. G. Jung," given by our visiting instructor Dr. I. Jay Dunn, of the American Psychological Association; two courses, "The Philosophy of Reincarnation" and "Advanced Studies in Mysticism" by Manly P. Hall; Two courses, "Fundamentals of Jung's Psychology" and "The Axioms of Truth" by Henry L. Drake; and a course on "The Philosophic Psychology of the P. R. S." by Mr. Hall and Mr. Drake. It looks as though our classroom will soon be outgrown, a further reason why our building program is so important.

* * * * *

We now have the new Charter from the State officially giving us the power to grant graduate degrees in related fields to qualified students with the necessary college or university credits. We can also confer undergraduate degrees upon students who have completed three years of college or university work. The plans for our permanent school are therefore progressing well.

* * * * *

Mr. Drake, our Vice-President, has been actively engaged in a legislative program concerned with state laws regulating the practice of psychology in the State of California. There were two laws before the legislature, one of which we regard as excessive and unreasonable. The other was a moderate bill protecting the public against incompetent counselors and unsound therapeutic methods, while at the same time protecting progressive and sincere counselors who are competently serving the best interest of the public. The Psychologists' Legislative Committee met to study these bills and determine proper procedures. The meeting was held at the Teachers' Association Building, approximately 200 psychologists attending, and Mr. Drake was appointed Chairman. Later, he was appointed to represent this body in Sacramento. The bills have been returned to committee for further consideration.

# COMMENTS ON ASSEMBLY BILL 1678 RESTRICTING PHILOSOPHIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING IN CALIFORNIA

*(Read before the Psychologists' Legislative Committee)*

DURING the last thirty-five years, I have devoted my life largely to the service of troubled human beings. A wide and deep experience, gained through intimate personal contact with the problems of living, impels me to address a few remarks to the members of this group. Assembly Bill No. 1678, introduced for consideration by Byron Rumford, and to be voted on in the California legislature, essentially restricts all philosophical and psychological counseling to members of the medical profession, which seems to me unreasonable and detrimental to the public good.

This bill could, and likely would, be so interpreted that many school teachers, religious counselors, and practicing psychologists entirely competent to aid and instruct would be subject to criminal prosecution because of their sincere desire to help their students, members of their congregations, and clients. There is no real reason why a perfectly natural and normal exchange of psychological knowledge, which persons in every walk of life sorely need, should be dominated by the policies of those favoring the American Medical Association. Nor have we any adequate assurance that the average physician is so far advanced in practical experience in the field of psychology that he, and he alone, is qualified to have exclusive control of this highly specialized field. Psychology and medicine are not identical, and to force this identity upon them is not likely to accomplish the greatest good for all concerned. The bill is an unnecessary and unwarranted restriction on the rights of citizens, and might well lead to ridiculous extremes.

A much fairer and more constructive approach to this issue is, in my opinion, available in Assembly Bill No. 3716, introduced by Ernest R. Geddes. The latter interferes in no way with the rights of physicians, but does prevent a new and important field of human endeavor from being dominated by a reactionary group. It is entirely possible to protect the public without destroying the useful and constructive careers of thousands of efficient and dedicated workers throughout the state.

MANLY P. HALL

# The Oriental Concept of Brotherhood

It has been suggested that I make a brief statement of the Oriental concept of brotherhood. It would seem that this is a most timely and practical subject, especially on a program emphasizing the importance of East-West understanding and cooperation. Unfortunately, time does not permit an adequate survey, so I will limit myself to the opinions of certain sects which have influenced profoundly the ethical and moral cultures of Asia.

We think of brotherhood as a friendly and cooperative relationship including respect for the rights of our neighbors and a natural inclination to aid and assist the worthy purposes of each other. To us, the brotherhood of man is built upon convictions of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Oriental peoples approach the idea of brotherhood from a religious or philosophical point of view and their conclusions are based on somewhat different foundations than those of Western man.

