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(All unsigned Articles are by Manly P. Hall)

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Philosophical Research Society

WINTER
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HORIZON
LINES

AN EDITORIAL

BY MANLY PALMER HALL

Thinking Makes It So

THE human mind is still a mystery to the human mind. It is supposed to be the mainspring of our mental life. It divides us from the brutes, and supplies us with the instrument of a unique destiny. Because we have minds, we can think, and because we can think, we live in a universe of infinite opportunity. We are proprietors of Nature and of ourselves. With a deep and abiding inclination to dominate each other, we sharpen our wits and intensify such instincts as are useful to our ambitions. Although we know practically nothing about the machinery of thinking, we assume that because we are human we have minds, and because we have minds we are the noblest creation existing within the magnetic atmosphere of the sun. Even scientists are inclined to suspect that the wonderful workings of natural law produced mankind and then rested, utterly incapable of improving upon its own handicraft. To them it is doubtful if there exists anywhere in space another race of creatures so wonderfully endowed.

Those less analytical are content to accept their own minds as a rightful heritage. The mere fact that we exist presupposes that the mental energy is our birthright. If any further polishing is necessary, we have available a marvelous educational system by which the mind will be properly tutored and molded into the semblance of intelligence. It is no concern of ours that in the process of polishing this

gem we wear away most of the stone. What is left scintillates with proper splendor, reflecting from its neatly cut facets the rays of celestial light. By the time we are ready to go forth into a world of reality, the mind is our all-sufficient guide, and we use it with so much enthusiasm and so little intelligence that living becomes one long confusion punctuated with desperate crises. It seldom occurs to us that most of our troubles are due to that noble organ seated somewhere within the recesses of the skull.

Those who must struggle with the consequences of human mentation have come to the conclusion that the average person's mind may be likened to a spoiled child. It has never been disciplined or corrected or directed into constructive paths. It is willful, wayful, and capricious. Most of the notions which it engenders are worthless or worse, and it governs the human fabric with the inclinations of a juvenile despot. When it does not have its own way, it screams, kicks, and pouts, hoping to attain its purpose by becoming unendurably disagreeable. The mind is certainly a useful instrument, but, when allowed to run wild or to grow like the daisies of the field, it often becomes a nuisance to its owner and a menace to others. If we found our own mind in another person, we would seldom choose him for a friend; but we are resigned, and endure our own foolishness with the same spirit with which we condone the mischief wrought by our own children. The peculiarities of other persons are generally obnoxious, but our own peculiarities are actually "cute;" in fact, they prove beyond reasonable doubt that we are not like everyone else.

Many a free man has lived his entire life in abject slavery to his own mind. Its notions become his laws, and its opinions determine his conduct. He would never for a moment even think of questioning the validity of his own thoughts. Whatever the quality of these thoughts may be, they are his, and because they are his he must, if necessary, die in their defense. All this is the more true because the mind supplies the means for estimating the mind. It is a tight little corporation and must not be expected to betray itself. If we question one of our thoughts, the thinker of that thought immediately assures us that that particular mental morsel is infinitely precious. Against this conspiracy, the rest of the personality retires abashed. First the oracle speaks, and then from the same oracle comes the further revelation that the first revelation was the awful truth.

Just as it is almost impossible to get doctors or lawyers to testify against each other in court, it requires a miracle to induce the mind to testify against itself when reasonable doubts arise. The mind simply takes over, smothers the doubts, flatters the owner of them, restates its original conceit, and remains infallible. Even when the mind takes on a penitent air and insists that it is sometimes wrong, we

must be watchful, for there may be, and probably is, a larger strategy up one of its convolutional sleeves.

Sometimes the mind plays the part of a condescending father bestowing priceless (of no worth) advice from its own ill-lived career. Again, it acts like one of those smothering mothers who is forever reminding her full-grown children that she inevitably, eternally, and unconditionally knows what is best. The mind is also wise enough to accept the stomach as a junior partner in its enterprises. It caters to the body in order to lower resistance to its schemes. It further caters to the ego which it advances to objective rulership of the empire, and then keeps for itself the authority of the prime minister and the cabinet.

That mortals should have lived so long and suffered so much without suspecting that they nurse a tyrant within themselves is difficult to understand. Likely enough, this is due to the fact that the mind itself does the understanding. It also has a ready explanation when things go badly, and applies its full energy to the task of shifting the blame to some other unfortunate part of the organism or member of society. Even when caught in the act of being utterly and completely wrong, the mind assumes an air of injured innocence and bluffs its way out of or through the dilemma. In the meantime, the balance of the personality is expected to co-operate regardless of the consequences. Mental dictatorship is fashionable and receives a negative kind of approval from all concerned. When a man's friends tell him that he is stubborn, he is profoundly shocked. He retires with this news and has a little chat with his mind. He leaves the conference satisfied that his acquaintances have judged him badly. His mind just assured him that he was really the fortunate possessor of a strong and determined will such as is required by exceptional persons like himself.

If he suspects that he may be a coward, the mind assures the man that he is merely prudent. In the same way selfishness is explained as a practical instinct. Envy is only an acute sense of values; jealousy, the desire to possess what is rightfully ours, or an objection to the faults and assumed virtues of others. An old-fashioned bad disposition is really sensitivity, and a foul temper is righteous indignation. By the time the mind has applied a kind of balm that was never in Gilead, all natural instincts to self-improvement are frustrated and nothing remains but the impulse to go out and correct those who do not see things our way. This gives the mind a royal holiday. It can transform pleasant conversations into interminable arguments and burden the personality with so many mental obligations that it can never hope to pay off its mental mortgage. The mind having forced the individual into difficulties is now called upon to play the heroic

part and save the situation. It emerges in the role of the noble friend and further enlarges our sense of obligation. We can never do enough for a mind that has saved us from a predicament which it caused.

It is generally acknowledged that we see and estimate, not with the sensory perceptions but with the mind. It therefore censors all the evidence that comes to us from the outside world. It has the habit of making certain that we see nothing, understand nothing, and consider nothing which is contrary to its own tastes. In this way it protects us from error, for obviously that which is incompatible with the mental opinion is a dangerous and evil notion. Thus we can live long and industriously with comparatively little benefit to ourselves. We can be in the midst of great learning and learn nothing. We can look directly at facts without seeing them, and interpret errors until they become monuments of truth.

Not only do we make mistakes, but we also repeat them, still convinced that what has previously failed will presently succeed. Like a crafty courtier, the mind is forever catering to our whims, while at the same time achieving its own purposes. It remains well-loved and highly honored because it invariably counsels that we should do exactly what we want to do. If anything more is required in the form of self-justification, the mind has a fragment of sophistry suitable to the occasion. It capers about like Mephisto in the second act of *Faust,* until, like the hero of the opera, the owner of the mind is well-content to die to rid himself of the nuisance.

Obviously the mental life of the average person needs intelligent organization. The time comes when each of us must have a quiet talk with himself, covering such facts of life as every young mind should know. We can state our position substantially as follows: We do not have to believe everything *we* think any more than we have to believe everything that others think. Our friends have peculiarities and it appears to us that many of their concepts and conclusions on pertinent matters are unreasonable and inconsistent. We disagree with their political allegiances, their religious convictions, and their social policies. Quite likely the attitude is mutual, and others are at a loss to understand why we are such nice folks with such foolish notions. A gentle consideration of the factors involved should reveal that the pronouncements of mortal mind are far from infallible, and it is quite possible that our own thinking is more picturesque than profound.

It is easy to disbelieve the thoughts of our acquaintances and relatives, but this gentle and sincere skepticism should also be applied to the results of our own cerebrations. A sense of humor will help. When we say that we take ourselves too seriously, it usually means that we place too much confidence in the validity of our own opinions.

It is always wise to remember that we can be wrong; it is a most depressing reflection, but a very healthy one. Our first thought when listening to the productions of other minds takes the form of a question: Is the person qualified to express himself with such an air of authority? It is reassuring to learn that a man expounding law is himself a successful lawyer, or that the health hints are emanating from a reputable physician. Even though we may have reservations as to the present ethical levels of the legal and medical professions, we are glad to know that we are listening to those trained and experienced.

Likely enough, our friends feel the same way. If we solemnly pronounce their favorite politician to be corrupt, their religious convictions to be infantile, or their selection of an automobile to be a rare example of bad judgment, they will promptly ask themselves by what qualifications we have become a self-appointed critic. They may look back on our career and remember that the last politician we endorsed was impeached for absconding with the local funds, or that we have been far less-pleasant human beings since we formed our most recent religious alliance. Then, again, the car we bought and recommended to all our friends has been a constant source of trouble and expense; in fact, we had arrived at the present social assemblage in a taxi cab because the family vehicle had refused to function. This type of thinking does not enlarge our sphere of influence.

Actually, we should have long before reasoned these facts out for ourselves and realized that our thinking has not been sound. When we feel resolved to release a rare fragment of erudition, we should choose a subject about which we are adequately informed. This implies not only that we have sufficient knowledge, but also that we have applied it successfully to ourselves with noteworthy results. Only when we live better than our neighbors is there any reason why they should be interested in, or impressed by, our formulas. There is a popular procedure at the moment against which much could be said. This is the common practice of listening to a group of opinions on Monday evening and passing them on as gospel to another group on Tuesday evening. This procedure may cause us to appear erudite, but ultimately our mental reputation will suffer.

The mind is an individualist and frequently a bit rugged. It also has the pernicious habit of generalizing on an intimate particular. We confidentially pass on the significant discovery that a certain brand of vitamins works wonders. We have taken two bottles, which have transformed us from physical wrecks to corporeal heroes. We know that the remedy will do the same for anemic acquaintances. Actually, we do not know the causes of poor health in others, but enthusiasm and a genuine desire to be helpful lead us to assume that what is good for one is equally beneficial to all. By the same policy, we dis-

tribute recommendations on rearing children, settling marital disputes, investing spare cash, or any other subject that may come up in conversation. Thus we babble along, verbally monopolizing the evening, and utterly disinclined to listen to others who may know much more. When thoughts come to mind, there should always be a brief pause, sufficient to give the ego an opportunity to decide the merit of the notion. If the pause is indefinitely extended, it probably means that we have dismissed a foolish thought before it had a chance to convict us openly.

We all want to contribute to the edification of each other. This means that we must have more than an average knowledge on some pertinent subject. To acquire such knowledge, we must use the mind as an instrument for the accumulation of facts and an honest reflection upon their value and utility. This also means that we must train the thinking apparatus until it works for us, obeys our instructions, and confines its conclusions to the fields where its activities have been adequate. Each of us has a perfect right to demand of his mind that it sustain reasonably and logically any attitude or opinion it may hold. Failure to exercise this privilege of checking upon oneself is to incur unnecessary responsibility for unwise action.

Through the years we nearly always discover that there is a natural human tendency to complicate every phase of mortal life. We hold the mistaken idea that complexity is a symbol of thoroughness, and to do things the easy way implies indifference. Actually, one of the principal functions of the enlightened mind is to make difficult things simple, and the indisputable proof of bad thinking is the instinct to make simple things difficult. Mental training does not necessarily solve this unhappy tendency. Those highly schooled are addicted to laborious and involved methods of self-expression in the communication of ideas. Frequently, involvement testifies to lack of basic knowledge. If we confuse thoughts sufficiently, we are no longer aware that they are inconsistent or contradictory. Only the superlative genius is able to transcend the instinct to appear profound. The mind, when unable to prove its point by reasonable means, takes on an air of mystery and escapes behind a curtain of confusion. It may go so far as to bestow an inferiority complex upon the person who is the victim of its conspiracies. The easiest way to prevent the mental processes from exercising their tyrannical inclination is to force them to express themselves concisely and without equivocation.

We never know how little we know until we try to tell it in words of one syllable. We must confuse each sentence with terms of reservation, uncertainty, modification, and qualitative direction. In thus defending ourselves against possible criticism, we subtly admit that every thing we say is susceptible to contradiction or debate. Thus we

protect our position by sacrificing our convictions. Although the English language is rich in vocabulary, very few persons can use unusual words effectively. There is no common agreement without recourse to the Dictionary. The mind of the listener attempts to grasp the implications of the speaker without benefit of Webster. At best, there is haggling over terms and reservations as to the propriety of usage. In this muddle the ideas are of secondary importance, and we lose the point in the very effort to discover it. Paracelsus wrote his medical books in Low German with dialectic trimmings because he wanted the common people of his time to understand them. As he expressed it: "I prefer to be clear rather than elegant."

Such clarity not only favors the listener, but also benefits the instructor. It means that he has already thought through the complexity and achieved the substance of his subject. Finally knowing exactly what he wishes to say, he can clothe it in terms appropriate to the mental level of his auditors. The mind, when subjected to such a disciplining process, rebels with every instinct at its command. It fights against being cornered, and resists to the death all efforts to organize its resources. The mind apparently is well-aware that its own actual knowledge is extremely limited. When opinions, notions, and vagaries are cleared away, that which remains is not especially impressive. We know much less than we think we know, and are not entirely sure of what we do know.

It is a valuable axiom that we should use thought to justify the truth of the matter and not to jusify our own convictions. This is a sensitive point. We hold the common belief that our own convictions are inevitably the truth of the matter. To doubt the quality of our convictions is to question the very sovereignty of God. We live in a world of relative phenomena. Everything we see and do is susceptible of more than one interpretation. There may be an agreement on the proportions and dimensions of the visible, but there is no basic concord about the why and the wherefore of the visible. Even physical objects can be variously explained and have different meanings at different times and under different conditions. We all enjoy together the light of the sun, but this light itself has been explained by a hundred religions, fifty philosophies, and a dozen or more sciences. Each is certain that it knows why there is a sun, but the only indisputable fact is the rather trite conclusion that there is a sun. When we get into such an abstract sphere as human reactions to assorted stimuli, there are as many explanations as there are schools. Even within the schools themselves the professors frequently disagree.