In the East, all creatures are regarded as the manifestations of one Divine Principle. This Principle exists in many bodies, which appear to be separate. Each body is inhabited by a being which we call a *self*. Because the bodies are separate, I can think of my self as apart from your self; and because of the way we are constituted, you can think in the same way. The East has always feared this idea of self-hood because it seems to separate one being from another, and to justify a competitive spirit in the conduct of human affairs.

To solve this confusion, the Oriental affirms that while there are many bodies of many kinds, there is only ONE self, and therefore all men are bound together by an absolute identity which many have not yet been able to consciously experience. Thus, they advance the conviction that the one world we hope for is the natural abode of one Self, abiding in the depths of created things.

My brother, therefore, is not merely a kinsman by blood, nor my friend who has become my kinsman by affection and regard. My brother is my self in another body. What I do for him, I do for my self. When I give to him, I give to my self. What I withhold from him, I withhold from my self. His problems are my problems, and his pain is my pain. The stranger without my gates, the millions of human beings I have never met and will never know, are also my self. As they prosper, I prosper. And if they perish, something of my self perishes with them. Thus, selfishness, cruelty, jealousy, and anger

can cause me to injure only my self. For I cannot have peace of soul until I have found my own spiritual substance in both friend and enemy.

In the East, this Self, abiding forever in all things, is another name for God. When I serve my friend, or the stranger, I therefore serve both God and myself. This is a revealed truth as reported by Eastern saints and sages, who have taught this to their disciples because they have recognized that all who seek Truth have this one Self. When we help ourselves and others to live wiser and better lives, the one Self rejoices in the common good.

# Local Study Group Activities

We are happy to announce the forming of four new Local Study Groups. To those of our readers living in the vicinity of these groups we take pleasure in introducing Mr. and Mrs. Donald A. MacRury, 6918 Balsam Way, Oakland, California; Miss Elouise Gorman, 3010 N. W. 36th Street, Miami, Florida; Miss Ruth F. Morgan, 4131 Camero Ave., Los Angeles 27, California; LeRoy Aserlind, 511 W. Lewis St., P. O. Box 245, Livingston, Montana; and Mrs. Ida White, 5481 16th Ave., Rosemount, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. These good friends will be happy to hear from interested persons who would like to participate in the group activities of our Society. We take this opportunity to wish these leaders and their groups all possible success, pleasure, and self-improvement.

We have received a number of letters from leaders and members of study groups. They all express not only appreciation, but enthusiasm, over this activity. One leader writes, "I feel sure, not only from observation, but also from expressions made to me, that our group is filling a need." He adds "Needless to say, some very amusing as well as perplexing opinions are voiced. At no time has any animosity developed and if there is ever any friction it is soon smoothed out. This is natural as, of course, our membership as well as our visitors have quite various backgrounds and educations." It is wonderful indeed when serious men and women can come together and share their common ideas, thoughts, and opinions. Such fraternity on a philosophical level, is a real contribution to our democratic way of life.

The following questions, based on material in this issue of HORIZON, will be useful to study groups and are also recommended to readers in general for research and contemplation.

## Article: BUILDING A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

By Manly P. Hall

1. It is flattering to be considered broad-minded. What are the dangers that confront the person with an open mind but without adequate foundations in thought and reflection?

2. Explain the philosophic concept that the troubles we face in life are not due to our environment, but to limitations within ourselves.

3. Is it possible to live a full, constructive, and personal life without selfishness, possessiveness and ambition? If so, what would you consider to be the proper incentives for action?

## Article: PYTHAGORAS: LIFE, SCIENCE, AND MYSTICISM

By Henry L. Drake

1. What is the significance of the problem of "the one in relation to unity?" How did this cause a division in the Pythagorean school?

2. How were the concepts of duality and unity finally reconciled by the Pythagoreans? How does this solution contribute to better conduct and adjutment in life?

3. The Pythagoreans believed that everything could be analyzed in terms of number. In your opinion, what is the significance of such a theory?

## STUDY GROUPS

LeRoy Aserlind, 511 W. Lewis St., P. O. Box 245, Livingston, Mont.
L. Edwin Case — 821 Woodman Ave., Van Nuys, Calif.
Ralph F. Cushman — 5622 Laurel Canyon Blvd., North Hollywood.
Mrs. Jacques Danon, 2701 Longley Way, Arcadia, Calif.
Elaine De Vore — 3937 Wawona St., Los Angeles 65, Calif.
John C. Gilbert — 15 N. W. 12th Ave., Miami 36, Florida.
Elouise Gorman, 3010 N. W. *36th St.*, Miami, Florida.
Helen M. Johnson — 842 Acacia, Inglewood, California.
Mr. & Mrs. Donald A. MacRury, 6912 Balsam Way, Oakland, Calif.
Ruth F. Morgan, 4131 Camero Ave., Los Angeles 27, Calif.
Wilfred F. Rosenberg — 318 Blue Bonnet Blvd., San Antonio 9, Tex.
Mrs. Nellie Von Behren—1020 Pauline St., New Orleans, La.
Mrs. Ida White, 5481 - 16th Ave., Rosemount, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
P. R. S. Headquarters Group — L. Edwin Case.

# Library Notes

## The Bacstrom Alchemical Manuscript

By A. J. Howie

Ever since the Library of The Philosophical Research Society was opened to the public, a handsome set of 18 octavo volumes of manuscript bound in half-morocco has graced the shelves. Visitors have exclaimed at the beauty and impressiveness—few have paused to inspect the contents.

These are the *Alchemical Manuscripts* of Sigismund Bacstrom, M. D., "Doctor of Physic."

Collected here is but a portion of the fruits of one man's research in the controversial field of alchemy, hundreds of references copied from rare books and manuscripts, translations from German, Latin, and French, some personal correspondence, and a few old manuscripts. The handwriting is clear and readily legible. The title pages for the major works have been carefully lettered and ruled to resemble a published work.

Mr. Hall used these manuscripts while writing the chapters on alchemy in his *Encyclopedic Outline,* the full color plate of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes was redrawn from a tinted pen and ink sketch that is the frontispiece in Volume VIII. The same figure was used also in *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry.* The manuscripts were rebound after the bibliography was published in the *Encyclopedic Outline,* and somehow the numbering sequence of the volumes became mixed. To use the bibliography for reference, the volume number changes are as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 to 9 | 7 to 4 | 13 to 5 |
| 2 to 13 | 8 to 17 | 14 to 3 |
| 3 to 16 | 9 to 1 | 15 to 10 |
| 4 to 12 | 10 to 14 | 16 to 8 |
| 5 to 6 | 11 11 | 17 to 15 |
| 6 to 2 | 12 to 7 | 18 18 |

These manuscripts form an impressive, first-hand record of a decadent era of alchemical research. Bacstrom and his associates seem to have confined their efforts to searching the records of their predecessors for the secrets of the art; there is no mention of independent, original, pioneering experiment. Printed books get a certain amount of editorial polish. But a manuscript remains without change to reveal the limitations as well as the understanding of the author or translator. His command of words to marshal his facts, his care in spelling, grammar, the scope of his references, the general orderliness, all provide an intimate view of the man's mental world.

But what of the man himself? Even hints are scarce in all alchemical literature. Personal details unrelated to alchemy just never seem to be mentioned. There is a chaste, devout, intellectual singleness of purpose in all of the alchemical books. Among some 30 or 40 letters and notes signed with Bacstrom's name, most if not all of them in Bacstrom's own handwriting, only one has a human, personal touch. "If it was not so excessively dirty and our Albion Street inaccessible without boots, I would say that I should be happy to see you at my hut, but as we are situated and partly mud-inondated, I can not expect the pleasure of seeing you . . . . Mrs. B. beggs leave to give her respects to you." This mention at least establishes him as married and having some family existence apart from alembrics, tinctures, stones, and all the paraphernalia and jargon of alchemy.