The practice is to interpret the fact in a way that will support either a personal conviction or the collective conclusion of the group or sect with which we are affiliated. There is slight inclination to try

to honestly disprove our own viewpoint. Even when such a legitimate need is brought to our attention, we are insulted rather than inspired. From the beginning of time most men have used their minds to prove the correctness of their prevailing concepts. The ever-obliging mental equipment seldom fails to produce the necessary evidence. The evidence itself may be as inadequate and incorrect as the concept, but with one supporting the other there is slight incentive for improvement. Remember, the very evidence that you are using to sustain your own attitude is also being used by others to justify a completely opposite premise. Under such conditions a solid intelligence is needed.

Human knowledge is like an inverted pyramid resting precariously upon its apex. It is balanced so finely that it may be overthrown with slight effort. As we gaze with admiration upon the huge proportions of the balanced mass, it is easy to overlook the tiny point which supports the bulk. This point may be likened to a fact or an exceedingly reasonable hypothesis. The rest of the monument is interpretation, and all depends upon the reality and accuracy of the first hypothesis. Anything can be proved to any individual who will first accept some one hypothesis than cannot actually be proved.

The formula is: if you will accept *this,* then that and that and that plus that is true. If, however, you decline to accept *this,* then you are just plain stupid, stubborn, and unpleasant. Remember always that your own mind is practicing this method on you all the time. It can mean that a serious student can spend his entire lifetime arranging, classifying, and memorizing the by-products of an unsound basic concept. By this time the importance of the concept itself is forgotten. Most of all, the fact that it was a concept is forgotten. The well-pedigreed opinion, sanctified by tradition and justified by popular acceptance, has assumed the appearance of an immortal truth. Unless you have the courage to examine this truth in the light of common sense, you may never realize that you are trying to build a beautiful house without a secure foundation.

The acceptance or rejection of the basic concept is often dominated by unreasonable pressures. We may be overinfluenced; we may be exposed to ideas before we have the maturity to analyze them; and we may be impelled by our emotions, our appetites, or by primitive instincts. Once we have accepted a basic notion, we live to sustain it, and the more difficult it is to defend, the more desperately we seek self-justification. All our living and thinking are geared to a fallacy, and the resulting complications disfigure what might otherwise have been a happy and useful life. We are given minds with which to seek truth, but the mind in us, the minds in other, and the mind of the world subject us to a tyranny which many feel to be irresistible.

Another useful policy to be applied to mental conduct is to think things through. Never forget that thoughts and actions have their natural and inevitable consequences. Thoughts out of context are comparatively meaningless. It is easy to create a single thought that has attractive proportions, and it is still easier to borrow one from some better mind. This priceless gem can be quoted to good purpose until it becomes identified with our code, if not our conduct. What really counts is well-ordered sequences of thought, proceeding along the line from cause to effect. Those who have such skill are called thoughtful or far-seeing. Their mental lives are in patterned courses, guided by the will which bestows both courage and patience. When our actions move so rapidly that thought patterns cannot anticipate them or explore their road, we are called impetuous or shortsighted. Thinking that takes place when it is too late to influence a decision or direct an event is called an afterthought. Needless to say, many afterthoughts are magnificent.

Having done something badly, we suddenly realize how we could have done it better. This is a natural cause for regret, but does not cast so long a shadow that it prevents a recurrence of the practice. Those who wish to be credited with good judgment should have their afterthoughts beforehand. For example, supposing a decision must be made involving several possible outcomes. Instead of devoting all attention to one possible conclusion of the business, estimate the several possibilities, extend each of them into the future as far as judgment and perspective will permit. Remember that you have to live with your decision and the conditions which it will bring into existence. Are you going to be as happy paying for your decision as you were enthusiastic in forcing it through? There is always the future which depends upon the patterns now being formed. If we are too busy contemplating these patterns, we may neglect to survey those numerous reactions which must always follow action.

A friend of mine likes to buy pictures. They must be expensive and apparently cheap for what they are worth. When purchasing some post-impressionistic monstrosity, my acquaintance does not take into consideration that as the owner he must live with his property. There is great enthusiasm when the new acquisition is being hung,

but in a few days the *object d'art* reveals itself to be an unwelcome intruder. It hangs on the wall shrieking its discontent, howling at the other furnishings, and glaring like some malignant sprite at all who enter. The masterpiece is removed as a menace to sanity, and a new bargain is sought. An art dealer whom I know and who has a real appreciation of values told me that he will not sell an expensive picture to anyone unless he will first take it home and live with it for a month. If at the end of that time it is his picture, he will know it; if not, the dealer would rather that the purchaser make a different selection. In this way the merchant thinks things through for his impulsive customers who have more money than insight. Incidentally, he has done very well, but it has strongly affected the kind of pictures that he sells. He has learned from experience that folks are intrigued by the strange, the weird, and the grotesque, but they do not care to be constantly in the presence of such deformities. The final selection is nearly always a pleasant, normal, simple painting which touches a familiar chord or revives some nostalgic memory.

When we anticipate by thoughtfulness that which lies before us in terms of reasonable expectancy, we are not only happier but healthier. We remove the probability of those emergencies which bring with them tension and sickness. We are much more likely to fulfill our future hopes if we prepare for them long in advance. It takes time and patience, however, to think, and it also requires the sacrifice of a few momentary distractions. Those who have succeeded best in every walk of life are the ones who have operated from a master plan. They have decided what they wish to accomplish, and have made each day contribute its part to the final achievement.

The mind is sometimes the victim of the pressures of the personality. If you really want to succeed in the organization of a satisfactory mental life, keep yourself off your mind. This does not mean to ignore such mental activity as is necessary to organize your career or integrate your resources. It means principally not to engage in negative mental cuddling. Stop being sorry for yourself. Stop trying to estimate the degree and number of your own misfortunes. Too much mental energy can be used, or more correctly wasted, in the genial process of bestowing all your sympathies upon yourself. After awhile you bring memory to your aid, and dig out of the past innumerable occasions which at the moment you undervalue. Each of them was a rich opportunity for self-pity. The process is competitive and reaches its perfection when we are able to prove beyond any doubt or argument that we are the most afflicted, most misunderstood, most abused, most falsely judged, most neglected, and most pitiful creature that ever stumbled blindly through this mortal vale. Such a consummation is greatly to be wished. At last, we have distinction, so dis-

tinguished that it is hardly necessary for us to do anything else in order to merit the crown of martyrdom.

It takes much more mental energy to experience or re-experience a hundredfold all the devastating difficulties which have impeded our progress than it would require to carve a high and noble destiny. It has been estimated, for example, that it takes more actual vitality out of the system to be sorry for oneself for a single hour than it would take to work energetically with a pick and shovel for twenty hours. Needless to say, however, the latter occupation is not so satisfying to the libido. After a time we develop so much genuine solicitation for our own grievances that we actually believe we have found a new and useful occupation. Negation never accomplishes useful purposes. It is better to assume that everyone has his troubles and that those who complain the least have often suffered the most. As we select our friends from the more cheerful tribe, the chances are that others will do likewise, and we will have a richer and more satisfactory career if we do not contribute to the prevailing tendency to spread gloom.

It is always the wiser course to keep your thoughts large and wide and deep. Never cramp your mental processes with your own prejudices or the limitations of your associates. Fortunately, we can keep our thinking in our own names, and while we remain discreet we can enjoy a large measure of intellectual freedom. Opposition comes only after our opinions have been expressed in the presence of others. Few of us are punished for our liberality except when we try to impose it upon those with narrower horizons. In every mind there are restricting pressures. Such artificial boundaries appear especially significant when they exist in persons otherwise well-balanced.

Individuality itself survives by emphasizing points of difference. We are inclined to feel that lack of prejudice indicates weakness. Actually, the prejudices themselves are deformities of the mind and are the causes of unnecessary suffering to ourselves and others. Large thinking is inclusive thinking. It reveals a more thorough estimation of real values. A weak mind can nourish a variety of prejudices. It takes real strength of character to reconcile what appear to be hopeless differences of opinion. Experience shows that most prejudices originate in unhappy personal experiences. From some particular unpleasantness, we have created a general antipathy. It is comforting to realize that human beings must be considered as individuals, each with a temperament and personality distinct from all others. It is bad semantics to group human beings into patterns and then label these conglomerates with some general term.

To reject human contact because of some general preconception is to limit personal experience and deprive ourselves of numerous opportunities for self-improvement. We most dislike that which we

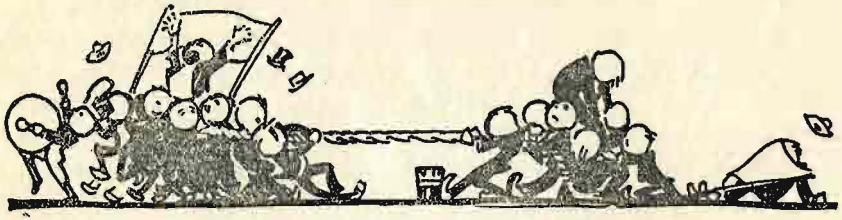
least understand. The unknown always implies a degree of menace. The only way to overcome these negative instincts is to press through them and meet life with an open mind and a kindly heart. If we fail to make such a gesture of comradeship, we are the larger losers. Consider the problem of religious pressures. Most so-called liberals are heavily afflicted with the limitations of their own liberality. They have emancipated themselves from some sect or group, but they have not transmuted or refined the religious instinct itself. As a result, the faith they have left behind and the ones they have never belonged to are viewed with condescension or even open contempt. These critical attitudes are distinct limitations which bring a measure of irritability to those who hold them and take a little of the sunshine out of living.

Antagonisms are used to justify the crusading instinct. When we see something that to us is wrong, we are in the presence of an opportunity to become reformers. This is a happy realization bestowing a new purpose and a new devotion. As it is quite likely that our reformation will be unacceptable, a militant situation is created which brings with it an excuse for a crusade and a fair chance for martyrdom. In this way folks find things to do and the priceless possibility of becoming significant. The end is always the same. The crusader passes into a long and purposeless career which leads to embitterment and disillusionment. Useful work is neglected in the effort to force an unnatural state upon our associates.

A broad mind is not necessarily profound in all the fields of knowledge. It is sufficient to be aware that the world is filled with things worth knowing and people worth understanding. Much is beyond our reach, but if we are wise we will include the unattainable among gracious realities. As we become convinced that the world is essentially good and that others are as sincere and well-intentioned as ourselves, we save our own mental equipment much wear and tear. The spirit with which we accept has much to do with the spirit with which we are accepted. The world wishes to be understood, not criticized or condemned without a hearing. We all feel that if others really knew us better they would find us likeable. We expect such treatment, and in turn we must bestow it.

In the course of years I have been an observer and counselor in many tangled and unhappy human patterns. In almost all cases thinking had been abused and mental attitudes were distorting and exaggerating the facts. Sometimes the several persons involved were each locked behind an adamant fixation. Each was sure he was right, but this conviction did not bestow any gentleness, patience, or instinct to forgive, forget, or temporize. There could be no solution until others gave up their convictions. Thus, in the defense of worthless opinions, homes are broken, families estranged, and sensitive hearts subjected to

pain and grief. The only constructive approach to these tragedies is for the several persons to sit down quietly and reason together. Each must listen with open mind to the convictions of the others, and by the discovery of common ground attain to common concord. This would happen many times were it not for the tyrannical operation of the mental equipment.



The human mind has transformed this earth into a battlefield. It has bound countless generations of essentially well-meaning people to policies that can never produce anything but disaster. It is time indeed, that the mental organism be called upon to account for its conduct. When a trouble-maker appears in society, he is dealt with in some appropriate manner. When a similar disturber of the peace arises inside ourselves, it should be promptly inspired to mend its ways. If we tolerate it long enough, we shall become accustomed to its vices and finally embrace them. By so doing, we place a heavy liability upon both our lives and our careers.

The mind, fortunately, is not left entirely alone to tyrannize human conduct; it has a worthy opponent in the human heart. Often constructive emotions rise above the selfish dictates of the intellect. When we are strong of heart, the mind is no longer the solitary dictator of our ways. Human emotions are much older and deeper and strangely wiser than the intellect. While the mind builds its strategies, the heart cuts through the tangle and asserts its own prerogative. It is therefore most important of all that the heart be kind. Love sacrifices all other advantages to achieve its own perfect work. It is more deadly to be sick in the heart than in the mind. Even though thoughts influence and even infect the emotions, these can never be completely dominated by intellection. When knowledge is gradually transmuted by experience, it takes on the richness of understanding. Perhaps we may say that understanding itself is knowing with the heart.

The emotions of the human being are ever available for good works. Even though they have been badly educated and their natural inclinations have been frustrated by outside pressures, they rise wonderfully to emergencies. In every great national and international crisis, the warmth of human emotions has been splendidly revealed. The abuse or betrayal of emotions is a greater tragedy than the mis-

instruction of the intellect. There is grave danger wherever emotions are involved in selfish or destructive actions. Under such conditions the tyranny of the mind becomes more absolute, and the danger of complete disorientation is imminent. It says in the Bible: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The way of the heart is the direct revelation of the self. We can be better than our minds, but no worse than our hearts. In time they will win if we protect their values.

Man, therefore, has two rulers within himself, or perhaps a prime minister and a premier. These, by working together, bestow a rich pattern for living. The mind justifies the heart, and the heart tempers judgment with mercy. If these counselors are divided, the life fails in its noblest part. If these counselors are corrupted, the career is ruined. Remember, then, we live not by thought alone, but also by grace. To us is given the privilege to reveal both strength and mercy. By *strength* we mean purposefulness, and by *mercy,* kindliness. The combination may not make us the brittle kind of success with which we are sadly familiar. It will, however, make us successful human beings equipped to find and experience peace, contentment, and happiness.

There is the old proverb, probably of Eastern origin, which says: "Nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." This is not entirely a negative statement, for it implies that thinking also can make things good. Living as we do in a world overshadowed by mental phenomena, it is not surprising that we trust the mind to supply us with personality orientation. We are enmeshed in concepts of law, medicine, religion, education, culture, and politics, all of which are by-products of human thinking. The wisest of mortals have attempted to explore natural processes and derive therefrom a pattern suitable for the perfection of human institutions. The conflicting products of various degrees of mentality have descended to the present time as a comparatively unorganized mass of accumulated tradition. We are required by our own mental faculties to organize and digest this heritage and to adjust our personal conduct with prevailing interpretations of an uncertain code. Thus each mind is expected to analyze the productions of all other minds, and while doing so to preserve a measure of intellectual individuality. It is an immense undertaking for which few are qualified.

Any violent departure from prevailing concepts is heavily penalized. The average person is required by conditions over which he has no control to conform or suffer. When he learns that to conform is also to suffer, he is on the horns of a dilemma. The prevailing policies have not accomplished the ends for which they were designed. The formulators were unable to anticipate the future growth of human society. They left fixed statutes to govern a moving universe, and

with the passing of centuries the interval between the existing solution and the growing need widened and deepened. There is an old saying that it is easier to create a new work than it is to mend an old one. We attempt to mend by amending, and each amendment further complicates the confusion. The only course open to the individual is to adjust his inner life to meet the requirements of conviction and conscience. Usually he succeeds only in adding another imaginary world to the mass of previous inventions. We become so obsessed with the familiar faults and mistakes that we devote more time to examining the trouble than we do to devising a remedy.

In the quest for security, we must discover a few basic concepts which have demonstrated lasting merit and have not been outgrown in the course of human progress. It is the work of the mind to seek these essentials and to bring them clearly to the attention of the person who lives in the body. To divide between the false and the true requires patience and understanding. One of the first truths that we must experience is the fact of our common dilemma. We are gathered here in an environment which we have partially conquered. More than any other generation we are equipped to make a substantial contribution to collective security. Between us and the noble end lies a tangle of conceits, opinions, prejudices, and notions. Together these form the mental adversary. Our policies are not dictated by heaven or justified by Nature. They are fashioned by ourselves, and as the creator of them we have the right to correct by thoughtfulness what we fashioned by thoughthlessness. To change our minds is not heresy, disloyalty, or mutiny, but a healthy sign of growth.

When Emerson said: "Consistency is the bugbear of little minds," he was roundly criticized. Was it not evident that consistency was a virtue, by devotion to which individuals shaped for themselves purposeful careers? To be inconsistent implied that you believed that some previous conviction was incorrect. This further suggested that sometime, somewhere, and someway you have been wrong. Such an admission weakened character, undermined confidence, and assailed future ambitions. But Emerson was right. It is far better to change your mind and grow than to keep your opinions and stagnate. Opinions themselves are steppingstones along the path toward truth, but they can also be rocks in the road. We are supposed to remain true to a conviction only until we can grow another one. The moment we assume that the present concept is sufficient, we lose sight of the real purpose for existence.

Each day we live we should experience some enlargement of understanding. This growth immediately requires that the new appreciation be incorporated into our philosophy of life. To ignore the new because it conflicts with the old is to become the worst kind of

intellectual reactionary. Yet in practice we are forever rejecting progress. Our mental habits are such that the new is proverbially uncomfortable. We become accustomed to a certain quality of misery and are afraid to change it lest we become more uncomfortable. It is the mind that is at fault in this predicament. Our thoughts have become our habits; to change them means that we must adjust mentally to an unfamiliar condition. This takes thought, ingenuity, inventiveness, and resolution. The implication is that we shall have to think and work. To escape so ominous a task, it seems more expedient to stay as we are and leave progress to the future.

Staying as we are is not an unmixed blessing. We live in perpetual complaint against the present state. Everything is wrong and threatens to become worse. By preserving the status quo, we exchange the miseries of the old for the dangers of the new. Nothing is solved, and the mind returns to those small thoughts which hazard nothing and profit nothing. As long as we prefer to worry rather than to think, we shall remain anxious. In these days of socialized consciousness we are inclined to condemn those parasites who make no contribution to the work of their world. We think of them as indolent, self-centered, luxury-loving folks, who richly deserve to lose what they have. Yet we nurse a wastrel within our own skulls. We have minds as pampered and nonproductive as decadent aristocrats. Like some downtrodden class described by Karl Marx, we slave, struggle, and sacrifice to bestow favors upon the capitalist in the cranium. The mind is forever demanding the best and producing the least.

If we are troubled, perturbed, uncertain, and disturbed, why not take the mind off the dole and give it useful employment? We can sacrifice some of its popular activities and its insatiable love of recreation for the moment. It needs a task appropriate to its resources. The more we exercise it, the stronger and more resourceful it will become.

Sometime ago it was brought to my attention that a young lady of eighteen committed suicide because her family was unable to give her a coming-out party as extravagant as that provided for one of her girl friends. Life was unendurable for this debutante because her eligibility for marriage was not advertised to the amount of fifty thousand dollars. The young woman herself probably was not so much to blame. She was a product of an environment which placed much too heavy an emphasis upon the significance of high society. Imagine a world of otherwise normal-appearing persons whose minds have never been put to better use. Contrast this with a father who owned an expensive automobile. He noted that his sons began bragging at school. Also they developed an inclination for snobbery and did not select their friends from among those with less-expensive cars. This man realized that his boys were heading into trouble. He sold

his car and bought another, inexpensive and just a trifle the worse for wear. This became the only available conveyance, and his sons promptly recovered from their delusion of grandeur.

Watch your own thinking and see what your mental habits are doing to those who depend upon you for leadership and example. The mind was given to the human being to assist him in the discovery of the great truths of the universe. While a part of it must be devoted to the physical concerns of this world, there must always be thinking beyond the physical. Our own future hopes and the confident expectancy of a world waiting and working for a better future depend upon disciplining the intellectual equipment. Once you believe this you are on the right road. The more you think about it, the more attractive the project will become. This conviction grows with each day, strengthened by increasing mental activity. What begins as an aspiration or a fond hope will thus enlarge in the mind until it becomes a wonderful fact—after all, thinking makes it so.

The word *confetti* literally means *confectionary* in Italian. Instead of tossing paper at each other, bonbons were used. After it became popular to toss hard candies, so much damage was done that paper was substituted.

Among ancient peoples, it was customary for a bridegroom to abduct his bride, and it was the obligation of her family to attempt to prevent her departure. Often a sham battle was fought, and on occasion the participants suffered bodily harm. This was a little too strenuous, so it is now a practice to limit the missiles to an old shoe.

Rabelais described a monk who could not sleep except when listening to a sermon. The pious man would have rested well had he survived to the present time.

During the fearful epidemics of bubonic plague which afflicted Europe, the "plague-spoon" became popular. It was ornamented with mysterious symbols and formulas, and any medicine taken from it was believed to be an infallible remedy.

Cardinal Richelieu was credited with the remark: "Show me six lines written by the most honest man in the world, and I will find enough therein to hang him."

While the Cardinal was receiving the last sacraments, the curé asked Richelieu if he forgave his enemies. The great prelate replied: "I have never had any enemies except those of the State."

The Problem of Easter Island

FEW areas on the earth's surface in which important archaeological remains are known to exist remain unexplored. While it might not be fair to say that Easter Island has been completely neglected, the extraordinary monuments and remains for which the island is noteworthy present problems for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been advanced. As a result of fragmentary and conflicting reports, a number of fantastic stories have gained considerable circulation. Even in prosaic times like our own, human imagination is intrigued by the element of mystery. That which is strange, remarkable, or remote can be distorted to sustain fantastic opinions. It seems sacrilegious to advance a simple solution when it is possible to become impressively complicated.

Isla de Pascua, known as Easter Island and also as Rapanui, is a tiny area of land in the South Pacific, about two thousand miles west of the coast of Chile and eleven hundred miles east of Pitcairn, long associated with *Mutiny on the Bounty*. It was so named because the first European to land there, the Dutch Admiral Roggeveen, first placed his foot on its shore on Easter Day in the year of grace 1722. Nothing is known about the island prior to this date. Even the Polynesians apparently had never given it a name. Easter Island is roughly triangular in shape, with a ragged coast line and an area of approximately thirty-five thousand acres.

The population, though small, has a complicated and tragic history. The early explorers were not moved to take a census, but it has been estimated that the inhabitants never exceeded four thousand heads. This comparatively insignificant human equation was subjected to much internecine warfare, a series of amazing crime waves, and the ravage of disease and slave traders. Life was perilous, and the land itself not remarkably productive. Survival was about the best that could be hoped. By the year 1872, the native population of Rapanui

had been reduced to one hundred and seventy-five souls. During this process of decimation, most of the cultural heritage was destroyed, including historical records and even the local mythology and legendry. In the effort to preserve themselves, some of the natives migrated to the continent of South America and were absorbed into other culture groups.

Easter Island was annexed to Chile in 1888, although a few foreigners had lived on the island since 1864. Under the Chilean government, the natives of the island have been given five thousand acres of land for purposes of subsistence, and live in the village of Hanga-roa on the west coast. The remainder of the island, which is covered with grass, is owned by the Compañia Explotadora de la Isla de Pascua of Chile and is used to graze sheep and cattle. In the census of 1934, it was established that the population of Easter Island was four hundred and fifty-six including twenty-two lepers confined to a rude abode two and one half miles from the principal community. The size of the island and its remoteness render it unfit for exploitation. No productive industry can be maintained there, and contact with Chile is infrequent. It is always possible, however, that the island will be significant to the rapidly developing systems of air transportation.

Gathered on the slopes of an extinct volcano, which dominates the island, and along its irregular shoreline are the remains of an ancient culture and the evidences of considerable advancement in arts and crafts. Altogether, about two hundred and sixty burial platforms of massive stonework fringe the coast of the island. Artifacts belonging to the people who created these monuments have been found, also some human remains. To date, no pottery or metal has been recovered. It is the concensus of opinion of those who have examined the island that the relics and remains scattered about its surface are of no great antiquity. The signs usually associated with ancient works are totally lacking. It would seem that although the monuments give an impression of being prehistoric they were produced more recently by a people still functioning on a remote level of culture.

Popular stories to the effect that Easter Island is a remnant of an ancient continent and that its archaeological relics are proof of a Lemurian Empire or a lost civilization involving Gondwanaland have not been supported by facts as yet established. It seems more likely to the experts that the mystery is due to the recent disasters through which the native population has passed. Under the pressures which have arisen in the last two hundred and fifty years, the natural and simple explanation for the cultural relics has been lost. Perhaps the exceptional industry of the indigenous population was due to the comparatively limited field of their endeavors. Easter Island is of volcanic origin and is of the more recent geological creative processes. Its

greatest length is thirteen miles and its width seven miles. There are no trees on the island, and the principal sources of water are pools of rain which collect in extinct volcanic craters. On the island is an extinct volcano about seventeen hundred feet high, and much of the interior land is surfaced with broken lava. Agriculture is limited to small patches of shallow soil. There are no native animals except rodents, fishing is poor, and there are few birds except migrants.

Restricted to less than a hundred square miles of poor soil and completely isolated, the natives were frustrated by poverty of all natural resources. Their strange art was the only outlet for creativeness or ingenuity. Dominated like other natives of the South Pacific region by strong religious instincts and the elaborate ritualism of their primitive form of worship, the people of Easter Island seem to have devoted themselves almost entirely to making burial platforms and huge crude images. The art-form which developed on Rapanui can be more graphically pictured than described. The illustrations which accompany this article will convey the overall impression.

Most of the images are cut from the lava of the extinct volcanic craters. Some reach the length of thirty feet and a weight of fifty tons. More than one hundred and fifty images are still to be seen on the slopes of Raraku volcano alone. In addition, there are many unfinished figures still in the quarries. It is believed that these statues lined roads or marked the boundaries of areas reserved for religious ceremonies. The typical Easter Island statue is actually a bust. Only head and shoulders rise from the short grass, and the features are grotesquely elongated. The workmanship is dramatically simple to the degree approaching modernism. Most of the heads have stern or moody expressions. The ears are elongated, the eye sockets deeply sunken, and the mouths set with a look of grimness. Originally, many images were provided with massive stone hats. These were carved from a reddish tufa and averaged between five and eight feet in diameter. They were put in place after the statues had been erected, itself a prodigious understaking.

When the Routledge Expedition examined the island in 1914-15, only one of the colossal figures was still standing on the burial platforms along the shore. All the others had fallen, due apparently to erosion which had undermined their foundations. The state of the soil and the positions of the platforms led to the conclusion that the images could not have stood for any great length of time. Early travelers, in their drawings, represented many of the statues in their proper positions. This can only mean that they had been erected within a few hundred years of their discovery. The circumstances are mysterious because it does not seem that the available population had either the tools or the man power required to move and erect such colossal

THE ISLAND OF RAPANUI

From a map prepared in 1877, by Mr. Alphonse Pinart

figures. Perhaps the modern mind has been inclined to overlook many perfectly natural possibilities.

Colossal stone structures and monolithic monuments exist in several parts of the South Pacific area. William Churchill, in his work *Easter Island,* writes from personal observation: "Utterly beyond our comprehension, since apparently so utterly beyond the present capacity of the islanders, the enduring memorials of workers in cyclopean stone are preserved in the South Sea. Without pretending to offer a list of such structures we note a few of the principal buildings of that nature: the Fale o le Fe'e in the mountains of 'Upolu behind Apia, the great trilithon of Tonga, the scarped mountain erections on Rapaiti, the massive walls of Metalianim Harbor in the Carolines, the rows of pillars on Tinian in the Mariannes. Least comprehensible of all such works are the stone statues of Easter Island, rude masses of tufa-crowned human shapes mounted as termini upon platforms along the edges of the cliffs. We find them in all stages of execution from the partly hewn block in the quarries to the monument finished and erected in its place. They are claimed by the traditions of the islanders as the work of their forefathers down to quite recent generations. Yet, despite the tradition, we cannot see how a people unacquainted with metals could hew these great masses of hard volcanic rock; nor can we see how, without mechanical assistance of which they had no knowledge, they could lift these weights over the crater rim, transport them for considerable distances, and rear them on end."