I have noted three addresses which lend a further note of reality to Bacstrom as a person. In Volume 2 there is an anonymous letter addressed to Mr. Bacstrom at No. 2 Paradise Row, Marylebone. The cover is stamped with the "PENY POST" marks of the time, 1788. There is a note in a hand other than Bacstrom's: "Rec'd from Dr. B. March 31, 1798. 3.20 p. m." Is there any significance in the *Mr.* of 1788 and the *Dr.* of 1798? Did he receive his medical degree during this 10-year period? It was during this span of time, 1794, that he is supposed to have been initiated into the *Societas Rosae Crucis.*

Volume 14 contains a number of dates and places, including the letter with the mention of Bacstrom's wife quoted above.

With a translation from an old letter concerning the Sophic Tincture written by a Dr. Dippelius of Amsterdam, dated March 24, 1716, there is a note by Bacstrom: "When I lived at Amsterdam between the years 1763 and 1770, I had the pleasure of being intimately acquainted with Alderman Abram Gromee and his family. He was far advanced in years, and was a believer in the philosophers stone on account of his father who had been Burgomaster of Amsterdam and a confident friend of Dr. Dippelius, then living near the amstel."

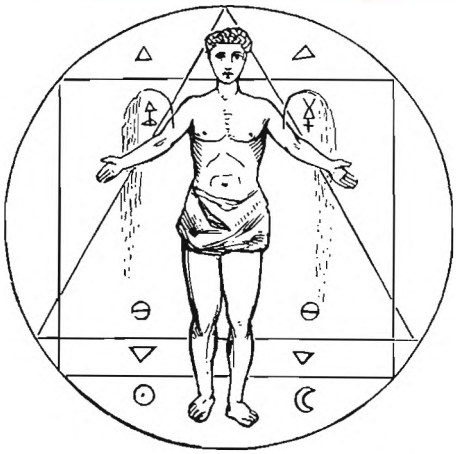
After *A Process on Lead* by G. Von Dietrichstein, Bacstrom mentions a trip around the world, but gives no date.

One translation closes: ". . . . finished Tuesday eve., April 24, 1804, in Will Close Square." There are several mentions of No. 19 Albion Street, Commercial Road - March, 1805, December 29, 1805, March, 1806, and the latest, Saturday, May 28, 1808. These letters indicate that Bacstrom lived in England, if not continuously, at least in the years noted. And these years are before and after the date of the initiation certificate which will be discussed below.

The foregoing fragments are the only facts that we can glean from our own manuscripts. Arthur Edward Waite in his *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* is the only published supplemental source of biographical information, but even that is on very vague documentation. Waite apparently became interested in the Bacstrom manuscripts at the time he was gathering material for his *The Real History of the Rosicrucians* which was published in 1887. He was able to examine at least a part of the library of Frederick Hockley which was sold upon the latter's death. The inference is that it was in this collection that he found the initiation certificate of Sigismund Bacstrom into the order of the *Fratres Rosae Crucis* on the Isle of Mauritius, September 12, 1794. He published the document in full, but with a surprising superficial brevity, made no statements as whether it was an original certificate or a copy; nor did he give any reason for accepting it as genuine. It was not until some 37 years later in his second book on the Rosicrucians that he went into any detail. Again he is uncritical, evidently being more desirous of adding another name to his roster of initiates of the *Societas Rosae Crucis* than in evaluating his material.

In *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (1924), Waite states as a fact that "a certain Comte de Chazal . . . . received Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom, who is known otherwise to Hermetic students, into a *Societas Rosae Crucis,* personally and on the spot, by what is known as the mode of communication." For the purposes of this article, it would have been most helpful to know how Dr. Bacstrom was "known otherwise to Hermetic students." We can not restrain an urge to mention the vagueness, if not meaninglessness of the "personal and on the spot" mode of communication. We are interested in Dr. Bacstrom as the source of the alchemical manuscripts rather than as the last known initiate of the Rosicrucians.