Dr. Churchill has skillfully summarized the important and available facts, also the dilemma which they present. Confronted with irrefutable evidence that the seemingly impossible was skillfully accomplished, modern archaeologists have acknowledged themselves to be baffled. This has led to a series of extraordinary conjectures which have drifted far in the direction of fantasy. I think we can dismiss the idea that supernatural forces were called upon to work this wonder, nor is the notion that the images were fired like round shot from the crater of a then-active volcano especially satisfactory. It seems more likely that we have simply underestimated the intelligence of primitive peoples. If this were the only example of monolithic art and architecture, there would be more justification for idle speculation. Actually the earth's surface is strewn with such remarkable remains, indicating that widely scattered cultural units shared a general knowledge of higher engineering.

The great statues were not the work of a small group, and it can safely be assumed that the full strength of the population was available for the project. This could mean a potential man power of several hundred natives, quite possibly a larger number. The answer to the riddle may lie in some simple and natural peculiarity of the region which has not yet been correctly estimated. We know that the figures were actually perfected in the quarries and that the final separation from the parent rock was not made until the images were otherwise completed. Specimens may be examined in all stages of production, and to the time of transportation they present no mysterious elements.

The number of images which were moved and the abandon with which they were scattered about do not convey the impression that the problem was regarded as especially formidable by the artisans. Whatever means they used met all reasonable requirements. It may be significant that only the heads and shoulders were delineated. Most of the images are roughly cylindrical, but they could not have been rolled into position without disfiguring the features, especially the noses. No wood was available to be used as rollers. Tools are believed to have been limited to implements of volcanic glass and rock. If the statues had been covered with a cylinder-shaped coating of available clay and this had been hardened, perhaps by fire, it might have been practical to roll the statues thus encased into position and then remove the covering. Many ancient peoples were able to erect monolithic stones by building a pit under the lower end, which caused the base to tip into position. The Easter Island images are embedded in such a way that this explanation appears to meet the requirements.

The natives of the island still preserve a legend that their ancestors came in canoes from a distant place, probably the Gambier Islands,

which are about twelve hundred miles distant. They brought with them many Melanesian customs, but their development of a form of writing and their technique with great statuary cannot be conveniently traced to outside sources. Most aborigines who move into a previously cultured region disclaim all knowledge of the source of such monuments or remains as were constructed by their predecessors. Other explanations failing, there is the convenient recourse to theology. The prehistoric structures were attributed to the gods or to races of giants who inhabited the area in the long ago. The Easter Islanders have no such solution for the great stone faces. They emphatically declare that their ancestors constructed them and were still engaged in this work shortly before the arrival of foreigners.

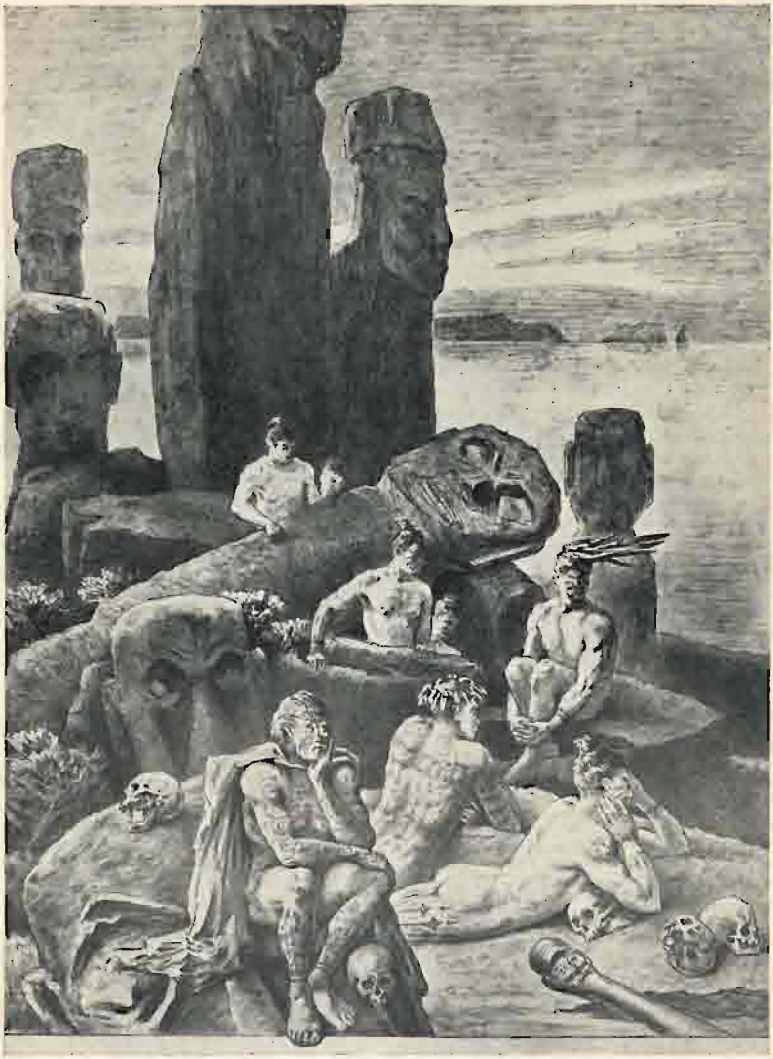
It is not impossible that the secrets of monolithic stone-construction descended from a remote time and originated in the Lemurian epoch. Certainly the work is in the style of a remote culture, but this does not mean or imply great antiquity to the productions themselves. They were relics of a vanishing craftsmanship and were possible only because with the incentive to create images also descended the methods by which the handling and placement of them was possible. The later natives forgot not only the meaning of the statues, but also the means by which they were transported. The fact that no implements have been discovered does not necessarily mean that they did not exist. The same attitude was long held in connection with the achievements of the Central American Indian tribes. Recently a number of fine-quality tools have been found; the same may also occur when Easter Island is given more careful consideration. The original inhabitants may also have brought implements with them. Certain types of craftsmanship could have failed when these implements were worn out and could not be replaced.

No one seems to know who the grim-faced busts are intended to represent. There is a great deal of sameness about them and they do not agree especially well with the appearances of the present inhabitants of the island. So highly stylized a representation suggests a special and definite meaning. Most Polynesians and Melanesians do not, for reasons of magic and taboo, create portraits of living persons. Nor are they inclined to bestow such skill and craft upon depictions of their divinities. The statues represent a type or a concept highly distinctive and traditionally inspired. As these depictions stood in rows upon the tombs of the dead, one may suspect that they were the conventional and accepted likenesses of ancestors. The crowns or hats were symbols associated with important persons. Probably much of the religious lore has also been forgotten, but such legends as remain support the belief that the busts depicted the heroic dead. This does not explain all,

for we can wonder why hundreds of images were scattered about which had no direct association with the mortuary monuments.

Primitive people never perform an action without a reason. It would be vanity to assume that artists were merely gratifying an aesthetic instinct. The procedure had to have been rooted in that inscrutable religious overtone that dominates the aboriginal consciousness. There is so little variety in the Easter Island pantheon that it would be useless to speculate that the faces represented embodiments or personifications of natural forces. When such is the case, there is always a certain amount of distinctive identifying symbolism. We are not certain that the volcanoes on Easter Island were ever active after the present inhabitants arrived. I have heard no reports or indications that volcanic activity has left any trace upon the workmanship or has been responsible for the overthrow of the images. Had there been much volcanic activity, it might be assumed that the stone faces represented the spirit of the volcano, but there is no reason for assuming this. Some of the statues, usually the smaller ones, are ornamented on the reverse with symbolical designs. In these designs, aquatic birds highly conventionalized are prominent. There are also numerous carvings of a similar nature on the outcroppings of rock in different parts of the island.

Assuming that certain vestiges of religious tradition have survived in the native soul, we can approach other examples of indigenous artistry in the hope of gleaning a larger knowledge. After contact with the outer world, the Easter Islanders developed considerable skill in woodcarving. Of course, this was only possible after wood was available to them. The *moai miro* have been described as astonishing examples of early Pacific art. They are full-length figures, from twenty-five to forty-five inches in height, and are among the most advanced forms of aboriginal art. It has been said of these images that they reveal a knowledge of anatomy without parallel among primitive peoples. Like the massive stone heads, the *moai miro* are distinctly representations of one basic idea. They usually take the form of an emaciated old man, although female figures have also been found. The natives call these figures "statues with ribs" because this is the outstanding feature of the stylization. The little figures are seldom erect in posture, but are bent forward slightly, conveying the appearance of age and decrepitude. The ears are elongated, and the male figures almost invariably have goatees. The images are nude, and on the back, at the lower part of the spine, there is usually a circle resembling a raised ring. Its placement suggests that it represents the Mongoloid spot, a small area of color present on members of the Mongolian race at the time of birth.



—Water Color, by Pierre Loti

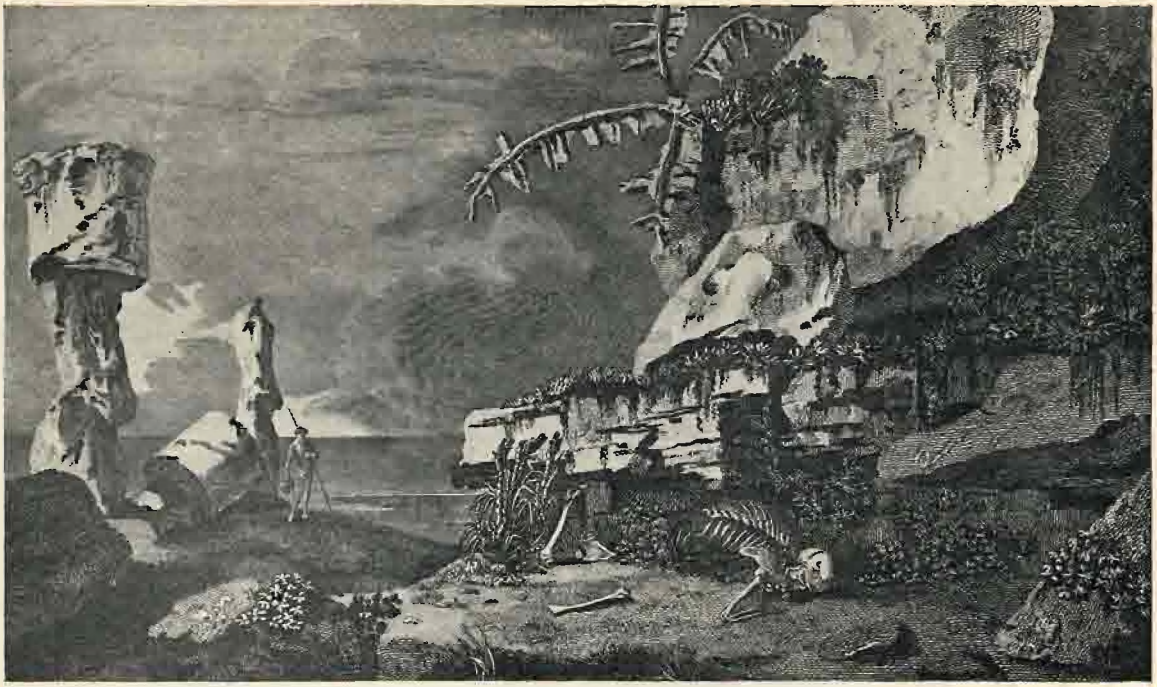
IMPRESSION OF EASTER ISLAND

Drawing dedicated by the artist to Mme. Sarah Bernhardt. This illustration reconstructs the conditions of the stone monuments and native peoples of the island as they were in 1872.

—Drawing by A. de Bar

INLAND SCENE ON RAPANUI

This illustration is from the region of the volcanic crater on the side of which so many of the great figures stand. Also, stone faces are carved into the steep sides of the cliffs or partly attached to the quarries.



—From *Voyage Autour du Pole Sud de J. Cook*

MONUMENTS OF EASTER ISLAND

A vivid impression of the strange remains seen by Captain Cook

—Designed by Pierre Loti

A BURIAL PLATFORM

A typical example of the massive structures found on the shores of Easter Island. The pedestal supports five gigantic stone figures, each wearing a ceremonial hat.

As far as can be learned, these *moai miro* are intended to be portraitures of the dead. Some investigators believe that they represented supernatural beings, but there is little to suggest departure from realism. Of course, the ancestor worshiper holds his deceased progenitors to be spirits possessing wonderful magical powers; thus, the ancestor and the divinity may be identical. The small carvings are quite different in their technical treatment from the massive faces in stone. It is hard to imagine that the arts have a common origin. In addition to the statues with ribs, there are implements variously ornamented, such as the handles of paddles, articles of adornment, and what may pass for weapons.

Among the greatest curiosities of the region are tablets, usually roughly rectangular, inscribed with mysterious writings, pictographic or hieroglyphic. Several efforts have been made to decode these tablets, but the results are far from satisfactory. Some of the older natives claimed to be able to read the inscriptions; in fact, they seemed to do so with remarkable ease. Unfortunately, however, the next among the scholars read the same inscription with the same ease, but with a totally different result. It seems that the motive was to oblige rather than to inform. There is some question as to the intent and purpose of the old writings and also as to the degree of learning to which it testified. There is every evidence that the tablets were the productions of a sincere industry, but like most pictographic inscriptions the implications of the crude glyphs were known only to those who employed the figures as reminders of important ideas. I doubt if much will be gained from the inscriptions even if they are finally deciphered correctly.

The psychologist may be in the best position to estimate the internal pressures which caused human beings to express themselves through clearly delineated systems of symbolism. Regardless of time or place, the human being instinctively reacts to the circumstances of his environment. His activities are his escape from the pressures or limitations imposed by ignorance. Man is an interpreter. He interprets Nature in his search for security, and then confers his own opinions and conclusions upon his fellow creatures in a number of ways. The Easter Island art tells a story about the people who produced it. It is directly connected with their problems of survival and with the adjustment which they made to the limited world in which they were condemned to exist.

What pattern originating in the human subconscious would cause a small community to strew its land with massive, brooding faces? One possibility is memory. Are these images copies of some older original? Did the natives feel it to be a duty or responsibility to perpetuate the likeness of something cherished from the remote past?

This attitude could become habitual until the project was accepted as a proper and inevitable task. Here, perhaps, is a link with an older cultural system. It has been suggested that at one time the area around the Easter Island included other and larger islands. These could have been ornamented with actual relics of the Lemurian continent.

When the Melanesians found monolithic stone remains which they accepted as the work of spirits or giants and which they incorporated into their religious conviction, such images could have assumed the full proportions of idols. If, later, the originals were submerged or destroyed by the operations of Nature, it might have seemed necessary to reproduce them in order to preserve contact with the magical agencies which the images represented. The reproductions were cruder than the originals, but this was not of great importance. To the native the similarity was sufficient, and after a few generations there was no longer any remembrance which could have suggested comparison. In this way a Lemurian custom might have been perpetuated by a Melanesian people, with the result that the old and the new were confused into one general pattern.

A second possibility is more intimate. If the people were dominated by an overconcept of life, they may have embodied a mass of psychological frustration in a symbolism which ultimately led to the systematic production of meaningful images. Man is forever creating images in his own mind, and these sometimes dominate schools of folk art. It was an ancient habit to capture the quality of strength through the impression caused by size and mass. The images should be analyzed for psychic content. What emotion, what reaction did they stimulate in the minds and hearts of those who fashioned them? We are far removed from their intellectual platform, but what do these images stimulate in us? Various explorers have described curiosity, astonishment, and even consternation as their immediate response to the impact of the statues. The more they thought, the more the wonder grew until it finally led to a disorientation of the conventional viewpoint and attitude. The end was mystery, complete bafflement, and a strong tendency toward an inferiority complex. We are always disturbed when we cannot find a reasonable explanation for a phenomenon which cannot be empirically denied.

Routledge estimated the number of statues scattered about Easter Island as between four and five hundred. This in itself is difficult to explain. There seems no good reason for so large a collection in so small an area. We are continually confronted with the problem of vast isolated complexes of buildings and monolithic remains in remote, unfrequented, and sparsely populated regions. The most likely answer to this type of phenomenon involves religious practices. Most primitive peoples have records of sanctuaries, shrines, and places of

spiritual learning which could only be reached after long and hazardous journeys. Many of these accumulations of strange edifices were not cities or communities as generally believed. They were sacred places set aside to the gods and reserved for the deeper ceremonies of the dominant cult.

We would like to believe that this would explain the Easter Island images, but even this solution does not meet all of the requirements. It is one thing to hide religious buildings in a far-away jungle or some mountain fastness, but it is another matter entirely to select a spot so inaccessible as to preclude even the reasonable possibility of reaching it at all. It would be extremely convenient to suspect that the images are vastly older than supposed and were fashioned at a time when Easter Island was part of a larger land distribution or was connected with some major continental area. Under such conditions the island could have been a necropolis or city of ghosts and dead—a spirit community, for which there is ample precedent. Many aboriginal groups venerated a place associated with the beginnings of their historical traditions. Indian tribes of the American Southwest have their sacred mountains where the protectors of their communities are still believed to abide. Most of the ancients held it to be a fact that they emerged through the earth from a dark underworld. The hundreds of heads protruding from the ground might have been intended to symbolize this coming forth out of the earth.

It is not impossible that islands have risen or sunken in the locality of Rapanui. Had a once-populous archipelago regarded Easter Island as the sacred center of their culture, they could have devoted much time and incredible labor to the task of creating appropriate monuments. The facilities which they used may have been removed when the work was finished or have disappeared long ago due to natural causes. The island does not provide a terrain especially suitable to the preservation of artifacts. Such as remained scattered about could have been claimed and ultimately destroyed by succeeding waves of population. Here, of course, we are speculating, as we have no proof of the antiquity of the tombs and stone heads. The strongest argument against the age of the works is the native report that the images were still being made shortly prior to the arrival of foreign ships. Here, again, there could be misunderstanding. Suppose the more recent works are represented in the pieces still in the quarries or attached to their matrices. The natives, believing in the magical powers of *mana,* or the universal life-principle, could have continued the work or revived it with the fond expectation that the stones would be put in place by miraculous means. It is also within the range of the probable that the surviving exponents of an old culture were satisfied to make

smaller figures as copies of the older ones, and this industry constitutes the "recent" additions.

The prevailing tendency of modern scientific investigation is to discount heavily the antiquity of prehistoric remains. This is especially true if these mysterious productions reveal a comparatively high degree of skill or intelligence. We dislike to assume that our remote forebears possessed unusual mental endowments. We reserve such attainments for our own kind and recent ages. If this prejudice has contributed to the dating of the Easter Island figures, the real solution may be simpler than we suspect. The mystery may be of our own making. This was certainly true of our estimations of Central American culture and has delayed our appreciation of monolithic remains in Europe and Asia.

The size of the heads is worth passing thought. A somewhat parallel group of colossal faces has recently been found in Mexico. It is evident in the case of the Mexican antiquities that these almost spherical heads, more than ten feet in diameter, were not intended to be parts of complete images. The under surface where the neck would naturally be attached is elaborately carved. The purpose for which these heads were intended is unknown, but the workmanship is far better than that of the Easter Island busts. Equally interesting are a number of immense legs which have rewarded excavators. These are in the form of attached pairs and are perfect representations of the lower extremities of the human body from the knee to, and including, the feet. Examples are on exhibition in the Archaeological Museum in Mexico City. There is no evidence that these legs were ever attached to bodies of appropriate size.

In the little museum in Merida, on the peninsula of Yucatan, are two three-quarter length figures, one male and the other female, which are reminiscent of the ponderous sculptural productions of Epstein. At first appearance, the figures resemble gorillas, but each has a caudal appendage. The female is holding a child. No such species of creature as depicted by these images ever existed on the American continent. The figures are evidently very ancient and not in overly good condition. They stand unknown, unhonored, and unsung, an embarrassment to learning and therefore conveniently ignored. Such productions, which are forever being discovered, require some expansion of prevailing concepts in the field of anthropology. Until we have an adequate pattern covering the prehistoric state of the human being, we shall always be confronted with these unpleasant exceptions to our hypotheses. In the dim, dark past, primordial mankind passed through a vast cultural stratum which may be called the Monolithic Period. At that time, there was a powerful urge in human consciousness to erect immense markers and to engage in incredible architectural proj-

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A TYPICAL EASTER ISLAND SCULPTURED HEAD

ects with uncut or roughly hewn stone. This was not a local phenomenon, but seems to have extended over most of the known earth. There are scarcely any important regions in which such monuments have not been discovered and it is inevitable that more will be found.

It is folly to assume that so wide a distribution of cultural endeavor was incidental or accidental. There is no reason why we should insist that the migrations of the bow and arrow, the flint ax, or such pottery designs as swastikas and the labyrinth motif are highly significant, and the monolith industry merely a wonderful example of local patience in far places. In modern social psychology, we use massive monumental structures as markers associated with persons or events. The Washington Monument, Cleopatra's Needle, and the Tower of Victory at Delhi are refined expressions of the same instinct, nor does it seem to me that monolithic stones are remnants of early phallic worship. Their arrangements and the complex patterns in which they are so frequently found suggest many other motives and usages. The orientation of these remains and sometimes the very shape of the structures and the number of stones employed are best explained by reference to early astronomical symbolism. Here once more we are in trouble, for it has been unfashionable to assume that the citizens of the Monolithic Period had any concept of universal motions.

It has not been suggested that the Easter Island figures were arranged in any consistent pattern that would assist in their interpreta-

tion. Such diagrams as I have been able to see do show, however, a tendency toward grouping and arrangement. It might be useful to have an accurate chart with careful measurement and emphasis upon the orientation of the various pieces. If there was any kind of a master plan, and there is in most of these early monuments, this plan might supply the missing parts of the enigma. A simple series of aerial photographs would give the relationships between all the clusters and tombs. Lacking such specific information, it is possible only to speculate.

The quarries are above the sites on which the statues were later erected. Although there are instances in which it appears that the stones had to be moved up and over the edge of the extinct crater, most seem to have been cut along the crest of the slope where they now stand. Assuming the availability of sufficient man power, the statues could have been so poised in the quarries that when they were finally detached they would have rolled down a gentle slope into cross trenches, prepared in advance to stop them at any point. Once in general placement, further digging would permit the base to drop, and again man power could have tipped the stone into a vertical position. By filling in ground around the base, the work was completed. Any damage done on the grassy slope was repaired after the figure was in place. I do not know what facts are available about the quarry work done inside the crater rim. Vacant spaces may have marked the removal of smaller stones which could have been transported, or, if unfinished images are still there also, it may not have been intended to carry them over the crater rim. The project could well have included the ultimate erection of statues within the crater itself.

The great stone hats are in the form of short cylinders about the proportions of conventional napkin rings. These cylinders on edge were like huge wheels. They could easily roll and even on level ground could have been rolled by a number of strong persons. When ancient peoples wished to put a stone, which they could not lift, on top of another stone already highly elevated, they used the same contrivance which the Egyptians employed in the building of the pyramids. They buried the upright stone, which was already in place, under a mound of earth. They made this mound large enough so that one side presented a gently sloping surface. The caping stone was then rolled up this gentle incline until it could be placed where desired. The mound of earth was then dug away, and for those who did not understand the procedure it appeared that a miracle had been performed. If we remember that these works were accomplished without haste and that expense was no factor, the results are not so incredible.

It would be interesting to learn if the people of Easter Island were able to make efficient ropes. Most of the Melanesians are skillful in

this work. With ropes it is possible to use more man power than can be directly applied to the stone itself. If at some past time wood had been procurable, the task would have been further simplified by the addition of rollers. Here, again, some scientific research would help. The island is now without larger vegetation. How long has it been thus barren? Was the wood supply always lacking, or was it actually exhausted in the requirement of timber for the stone works? Is any wood to be found in the construction of the tombs? Apparently none has yet been noted, but was anyone alert to this kind of evidence? Stone rollers are also a possibility, but some of them should be found if they had ever been used.

What is the nature of the subsoil in the area where the stones were moved into place? If a track were well-cleared, would the terrain itself have offered any facilities to make easier the sliding or rolling of the stones? We are seriously handicapped by the limited knowledge available from the reports of travelers and explorers. They have not answered the most pertinent questions, and have permitted the mystery to grow entirely out of control. Mystery itself always feeds upon the unknown. The less facts we have, the more uncertain we become. Beneath the incredible there is always hidden a simple and common-sense solution.

Primitive people possess something which we have lost—a direct instinct and the ability to become instinctively aware of the easiest and most natural way of achieving a desired end. Their technique is proverbial. Confronted with the impossible, they sit back on their haunches and give the subject due consideration. All travelers and explorers are aware of this technique. When a certain untutored savage solved an engineering problem with almost fantastic ease, a European who was present asked: "How did you hit upon this remarkable solution?" The native replied with a smile: "Oh, it was very simple. That is the only way it could be done." The logic was irrefutable.

Human ingenuity languishes as mechanical knowledge increases. Today we approach all projects with the equipment which we have perfected. We measure difficulty in the terms of that equipment. Thus, we solve our difficulties, not with our own skill, but by calling upon the accumulated knowledge of our generation. Primitive man had no such assistance at his disposal. As a result, he depended upon the sharpness of his own wit. According to his thinking, if it must be done, it can be done, or if others can do it or have done it, I can do it. He was not even confused by the opinions or suggestions of his associates. In an emergency the savage is silent. He retires completely into himself and remains there until he is ready to act. He has available a tremendous amount of observational experience. He has watched Nature and learned from the operations of living things innumerable

useful lessons. Nature produces specialists ranging from the trap-door spider to the dam-building beaver. These creatures accomplish what seems to be impossible as a matter of course. No one tells them, but some strong instinct successfully guides their activities.

If the stone figures were actually created by the simple natives of Rapanui, they found the means of moving the stones by recourse to things observed. The clue may still be on the island or it may have been brought with them from some earlier place of domicile. All that they could do was to adapt some fact already demonstrable to the need which arose among them. If we could watch the folk who now live on the island and are the remnants of the earlier inhabitants, we might find in the simple work which they do now the key to their cultural thinking. They may not themselves realize the importance of surviving arts and crafts. Reduced by circumstances to a very low level of subsistance, it probably does not even occur to them that they could solve their problems by their own instinctive consciousness.

Suppose someone offered these natives a handsome reward in something that they greatly desired and needed under the condition that they carve and transport another image to a place designated. Then let all nonnatives leave the island, suggest nothing, provide no implements that might dull the natural wit, and promise to return in two or three years with the reward. I believe that there is a very good chance that the image would be standing in its place when the foreigners got back. If, however, the natives were first given a few lessons in modern architectural and weight-displacement techniques, there would be no image. If they resolved that they had to put one of these statues in place, they would work it out for themselves "the only way it could be done."

The inducement would be real under such conditions, and the natives would have the further support of the factual evidence that such work had been done before. This is enough to set in motion the subconscious machinery of the primitive man. There might be long discussions, some despair, and a few false attempts, but among these people at least one would come forth in whom the attributes of the master builder predominated. Once he was recognized as the director of the project, it would proceed according to schedule. But if instincts are strong, memory orientation is poor. The native is no chronologist, and he has an amazing capacity to forget what he himself has accomplished. After the new image had stood for a few years, it would appear as mysterious as the others. The men who helped to raise it would be the first to proclaim it a miracle, and legends would transform the directing genius of the enterprise into an embodiment of some Nature deity. Primitive man must make heroes and must sing songs about them and hold festivals in their honor. He must weave legend

and myth into the story, and bestow it upon his children and his grandchildren so embellished that few facts remain obvious.

The people of Rapanui have legends similar to most of the natives of Melanesia and South America. They, too, were visited long ago by the heroic stranger who came from a distant place. It was this mysterious visitor who taught them many wonderful arts and crafts, gave new meaning to their religion, and promised them that their culture would ultimately flourish. These stories could have originated only from ancient navigations. Long ago, probably within the first five centuries of the Christian Era or perhaps a few hundred years earlier, ships from somewhere explored a good part of the South Pacific. These vessels probably did not come from Europe, at least not from the Mediterranean area, or some record would have been preserved.