However, the Library of The Philosophical Research Society recently has acquired a beautiful, illuminated manuscript copy of the initiation certificate of Dr. Bacstrom. The wording differs occasionally, and



—From Waite's *The Real History of the Rosicrucians*

The philosophic seal of the Society of the Rosicrucians appended to the copy of Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom's Rosicrucian diploma. From the collection of Mr. Hockley.

punctuation, spelling, and capitalization vary frequently from Waite's text. Waite admits that he worked from a copy and had no information as to the whereabouts of the original certificate. His copy was made in 1842, apparently noted by the copyist. In the course of his research, he had examined another copy, but makes no mention of similarities or differences. It is most unlikely that the original was in English, so that the differences in the copied texts could be due to independent translators. It would be interesting if we could determine if our copy is the one that passed through Waite's hands.

There are two important differences involving the seal between Waite's published text of the certificate and our copy. Waite's seal carries the caption *The Philosophical Seal of the Society of the Rosicrucians.* Our seal is titled *The Seal of the Red Stone.* The seals are similar in that both contain a geometrical figure depicting the squaring of the circle. Waite's figure is elaborated to contain a man surrounded by 10 small alchemical symbols. Our manuscript figure is composed simply of an interlocked equilateral triangle and square, both contained within a circle surrounded by alternately rounded and pointed fluting that encircles the entire figure. The central circle is tinted a pale rose (the Red Stone) and the fluting is in red, yellow, green, and blue. Waite mentions no coloring.

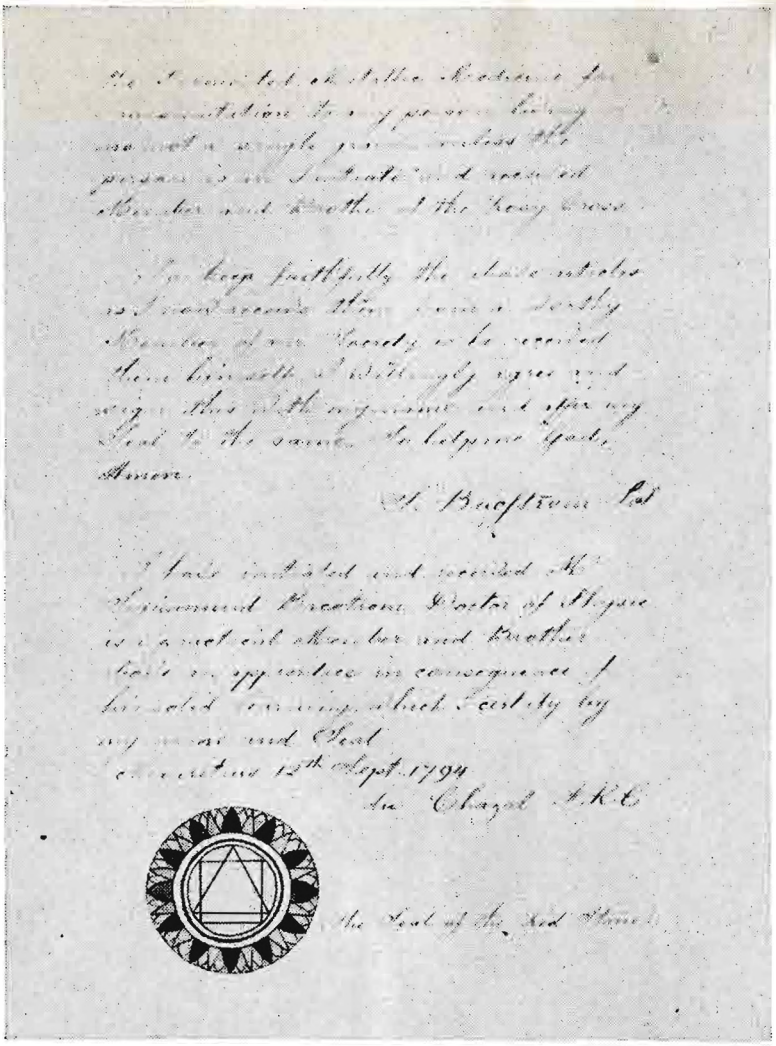
Bound in with Waite's certificate was a *copy* of a long letter dated March 16, 1804, from Bacstrom to an Alexander Tilloch answering

his questions concerning the Comte Louis de Chazal who signed the Bacstrom initiation certificate. The items of the letter, if authentic, give us some insight into the character of Dr. Bacstrom. We interpret Bacstrom within the limits of Waite's summary of the letter, which he does not quote verbatim.