Just as the Vikings reached the shores of North America long before the voyages of Columbus, other seafaring peoples operated in the Pacific area. Our knowledge of Oriental navigation is extremely limited and the records probably survive only in the form of legends. There was a proud and wonderful civilization in the Dutch East Indies. The Chinese, two thousand years ago, had ships as seaworthy as those which made possible the landfall of Columbus. It is possible, of course, that the navigators who touched remote islands, usually in search of water, never returned home. Their discoveries perished with them or they were stranded in some strange land where they lived the rest of their lives. Cultures are carried by little ships much as seeds are brought from strange places by birds. The great stone faces may well be crude copies of remembered images in distant lands. Asia was the fashioner of images. Stone gods, some of them of fantastic size, are present wherever Hindus and Buddhists established their doctrines. Naturally, the mental image could not be faithfully produced again if skill or materials were inadequate. Yet the urge may have been strong enough to justify the attempt to restore the familiar pattern in this desolate and isolated place.

The story of Rapanui contains the account of two clans: one called the Long Ears and the other the Short Ears. The strife between these groups was bitter and long. This is interesting, for if the history of the islanders is so constantly disfigured with warfare their programs of stoneworks should have suffered. The legends, incidentally, do not account for the building of the monuments, and there are no direct references to them. The island conflict ended with the defeat of the Long Ears, who made their last stand on the eastern headland. The old accounts are probably true, as a mixture of racial types is still evident. At least two waves of immigrants must have reached Rapanui. These were the dark, long-headed, wooly-haired Melanesians, and the broad-headed, pale-skinned, and straight-haired Polynesians. Sir Arthur

Keith is credited with the statement that the Easter Island people are the largest-brained group yet discovered on the islands or shores of the Pacific.

The Long Ears probably brought the Melanesian practice of distending the ear lobes and other cultural styles. The Polynesians have been held responsible for the bird cult which developed on Easter Island. Natives of the Solomon Islands have ceremonies of a similar nature. Neither group, however, could have contributed the development of a written language or the intense addiction to the fashioning of the great stone faces. Some other historical elements are worth remembering. There must have been considerable internal difficulty in the interval between the arrival of Admiral Roggeveen in 1722 and the visit of La Perouse in 1780. In the first account, the natives were described as dwelling happily in a flourishing region and reverencing the ancient images. Less than a hundred years later, the islanders were in a miserable state. They no longer venerated their stone gods, and had developed a powerful inclination to steal the hats of visitors.

It would be rather helpful if we could learn more about the reference to "the variety of racial types" mentioned in the scientific reports. Is it possible that other streams of immigration had reached the Easter Island prior to the arrival of the Long Ears and the Short Ears? Did these later colonizers find an inhabited or an uninhabited area with the program of image-carving already in an advanced stage? If remnants of an older people then dwelt on Rapanui, they may have survived in some conformation which they bestowed upon the skull structure of the present inhabitants.

Could it be that the island had been approached also from the east by natives already responsible for the huge stoneworks which ornament Peru? Two thousand miles is a long distant even now, but stranger things have happened. The nearest area which could have supplied the passion for monolithic construction would be the west coast of South America. Incidentally, the Inca princes created their empire in a region already remarkable for stoneworks. These also remain unexplained, but are attributed to a people who were decadent long before the consolidation of the Inca dynasty. It would also be helpful if we could decide the origin of those wandering adventurers who became known as the Incas after they had dominated Peruvian culture. If the Incas, as has been strongly suggested, came in ships from Asia, it would no longer be incredible that navigation could have touched Easter Island.

Throughout the vast distribution which includes most of the Americas, there are evidences of cultural remains long antedating the tribes which later occupied the regions. The Aztecan and Mayan Empires are remarkable for overbuilding their monuments. In some in-

stances from eight to a dozen buildings are buried below or within each other. The earliest structures in each case are of remote antiquity. We have already tried to explain the Aztecs by bestowing upon them a hypothetical parental culture called the Toltec. This is little more than a convenient name for the unknown. In the Easter Island picture, we are in desperate need of a convenient hypothetical culture corresponding to the Toltec. Mark Twain explained that it is perfectly possible to reconstruct a dinosaur from one bone. But, alas, we must have the one bone. In Easter Island, the nearest thing to a bone that is available is the monolithic construction. All effects in Nature have causes, and this penchant for artistry must fit into an appropriate hypothesis. We must either assume that Easter Island was included in the grand pattern of ancient stoneworks or else was an isolated example of contact with a remote, but available, scheme of things.

As native artistry retires into the dim past, it also converges toward a common quality of design. It is extremely difficult to distinguish archaic artifacts when they are no longer *in situ*. A pottery design from the cliff dwellers of New Mexico, the labyrinth builders of Knossos, or a prehistoric Chinese burial mound are so nearly identical as to tax the greatest expert. The same is true of stonework and even of images and pictographic forms of writing. They all find a common level, and it is only after the cultures themselves unfold that clear differentiation takes place. If for some reason there is not sufficient impulse to develop individual initiative, the old forms linger comparatively unchanged until the group becomes extinct.

The principal cause for the individualization of culture is the instinct to survive. Progress is always more rapid when groups must depend upon increasing ingenuity to maintain themselves against stronger or more dangerous neighbors. Where survival does not require the strengthening of the competitive instinct, there is little incentive for improvement. The rise of Europe was due to the diversity of the European cultural groups. These were forever exploiting each other, conquering the territories of neighboring clans, and invading the stronger states. Out of stress came strength, and with strength the tribe or clan finally emerged as the race or nation. The lack of worthy adversaries reduced the pace of civilization throughout the Western Hemisphere. Protected from both Europe and Asia by immense oceans, the American aborigines never recognized their place in a world pattern. Lacking perspective and incentive, they drifted along, developing only such arts and sciences as were required for internal security.

A place so completely removed from world interference as Easter Island could have continued for thousands of years without any strong incentive to advance a protective or competitive culture. Under such

conditions the psychology of the Stone Age could have lingered on long after it had been submerged into the subconscious of people who had been forced to become mentally energetic. This means that it would not be necessary for the images on the island to have originated in a geological period equivalent to the Stone Age, but in a psychological period of Stone Age consciousness in a remnant of a surviving primitive group.

One of the most powerful and least appreciated attributes of ancient man was patience. The most wonderful things can be done if there is no element of haste and no ambition for immediate accomplishment to interfere. In the great stone walls of Peru, massive blocks have been fitted together so intricately that they lock each other without cement. Even though instruments were poor, the workmen patiently scraped and chipped until the product approached perfection. When complications arose, they were solved in the same slow way. Huge foundations were constructed where the terrain was unsuitable to sustain a superstructure. If one project failed, another was immediately started. The very timelessness which enveloped the Easter Islanders has been transformed into an atmosphere of mystery. Dominated as we are by complex interests and activities, it is almost impossible for us to realize or appreciate what can be done by those who quietly labor.

This article is not intended to be conclusive, but only indicative. We have tried to understand a quality in man himself and not to allow our minds to fall into fantasy. Only further research and an enlarging knowledge of the wonders of the past can bring the positive answer to the riddle of Easter Island. While such questions remain unanswered and such exceptions to our prevailing concepts continue to appear, we must accept first of all the insufficiency of our own knowledge. We must realize that our answer to the origin of man is very largely a speculation. We have created a concept, and are disturbed when something confronts us which will not fit into the acceptable and accepted conviction. Our own attitudes must be reformed and reorganized. There is much more behind the dark curtain of history than we are ready to appreciate. Instead of striving desperately to maintain an inadequate hypothesis, it would be wiser to face the dilemma with a more open mind. In the meantime, the great stone faces, with their long ears, stare glumly toward the ocean. We, in turn, stare at them with equal glumness. But we can take cheer in the thought that our ignorance is not limited to the statues on Rapanui.

NOTE—We are indebted to *L'ile de Paques et Ses Mysteres*, compiled by Dr. Stephen-Chauvet, for much of the research incorporated into this article.

In Reply

A Department of Questions and Answers

QUESTION: *Although I am deeply interested in learning as much as I can of the religions and philosophies of the world, I find it difficult to know how to approach so deep and vast a subject. Can you offer any suggestions by which I can simplify and organize my efforts?*

ANSWER: It might be wise to summarize the difficulties which present themselves under existing conditions, and in this way be in a better position to recommend a practical plan. It seems that two major problems present themselves: first, lack of background and familiarity with the names, words, and terms peculiar to the field; second, lack of time, leisure, and mental energy to be devoted to the subject. These two factors, when combined, create a formidable obstacle especially confusing because it is almost completely negative.

We live on the surface of our own temperaments. There has been very little to objectively stimulate interest in abstract learning. Attention is focused upon daily problems which must be faced and solved with the help of whatever resources are immediately available. During those years devoted to acquring an education there was little, if any, emphasis upon creative idealism. As a result, we graduate from school without even intellectual contact with the broader aspects of spiritual and philosophical culture. The average American is reasonably well-acquainted with the history of his country and the agricultural and industrial products of its several regions. He traces the courses of rivers, and receives a smattering of political and economic knowledge. Under favorable conditions, schooling will include a brief survey of like quality covering other important nations. A bright lad may memorize *Horatio at the Bridge,* the opening sentences of *Caesar's Gallic Wars* (in classic Latin), and even gain a fair estimate

of the effect of the Franco-Prussian War on European civilization of the 19th century. Obviously, such priceless information is promptly relegated to the subconscious from which it seldom emerges.

Too many educators feel that there is no time or reason to burden the child-intellect with the cultural heritage of mankind. The young man may sometime need a fair familiarity with the details of silkworm culture and the advantages of protective tariffs, but it is unlikely that he will ever feel frustrated for lack of the rules and laws governing the control and use of his own mental faculties. It is the concensus of informed opinion that the average man will never think and will never need to know how to think because of the protective blessings conferred by our way of life. Therefore, he is taught how to make a living, but not how to make a life.

When in the course of years it becomes necessary to integrate personal resources to face critical periods of insecurity, the need does not stimulate any memory of things learned during the formative years. University education may have enlarged the resources to some degree. Names like Plato, Buddha, Confucius, Kant, and Descartes have a familiar sound. This sound in turn is associated with prodigious mental or moral labors and certain depreciatory remarks contributed by the professor. It was a long, dull time, endured only because it contributed the credits required to graduate and to escape from it all.

Having settled down to such gentle activity as selling neckties, the individual drifts along, gradually identifying himself with the concepts, interests, and activities of his associates. It is only by accident that these contacts will revive scholastic memories. Conversation has long ceased to be an art and has deteriorated into small talk. The mind, becoming fascinated with trivia, is content to serve a prattling tongue, and its larger resources are unsuspected. This does not mean that a person is not thoughtful, well-meaning, or kindly intentioned. The problems that arise are met with the best judgment available, and this too often includes suggestions and recommendations by others no better-informed. In simple truth, the everwhelming majority of human beings does not even realize that the situation can be improved.

The pressure of contemporary civilization limits the resources of private citizens and binds them to a concept of existence which makes heavy demands upon both time and vitality. This struggle for survival and those luxuries now considered as absolute necessities so burden the mind and so strongly emphasize the false values that any native inclination toward philosophy is ignored. Very often it is not lack of capacity that limits perspective. Some of the well-laid schemes which are perfected by the ambitious require much thought, but it is centered on the physical plane of life and seldom departs therefrom. There is an old saying that busy people have the most time, and

another to the effect that what we want to do we will find means to accomplish. It may well be that what slight philosophy has been read or studied did not stir the imagination, vitalize the emotions, or stimulate the mind. It was deep and dull, long and difficult, and led to an inferiority complex rather than a fiery zeal. It offered little for popular conversation and there was not sufficient community of interest with others to awaken the competitive impulse. To be reminded of school days and to be invited to settle down to a long process of self-education after one is forty years old is not exactly an exciting prospect.

The tendency is to put off that day of self-improvement and to include it among the subjects to be undertaken after we are rich and successful. The human temperament is such that this golden time never comes and we depart from this mortal sphere profoundly versed in mechanics or supersalesmanship. It is greatly to be hoped that we shall find some use beyond the grave for those attainment for which we have sacrificed so much, even life itself. Add to the other factors the general confusion which pervades our corporeal atmosphere and we have a fair picture of the present state of things. Our thoughts are forever being interrupted, our plans disrupted, and our tranquillity disturbed. This means that we must use most of our mental energies to get out of one situation or into another.

Most persons who come to me for advice on the subject of study open their interviews with elaborate apologies. They seem to feel that one might inquire as to why they waited until the last desperate moment before making the important decision. The explanations are amazing. Some were too happy to think, and some too miserable. A few were too busy, and others had too much leisure. One group felt it was too old; another group felt it was too young. Now and then a very honest candidate admitted that he was too lazy. Nearly all agreed that they had been delayed because they had never been inspired or informed in the direction of mental improvement. Their parents had not been deep thinkers, nor had they acquired a philosopher by marriage; their associates were lazy-minded, and the advantages of sound mentation had not been considered.

There is a strong conviction in the public mind that it is highly desirable to go through life with a maximum of comfort and a minimum of endeavor. Why work at anything if you can be happy as you are? In fact, it would seem that the more thoughtful one becomes, the more rapidly one's difficulties multiply. The wise do not seem to escape the troubles which burden the foolish, and frequently lack the tangible evidences of prosperity. As one remarked to me: "Let's be honest. I do not want to be better; I just want to be richer and happier." Another told me that he greatly admired the

person and attainments of Mahatma Gandhi, but had no intention of leaving behind him an estate consisting of a loin cloth and a safety pin. The fact that Gandhi was first in the hearts of his countrymen was no satisfaction to a gentleman who was convinced that a solid bankroll was the quickest and easiest way of making friends and influencing people.

The simplest way to become profoundly informed on any subject is to make it a profession. If your interest and livelihood are the same, there is no division of time, and one grows and works as he grows. Unfortunately, philosophers are not a privileged class in a democratic State. The scholastic income is far below that of prize fighters, movie stars, and band leaders. For this reason, young and ambitious members of the class of 1953 are not impelled to select learning as a career. The field languishes from both internal and external causes. The brand of philosophy which has received the approval of the academic bodies is so sterile that it offers neither consolation nor even a good example. While educators continue to make intellectual fashions and do not improve the quality of their product, there is slight encouragement for those seeking to better themselves. In the practical world of affairs, philosophy is quietly and gently ignored out of existence. There is much evidence of a pressing need for better thinking, but no one is encouraged to qualify for leadership in any department of society because he has philosophic insight. While there is no demand for any product, the supply will remain limited.