Dr. Bacstrom was introduced to de Chazal (our certificate reads *du*) by Dr. Petit Radel, a learned Parisian physician who had escaped being guillotined during the French revolution, leaving all that he possessed behind him in his flight. At the time of the introduction he was being secretly supported by the Comte (although Bacstrom was able to learn the secret on short acquaintance). Bacstrom paid three visits to de Chazal, the last of which was for eight days (the longest visit?). An amazingly quick intimacy seems to have sprung up, because Bacstrom says they became *intimate* friends. At any rate, the Comte seems to have lost no time in pouring out detailed confidences—the vastness of his learning, his wealth, his charities, his source of income, his manuscripts dealing with his experiments and cures by means of animal magnetism, electricity, and galvanism, his ability to see the details of events at great distances, which he recorded in a diary used for verification at a later date when news arrived from Europe by ship. Bacstrom was permitted to inspect the Comte's rich collection of gold medals, precious stones, philosophical (?), astronomical, and mathematical instruments, his library, his laboratory. (I am curious to know what the "philosophical" instruments might have been.)

De Chazal confided that he possessed the *Lapis Philosophorum* and the *Animal Stone,* and that to the one he owed all the wealth at his command, and to the other his robust health at the age of 97. He performed an alchemical transmutation for Bacstrom, in which process he permitted Bacstrom to assist. After all of these details are given, Waite continues the summary of the letter: ".... de Chazal found by frequent conversation that Bacstrom was acquainted with the theory of the *Lapis Philosophorum* and with the classic writers on alchemy. He therefore initiated him and then communicated his practical labours." This sequence of events is rather unconvincing in passing along the secrets of such a carefully guarded art, but so writes Waite without comment. Bacstrom "wrote down from his mouth" the whole procedure of the *Lapis Animalis,* there being five or six different methods, all leading to the same end. Although the *Animal Stone* is described in various ways throughout our manuscripts, we have found no mention that seems to refer to the methods learned at Mauritius.

The Comte is supposed to have offered Bacstrom 30,000 Spanish dollars if he would stay on for a year to work the process once more



THE LAST PAGE OF DR. SIGISMUND BACSTROM'S ROSICRUCIAN DIPLOMA

from the beginning. (In the earlier part of his letter, the process was worked during less than 8 days.) However, Bacstrom seems to have been under orders from the Colonial Assembly, and he was ordered to go on board the *Harriet* (Captain Daddy) bound for New York. Waite suggests that Bacstrom *may* have been a ship's doctor. De Chazal is supposed to have wept like a child, and lamented that they had not been introduced three months sooner. (Why only three

months?) At any rate, he emptied the coffers of all the money there was in the house at the moment, a munificent three hundred dollars, and begged Bacstrom to accept it as a small token of his sincere friendship. It seems to me that if only a paltry $300 dollars was on hand after all of the big talk, de Chazal might have given Bacstrom the gold they had transmuted together, or some of the precious stones—at least they would have been a priceless token to Bacstrom of the *Great Work* and his initiation. He does not say that he even accepted the $300.

These details do not measure up to the importance of the subject—the ancient art of alchemy and the mysterious order of the Rosicrucians. Waite, probably without intent, brands Dr. Bacstrom as being unduly impressed with and interested in wealth, gold, importance; as being concerned with his own abilities and accomplishments that commanded the attention of the possessor of such wealth. (This estimate ties in with the general tone of the manuscripts; compare Bacstrom's note to the translation of the Dippelius letter—another intimacy.) Waite makes no attempt to establish the authenticity of the certificate or the letter—both being admitted as *copies*... Yet he states that he has no doubt whatever that the Bacstrom certificate is a genuine document of its period—not bothering to explain his reasoning.