About the only way that the average person can educate himself in comparative religion and idealistic philosophy in America today is by a well-ordered program of reading. This does not mean that the student should become a bookworm, but the printed page is our only common contact with the wisdom of the ages. In the beginning, reading is likely to be strongly influenced by prejudice, and this is an early stumbling block. If you are already dominated by some conviction or by a dominant pattern of ideas, you will read, not to learn, but to justify and sustain your own opinions. This dooms the project at the beginning for the simple reason that opinions should follow knowledge and not precede it. Conclusions are the last things to be reached, and if we start with them we can only intensify our mistakes, whatever they are.

It is hard to be open-minded where the dimensions of a subject are not known or appreciated. Philosophy is universal. It transcends all artificial boundaries of time, place, or race. It belongs to no one people and has never been captured within one school or group. Even this thought itself is staggering to many minds. We are used to living in a world where a few are right and many are wrong. We have been bred and nourished upon a narrow sense of devotion. To be

true to someone or something, we must take sides and reject much more than we accept. If this is true in philosophy, it is even more completely and violently true in religion. Even though we may claim that the universe is governed by one Supreme Power, we hold the right to deny the validity of distant and different faiths. There seems no immediate probability of a fair and equitable reconciliation of religious differences, and the truth seeker is frequently defeated by sectarianism.

Conservatively speaking, the religious and philosophical literature of the world, if we include works of interpretations and explanation, will well exceed a million volumes. Many of these are in substance worthless and are little better than liabilities. They distort and deform basic doctrines until these are all but unrecognizable. Many of the worst books are the most popular, and conversely many of the more valuable are comparatively unknown. So little thought has been given to the utility of such writings that they have been perpetuated haphazardly, translated inadequately, and edited miserably. The books themselves cover an incredible diversity of material. They range from Scripture to polite fiction. There are countless contributions by fanatics and well-meaning mortals who believe that their own personal experiences will set cosmic fashion. Each work functions from the simple premise that it is the one and only correct statement on some wonderful and abstract matter.

It takes the wisdom of a Solomon to approach this monumental literature and select that which is immediately suitable. The chances are that a person endowed with such discrimination would not need the book. Many of the writings, especially of recent vintage, cater strongly to the prevailing temper. Thus, they flatter the reader who is gratified to find an author of the same mind as himself. There has recently appeared a deluge of popular treatments of obscure themes, and these have made bad matters worse. In the process of being popularized, the original ideas were quietly and conveniently forgotten. By encouraging the reader to feel that he can become an authority in a few hours, scholarship is so diluted that a little knowledge becomes more dangerous than none at all.

The larger hope is that an honest reader will finally select an honest book. His own honesty and basic common sense are the beginner's principal protections. If he is mentally healthy, he will not accept the products of the mentally unhealthy. If he is kindly, he will lay aside those bitterly critical volumes which appeal only to the pseudo sophisticate. If he is tolerant, he will have no time for intolerant authors, and if he is an idealist, he will instinctively rebel against the decadent realism that now burdens library shelves. There is no substitute for integrity, and the more honest we are, regardless

of the limitations of our knowledge, the more we protect ourselves from false docrines. We are not really led astray by bad books, but by bad instincts which permit us to enjoy and to accept bad books. The mind is constantly sifting and sorting, clinging to that which is agreeable and rejecting that which is disagreeable. When we accept the disagreeable, it is because we are disagreeable. Books which exploit our natural weaknesses, stimulate ambitions, intensify covetousness, or cater to our indolence may be neatly worded and attractively produced, but they serve no useful end.

Remember that the books we read are also mirrors held up to our own faces. So few of us are practicing the principles of semantics that words still mean what they stimulate within ourselves. Two persons reading the same book will come to entirely different conclusions about the author's intent. The eye and the mind jump about the printed page, fastening attention upon the familiar and the acceptable and ignoring the rest with a good spirit. Especially is this true at the commencement of a reading program. The student is searching instinctively for landmarks which are meaningful. He wants to orient his own thinking in some larger field. He naturally desires to proceed along the lines of the familiar, rejoicing when he glimpses something that he can quickly grasp. People have told me that they felt much abused because they had wasted many years in worthless reading. They were not cheated by the books, but by their own prejudices and dishonesty which made it difficult for them to cast aside what they would like to believe in order to search for what they ought to know.

The more trivial a text, the more widely it will be accepted. This is especially true if the trivia has the kind of charm which stimulates emotional reflex. Little history has been made in the philosophical world by delightful, charming, delicious, captivating, and enthralling little gems. With some exceptions, this is also true of those comforting essays which cuddle our sentiments, but in no way prevent future disaster. The wonderful, the marvelous, the incredible, and the unbelievable come under the same general heading. They incline the mind to fantasy and usually lead to unpleasant psychical experiences and sectarian affiliations. The better books are those in which the subject is deep and calm and the wording simple and direct. We have so long associated spiritual ideas with theological daydreaming that we are inclined to reject as uninspired that which contains anything useful or practical.

In Europe one goes to the opera to hear the music primarily; in America we are more likely to be attracted by a famous vocalist or conductor. We are so personality-conscious that we are more mindful of persons than of ideas. The same is true in literature. There is a

difference between a famous author and a great book, but we read the authors, and at the end sometimes wonder how the book happened to be printed. After we have read a number of works by one person, we begin to become a devotee. He is our favorite author and we would like to believe that we are his favorite reader—a cozy thought. Once we are convinced that our author knows something, it is easy to believe that he knows everything. Then we let down the barriers of judgment and drift into a state of ecstatic acceptance. Naturally, all humans are imperfect, and even leading authorities have blind spots in their mental processes. If we gain the wisdom of our author, we also assume his ignorance. In the end we discover that we are broad in one phase of our thinking and narrow in another.

A leading dramatic actor, who had reached portly years, confided to me that his secret ambition was to be a toe dancer. Authors have the same peculiarities. Successful novelists have yearned to write the great political essay, and scribblers of blank verse are convinced that destiny intends that they shall write the book which will put the universe in order. Occasionally the long repressed desire bursts into print and, sponsored by a reputable publisher, gains a sphere of unmerited influence. Let us always remember that Stradivarius also made bad violins. Some of the Shakespearean verse is infantile, all of Rembrandt's paintings are not great art, and Caruso did sing off key. It follows that highly respected thinkers may not be wise in all their observations or correct in all their conclusions. The reader is not supposed merely to accept the contents of a book; he is invited to weigh and to consider and to use his own mind which may have been stimulated or directed into some new channel by the writer. Books are not to be worshiped, any more than the men who wrote them are ready for godhood. It is right to share ideas, but not to feel duty-bound to accept any authority other than the convictions of our own conscience. Books would be more valuable if we adored them less and studied them more attentively.

In study, the Platonic formula still remains sound after twenty-three hundred years of test and usage. Plato taught his disciples that it was best to begin with a broad survey and then select a field for specialization. If we specialize first, the perspective is certain to be limited. A world-famous traveler and explorer once told me the pattern behind his busy and exciting life. When he was a young man he decided that he would devote his career to visiting unusual places. His first step was to make a comparatively brief trip around the world visiting all accessible countries and their principal points of interest. He then returned home and spent three years surveying in his mind the regions through which he had traveled. At last he decided that the area most congenial to his own interests and where the

particular abilities which he possessed would be most useful was Mesopotamia. Having decided, he then devoted much time and thought to the region, acquainting himself with every authoritative work which could broaden his foundation. This is a Platonic approach and is wise when exploring the strange regions of knowledge. No matter how intensively we develop a theme or research a project, we are defeated by lack of perspective. We should know why we have chosen a particular activity and also why, to our mind, it is peculiarly beautiful to our disposition and temperament. We seldom feel this sense of freedom when contemplating religion and philosophy. We do not regard them as worlds to be explored, but as inflexible institutions, each inviting us to assume its assets and liabilities at the same time.

The dilemma is possibly expressed in the words of one confused inquirer: "I want to be a philosopher. What is philosophy?" At least there is no doubt of the prevailing horizon in that mind. It certainly would not be wise for such an individual to become a devout and intensive student of pragmatism, behaviourism, or existentialism with the conviction that in this way he could become a philosopher. About all he could become would be a sincere follower of a system. He would discard all that this system rejected, ignore all that it ignored, and accept all that it accepted. In the end he would have a viewpoint and a conviction, but no way of determining its intrinsic merit. Most readers of modern metaphysical and mystical books are unaware of the great literature. They start with some book loaned by a friend or sponsored by a group, and from this small beginning must enter the world of reading. If the first book binds them completely to the doctrines of some individual of greater or lesser parts, it may well preclude the probability of further adventures in perspective. All groups wish to keep their members and therefore advise against the writings of other sects or cults. Perhaps the attitude is one of such intense devotion that the reader is convinced that the book in question contains the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and that further questing is a waste of time. This is another quiet and respectable way of blocking the natural inquisitiveness of the thinking apparatus.

While it is hard to think about religious doctrines unemotionally, we cannot afford to allow our feelings to so overwhelm the reason that all scholarly processes become confused. Subjects of importance must be appreciated simply and directly and with as much composure as possible. We desire to become informed and not superficially stimulated. Experience proves that books which are too popular at the time they are written seldom have lasting significance. The taste of the reading public is fickle and impulsive, and lasting contributions

to the literature of the world are appreciated only in future ages. We are all likely to share in a common dilemma, and we should try to protect ourselves against the mistakes of mass opinion. It is better to choose a book which requires an improvement of our own mental resources rather than one which caters to ignorance.

Those who live in large metropolitan centers are in a better position to own or consult learned writings than the residents of rural or suburban areas. Many must depend upon the facilities of the local public library. Most libraries have small budgets, and purchase volumes which are in constant demand. A large part of the funds is allocated to fiction, and of that which remains, technical books necessary for public-school work and current histories receive the lion's share. Thus, classical philosophy and comparative religion are seldom strong sections unless they have been enriched by special gifts or donations. Fortunately, however, tradition works in favor of the thoughtful. It is almost required that any library have at least one book by the more prominent ancients or medievals. Incidentally, this is immediately available.

In the last ten years a number of reprints have appeared and basic philosophical texts long unavailable can be secured in popular editions. Where reading horizons are limited, Oriental material is the hardest to secure. It is safe to say, however, that as the reader finds his needs enlarging he will discover ways of securing the books that he wants. Some rare texts may prove elusive, but a substantial reference frame can be accumulated without unreasonable effort. Let us suggest, therefore, that the reader begin by selecting the most comprehensive book available on comparative philosophy and comparative religion. A glance at the table of contents and the title page will help. It is better that the author be a person of solid reputation. This does not guarantee the integrity of his viewpoint, but it suggests that he may be careful of his own reputation and is unlikely to drift into absurdities. If he is a trained scholar, he has a knowledge of methods and so far as he goes his research material is usually authentic. Works published by important educational institutions or under their sponsorship also invite the reader to improve his own level of scholarship. The contents will show coverage and also may reveal the prevailing policy of the author. The title of the work frequently points the direction of the project. These together, if weighed carefully, will prevent a loss of time or a waste of effort.

Books should not be read hurriedly by those who sincerely desire to learn. Many unfamiliar personalities will be introduced and probably numerous inconsistencies of doctrine will be indicated, if not emphasized. Do not permit these contradictions and the inevitable conflicts of human opinion to become discouraging. Some of the

devout have come to me sorely perplexed and with the feeling that if authorities cannot agree there is little use for further study. This is a passing mood, however, and means that the reader has received the first impact of a larger intellectualism. From that moment on he shares in the common dilemma of mankind. He discovers that the great, the wise, and the good are not of one mind. Each has discovered a way of thinking which has been useful and which he has been able to justify to his own satisfaction. The reasonable conclusion is that we live in a world of relative knowledge, and it requires more than normal optimism to hope that absolute fact is immediately available. This disillusionment is highly constructive and will save the sincere truth seeker from many sectarian pitfalls.

A survey of comparative religion presents almost identical complications. We learn to appreciate the spiritual, ethical, and moral standards which influence the conduct of races and nations. The principal surviving religious systems are Christianity, Moslemism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Judaism. Each of these includes numerous sects, each with its own peculiar interpretation of a common tradition. We can appreciate the condition which prevails in other faiths if we examine our own. Christianity is a great term covering nearly five hundred groups in broad agreement about the significance of the life and ministry of Christ, but separated through the inevitable process of interpretation. Many persons who are liberal in philosophy find it almost impossible to be genuinely broadminded on theological issues. It is hard to convince the devout believer that he needs a broad perspective in order to justify his own preference. Failing in other sources of information, the beginner can look up the several headings suggested above in a standard Encyclopaedia and learn a great deal without recourse to other books.

Here again everything depends on the attitude of the mind. A genuine interest, unrestricted by prejudice, will enable the student to have a lively attentiveness. There is no need to fear that we will be converted away from our present associations. If we are honest, we will respect the faiths of others, and if we are exceedingly honest, we will choose impartially such ideas as enrich our own standard of values. A smaller personal attitude is not fitted for larger thinking. It is proper to desire knowledge in order that we may improve and enrich our understanding. If we do not hold learning to be more vital than opinion, it is better not to depart from the protection of the familiar.

It will require at least two years of diligent effort for the average person to sufficiently enrich his reference frame that he can begin to experience as a known fact within himself the breadth and depth of the human spiritual and cultural pattern. It is not the reading alone

which qualifies the mind for further endeavor; it is the effect of a broadening consciousness of values. After the provincial streak has been erased, the faculties of reason are freed to function in accordance with their natural aptitudes. Discrimination is strengthened, and discretion is automatically invoked when need arises. Unfortunately, however, there are other complications, and these must also be clarified.