Elaborate as is the certificate of initiation, it impresses me as clandestine or spurious. According to Waite's account, the initiation was conferred on very short acquaintance. In 18 volumes of manuscript, mostly dated after the initiation date given in the Certificate—many dated 1797—there is no allusion to any society. Waite mentions a Rev. W. Alexander Ayton who copied many of the Bacstrom manuscripts and tried a number of the experiments without success, but he does not know where the transcripts are. He also mentions that other copies, possibly originals, are in theosophical hands. And with this unverifiable documentation, Waite adds another name to the roster of Rosicrucians.

The alchemical section of the Library of The Philosophical Research Society contains more alchemical manuscripts than any library in the Western World, with the possible exception of the Library of Congress. The subject has been in disrepute among scholars for decades, but it has never been completely relegated to past error; the subject keeps cropping up. Chemical science freely admits that the efforts of the alchemists laid the foundation for modern research, but they deny absolutely the possibilities of alchemical transmutation.

Science notwithstanding, alchemical transmutation of base metals into gold is universally outlawed by statutes. The *Encyclopedic Out-*

*line* quotes in its entirety such an act from the *Statutes at Large*—1st year of William and Mary (1689), Chapter 30: "An Act to repeal the Statute made in the 5th year of King Henry IV against the multiplying of Gold & Silver" as copied from Volume 1 of the Bacstrom manuscripts. The act repealed made it a felony to multiply gold or silver. The new act admits the multiplying of metals and extracting gold and silver out of them by persons (presumably Englishmen) outside of the realm for fear of falling under the penalty of the earlier statute. The new act legalizes the multiplying of gold and silver only for the increase of monies and to be deposited in their Majesties' mint within the Tower of London in exchange for the full and true value. No metals so multiplied would be permitted to be used or disposed of in any other place within their Majesties' Dominions. If no one had ever transmuted base metals into gold, such an act seems superfluous, if not downright superstitious and gullible, on the part of the highest governing body of the realm. But this act is not unique. Alchemy is outlawed in our own United States.

Aside from the gold-making problem, alchemical literature is replete with allusions to spiritual processes that must accompany the physical efforts of the artist, adept, student. Professor Carl G. Jung has been researching quietly for years into the phenomena of alchemical symbolism. His *Psychology and Alchemy* has become available in English (1953, Pantheon Books). This research opens up an entirely new viewpoint from which to study alchemy that is of the utmost interest and importance to students of philosophy and religion. The Bacstrom manuscripts take on a new significance if studied after a serious consideration of Professor Jung's studies. If the visitor to our library who signed only his initials to a note left in one volume of the Bacstrom manuscript reads this article, he may find that his time was not wasted. He wrote at some unknown recent date: "Unless the difference is known between wanting gold and wanting a gold brick, read no further. A. T. S. (?)" I am uncertain of the initials.

In the following brief resumé from *Psychology and Alchemy,* the reader must understand that the mentions are digests and paraphrases selected with a consideration of the Bacstrom manuscript in mind. I have tried to be sure not to distort or stretch any connotations isolated from context. There are indications that Professor Jung restrained his statements sufficiently to prevent any enthusiastic misuse by cults and sects to justify particular beliefs. At the same time, there is a wealth of material in *Psychology and Alchemy* and his other writings from which we can evolve a constructive method of testing, interpreting, and synthesizing the phenomena of the various fields with which our library is concerned.

Jung refers to a collective unconscious in which all mankind participates. This is a region of healthy material, the universal basis of the human psyche even though it is differentiated variably in individuals. The underlying human psyche changes very little during the course of many thousands of years. The individual unconscious is a psychic fact; efforts to discipline it are only apparently successful—and are harmful to consciousness. The unconscious remains beyond the reach of subjective arbitrary control, in a realm where nature and her secrets can neither be improved upon nor perverted. This is a region where man can learn to listen, but may not meddle. The collective unconscious and individual unconscious defy definition or limitation.

"Natural man is not a 'self'—he is the mass and the particle in the mass, collective to such a degree that he is not even sure of his own ego." Jung in one place defines "self" as the totality of the conscious and unconscious psyche—and because it is not possible to limit or define the unconscious, the totality of the self can be experienced only in parts, and then only in so far as they are contents of consciousness. The evidence for this grows with experience. Because of the collective background, "man has needed the transformation mysteries to turn him into something, and to rescue him from the animal collective psyche which is nothing but a hodgpodge."

Jung says that the soul by nature possesses a religious function, and until the *mysterium magnum* becomes a conscious experience within the soul, the outward forms of religion and faith are ineffective. The Great Mystery is an actuality that is rooted in the human psyche. The prime task of all education of adults is to convey the archetype of the God-image to the conscious mind. The supreme values of everything that has been formulated in dogma—and a good deal more—reside in the soul. He indicates that psychology can help people to establish a conscious awareness of the relation between sacred figures and the equivalent images already pre-existing within their own psyche. This equivalent in the soul is the archetype, an imprint; he leaves to the theologians the responsibility for naming or identifying the active agent or imprinter. He definitely avoids intruding into the province of the spiritual mentors. He limits himself to his observances of certain psychic types and their correspondence with religious ideas and dogma.

"Our dreams practice philosophy on their own account."

Alchemy is likened to an undercurrent to Christianity. As the dream compensates the conflicts of the conscious mind, alchemy attempted to compensate for the gaps left by Christian tensions. The dramatic alchemical-religious phenomena reached completion, fulfill-

ment, only in the minds and experiences of a few particularly gifted alchemists. The contents of the personal unconscious are so indistinguishably merged with the archetypal contents of the collective unconscious, and when only parts are brought into consciousness, each individual experience is likely to be different. This explains the countless contradictions of alchemical formulas, processes, colors—and failures. This also explains the distortions evident in various religious manias.

" . . . . the mind of the alchemist was really grappling with the problems of matter, when the exploring consciousness was confronted by the dark void of the unknown, in which figures and laws were dimly perceived and attributed to matter although they really belonged to the psyche. Everything unknown and empty is filled with psychological projection; it is as if the investigator's own psychic background were mirrored in the darkness. What he sees in matter, or thinks he can see, is chiefly the data of his own unconscious which he is projecting into it. In other words, he encounters in matter, as apparently belonging to it, certain qualities and potential meanings of whose psychic nature he is entirely unconscious."

The authors the alchemist studied provided him with symbols he thought he understood; but in reality they touched and stimulated his unconscious. The majority of the alchemists applied the allegorical directions to chemical substance. But there were the few for whom the laboratory work was primarily a matter of symbols and their psychic effect. While they labored to learn the secrets of chemical transformation, there was a parallel psychic process which could be projected all the more easily into the unknown chemistry of matter since that process is an unconscious phenomenon of nature. The symbolism of alchemy expresses the whole problem of the evolution of personality, the so-called individuation process.

The totality of the psyche is a transcendent experience. Man's urge to experience larger parts of that totality is not easily explainable—least of all by the subject. The dynamics are directed from within the unknown unconscious, growing from a sort of theoretic nucleus about whose structure or meaning we know nothing. This center of the individual pattern seems to be self-ruling, manifesting in dreams, visions, urges, convictions. Whether we like it or not, the psyche has a creative capacity generating so-called "causes" which are really mere occasions, expressions of the pattern.

"Strictly speaking, projection is never made; it happens, it is simply there. . . . . The alchemist does not practice his art because he believes on theoretical grounds in correspondence; the point is that he has a

theory of correspondence because he experiences the presence of the idea, or of spirit, in physical matter. 'I [Jung] am therefore inclined to assume that the real root of alchemy is to be sought less in philosophical doctrines than in the projections experienced by the individual investigators. I mean by this that while working on his chemical experiments the operator had certain psychic experiences which appeared to him as the particular behavior of the chemical processes. Since it was a question of projection, he was naturally unconscious of the fact that the experience had nothing to do with matter itself (that is, with matter as we know it today). He experienced his projection as a property of matter; but what he was in reality experiencing was his own unconsciousness. In this way he recapitulated the history of man's knowledge of nature. .... Such projections repeat themselves wherever man tries to explore an empty darkness and involuntarily fills it with living forms."

(*To be concluded*)