The average reader is not primarily motivated by scholarly pressures. Most who come to me are under the glamour of the "esoteric." They have heard that somewhere wonderful secrets lurk, guarded by beturbaned Mahatmas, who occasionally condescend to "reveal all" to some intrepid joiner or potential devotee. This regrettable state of affairs is due to catchpenny advertising and glamorous pretensions which have disoriented the faculty of common sense. One impulsive product of the enchantment school insisted that he had no time for such profane subjects as religion and philosophy. All he wanted from me was the title of that wonderful book which contained the supersecret of it all. He was convinced that cosmic consciousness was just around some literary corner. Alas! If such were the case, that would, indeed, be a busy corner.

A Chinese philosopher once reminded his disciples that learning begins with unlearning. We must first correct false notions before we are capable of accepting something better. Thousands of well-intentioned Americans have become involved in metaphysical absurdities because of a native disinclination of heavy mental exercise. Confirmed bargain-hunters take it for granted that by the development of shrewdness alone they can get something for nothing. This concept always ends in a rude awakening and a thick bewilderment. It is just as foolish to assume that we can increase knowledge without enlarging capacity as to fondly hope that we can excell the virtuosity of Paderewski after one piano lesson. Wherever physical skill is required, we have no illusions as to the amount of work involved, but in the rarified atmosphere of the "esoteric" the miraculous is accepted as a matter of course.

It is always thrilling to read intimate little brochures describing the astral experiences of the author. We reason quite logically that if it could happen to him it can also happen to us. All we need is the proper technique. Only after more-than-sufficient trial and error do we ever get around to asking ourselves soberly: "I wonder what actually did happen to him?" As the author may not be approachable or be in a state of perpetual confusion himself, this pertinent question is not likely to be answered. It is certainly discomforting to learn indirectly that the wonderful account of things wonderful was nothing but a fragment of Freudian daydreaming. While the desire to

believe that we live in a world of miracles is strong in the breast, the faculty of judgment will remain weak in the mind.

The reorganization of that pressure which impels us to read books will prevent a hasty or ill-considered choice of literature. We cannot bump along on a diet of nervous thrills. Thinking is serious business; and when this mentation is dedicated to the discovery of a new way to live, we must protect ourselves from the inconstancies of our own inclinations. As explorers of an unknown world, we owe it to ourselves to proceed with due caution and with as much forethought as possible. For every person who has an idea, there are a thousand persons whose ideas have them. We become the servants of our convictions, and if these be unsound we are slaves of false notions. We can no more afford to live on an improper mental diet than we can afford to select physical nutrition without discretion. There is just as much adulteration of doctrines as there is of food products. On both levels we can be overfed and undernourished.

After the general survey, it is seldom necessary to make further suggestions. The student probably has already selected a subject which he desires to investigate. If not, he will be stimulated by special curiosity or will come across a philosophical or religious pattern which he finds especially attractive. When this decision has been made, the real work begins. It is always advisable to trace a system now popular, or once so, to its origin and discover if possible the original teachings of the principal exponent. Just by way of example, let us analyze Buddhism. We immediately realize the unfortunate absence of an adequate basic text. Books about Buddhistic philosophy are nearly all the products of schools which arose in the twenty-five centuries after the death of the great teacher. By reading the books of the sects, we become acquainted with the convictions of these sects, but there is some question as to how much we then know about primitive and original Buddhism. The Chinese have adapted this great philosophy to the peculiar requirements of their own complex psychologies; so have the Japanese, the Koreans, the Tibetans, the Burmese, the Siamese, and the peoples of Ceylon. Occasionally we can enjoy the convictions of English, French, German, Italian, or American converts. To those well-acquainted with the original tenets, these various interpretations are delightful and informative psychological documents. But for one without a solid ground in essential doctrine, the literature is hopelessly confusing and sometimes even conveys a definitely false impression.

In a condition like this, the safer course is to go back to those Indian writings which constitute the common authority for all the schools. Such texts as the *Dharmapada,* the *Book of the Great Decease,* and the Sutras will at least provide a fair statement of what

Buddha personally taught. This is not the end of the subject, but is certainly the logical beginning. It reveals to the mind the simple life and practical doctrine of a wonderful man who devoted his career to the instruction of his people. Having become acquainted with this pattern, we can then follow the organization of Buddhism after the death of Gautama and see how later sages and scholars unfolded the teachings according to their own internal enlightenment. It then becomes evident when and where new elements were introduced or old principles compromised. What is called popular Buddhism today is not much nearer to the original than popular Christianity is to the teachings of Christ. We have been fed a diet of interpretations, many of which were introduced and popularized by persons not qualified for the task.

Again, suppose we are interested in Rosicrucianism—incidentally, a most controversial subject. I have discussed the historical and doctrinal complexities of this secret Fraternity with a number of enthusiasts. Few of them have ever read the original documents of the Society. This is not because reasonably accurate reprints of the original are not available; it is just plain lack of interest, justified by the contention that it is possible to depend upon contemporary interpreters. I have read rather widely both the older works and the recent commentaries. It is immediately obvious to me that only an extensive knowledge of the activities of Rosicrucianism between 1600 and 1650 can clarify a variety of misunderstandings. Do not depend upon anyone else to do the research which is required if you intend to allow your life to be influenced by some school of thought.

There have been many revivals of ancient organizations. Sometimes they are rather well-done by qualified persons, but more frequently they are the products of vague enthusiasm. Too often the revivals are themselves founded upon other revivals, the foundations of which are in turn uncertain. It is easy to be influenced by impressive testimonials or the well-intentioned efforts of others actually no better-informed than ourselves. It is not pleasant, however, to look upon years of wasted effort and realize too late that we should have investigated more carefully.

Continue, therefore, the Platonic formula. Once having chosen a particular, then approach it as you would a general. First, make a comprehensive survey covering origin, historical descent, and doctrinal modifications. If necessary, study the biographies of members, alleged members, and apologists. You will find many names erroneously associated with organizations. We preserve errors and perpetuate them because of our failure to check references and to require specific information on doubtful issues. Many authors, desperately desiring to substantiate their own convictions, exaggerate the impor-

tance of intimations or hints and afflict their readers with fairy tales. Not long ago I ran across a line in a book dealing with Rosicrucianism which began with the words: "The great Rosicrucian, Robert Fludd, etc...." This statement was semantically unsound, but will be repeated and requoted as an obvious fact by most readers. The statement to be entirely true should have said: "Robert Fludd, an English mystical physician, although he personally denied in his written work that he was a Rosicrucian, has been associated with the Order as a prominent apologist, and some writers, on authority unknown, have said that at one time he was the head of the Society." Quite a difference, but unmeaningful to minds in haste to tie every great name in history with their favorite cult.

The reader is entitled to the facts, and, because in metaphysical matters they are seldom available in secondhand writings, everything must be checked. One simple way is to find an outstanding opponent of the belief and read him carefully. He will bring out all the doubts and uncertainties and, likely enough, make some foolish remarks of his own. Where his implications are devastating is a good point to start checking. Remember the words of your reigning favorite are no better than those of his most unpleasant critic. Only the facts are valuable, and these are found by digging and not by the gracious bestowal of acceptances. Instead of discarding all unpleasant attacks upon your favorite belief, look them over and reject only those which are evidently malicious or founded on a personal grudge. If the critic is evidently honorable by intention, he provides a wonderful incentive to prove that you are right while you are proving that he is wrong. Anything which stimulates the impulse to seek truth is valuable, even if it is irritating.

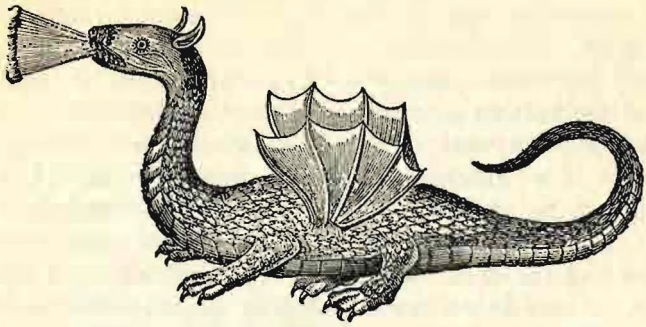
By this time you will probably have all the reading at hand which time and circumstance will permit. Even if your memory is good, keep paper and pencil handy and jot down notes which seem worth preserving. Even the best of us will misquote ourselves if the memory is too heavily burdened. References to other books which enlarge the treatment of the present author will supply suggestions for future reading. All scholarly texts should be documented where issues are controversial or the facts are not self-evident. Beware of writers who make large statements without proof. Fortunately, such statements can be properly evaluated, but it takes time and effort. Incidentally, it is bad literary form to underscore books or to fold down corners as place-markers. This seriously damages the value of rare volumes and is most inconsiderate of future readers. If books are valuable, they will serve others after you have finished with them. Take care of them, treat them with respect, and pass them on in the best possible condition.

Reading should not be the constant exercise of the thoughtful. We contribute very little to the pleasure of others and the security of our social faculties if we live from morning to night with our noses buried in massive tomes. Overreading is a complaint, and if carried to an extreme it becomes a disorder. We cannot read and think at the same time. The faculties necessary to absorb information merely pile it away for future reference. If this piling process continues, that which is at the bottom of the heap is soon inaccessible.

A book is composed of words, sentences, and paragraphs. The primary unit is a sentence, for locked within it should be an idea. By the time a paragraph is completed, a well-rounded thought has been more or less adequately stated. This thought must be transformed by the mind of the reader from a group of words to a living mental experience. There is no use proceeding to other thoughts until the present one has been duly considered. It is not difficult to memorize the opinions of others, but this does not constitute learning. The formula is: read a little, and think a great deal. Scholars have spent years in contemplation of an important aphorism or definition. The idea must be applied to a variety of circumstances, experiences, and convictions. Carried to its conclusion, one definition may change an entire religion or philosophy. While it may not be, especially in the beginning, that the reader is equipped for such elaborate procedures of estimation, he can be thoughtful. There is nothing to be gained by such an approach as came to my attention recently. A very sincere soul confided to me that she had spent "a whole afternoon" reading Plato. We will be fortunate, indeed, if she does not spend another "whole afternoon" writing a book on Platonic philosophy.

It is too bad that scattered through this country there are not a few recognized scholastic institutions devoted to an accredited program of idealistic religious philosophy. If a four-year course under qualified teachers were accessible to students, we would soon divide the wheat from the chaff. It would be easy to recognize those willing to make the sacrifice and effort to attend such an institution and have the ability to graduate therefrom with an acceptable grading. But daydreaming is not profitable and we must face realities. The student with proper aptitudes can plan and carry out a program even more useful than could be provided under an institutional system, but he must do just as much work and he must do it just as thoroughly. His reward is to be a better-informed, better-oriented human being with a stronger conviction and a more enlightened code of personal conduct.

Seneca is accredited with warning Nero: "No matter how many men you slay, you will never kill your successor."



Strange Creatures of Mythology

A ROMAN essayist, writing nearly seventeen centuries ago, acknowledged that he had certain mental reservations on the subject of centaurs. He admitted that many regions of the world had not been explored and no doubt these could be the habitat of strange creatures, but it appeared to him unlikely that centaurs would be found gamboling on some remote greensward. This doubting Thomas recommended caution in accepting stories about unicorns, satyrs, dragons, sea serpents, and the like. He took the stand that he would be better satisfied if a few examples of these monsters were available for public examination.

Ancient religious art abounds with representations of what are generally called composita. These are fantastic figures combining the attributes of several species like the winged, man-headed bulls of Assyria and the chi-lin, the unicorn of China. These imaginary orders of living things have intrigued the scholarly for centuries, and numerous explanations have been advanced as keys to the riddle. Even the solutions have been subject to periodic revision as man's knowledge of natural phenomena has increased. There are several schools of thought about composita and it will be useful to summarize the outstanding conclusions:

1. It is possible that at some remote time monsters actually existed. Dim memories of these have survived in the human subconscious through those traditions which together form a kind of historical subconscious.

2. It is known that strange animals, birds, reptiles, etc., did exist in the prehistoric world. While there is little similarity between the remains of these ancient mammals and reptiles and the mythological forms, the latter may have developed from incomplete knowledge of the former.

3. The few travelers who explored distant regions in the millennium preceding the Christian Era brought back accounts of amazing animals, birds, and insects which they encountered. The reports, enlarged and nourished by the imaginative qualities of the human mind, resulted in ludicrous and remarkable zoological texts appropriately illustrated by mediocre artists who had never seen the subject which they delineated. The single-horned rhinoceros is believed to have perpetuated the myth of the unicorn. The comparatively recent discovery of the gorilla led to amusing complications while incredulous scientists were trying to decide whether it was an animal or a human being.

4. The rise of the symbolic instinct in man himself and the dream experiences which could not be explained in the light of existing knowledge may have caused the belief that the productions of fantasy called phantasmagoria actually existed in some invisible part of Nature. The dream world was much more real to primitive man than to more highly civilized groups.

5. Symbolical devices were deliberately invented to represent abstract principles of Nature and to reveal certain secrets to the informed without exposing them to the profane. Certainly composita were involved in the books and manuscripts relating to esoteric subjects, and it is evident that such a use implied a rebus.

6. Mythical monsters that have descended in refined forms to modern times could also have been totemic. Old clans and brood families used various creatures in a kind of heraldry, and considerable light may be cast by studying genealogical devices. Landseer, the antiquarian, and father of the painter of the same name, was of the opinion that composita originated in astronomical myths and were perpetuated in modern heraldry.

7. Usually reliable witnesses can be in error when confronted by circumstances beyond their comprehension. The Mexicans were profoundly astonished at the sight of Spanish soldiers riding on horses, and circulated the report that the man and the horse were parts of one strange animal. The Emperor Saladin rebuked a nobleman from a distant land when this knight described lakes in his country which at times became solidified so that armies could march across them.

Early accounts of the octopus were heavily discredited, and American Indians seeing railroad trains for the first time accepted them as huge living creatures.

8. Nearly all mythical monsters were originally described as rare. It is possible that certain monstrosities or deformed births contributed to the perpetuation of strange reports. There are well-sustained accounts of freaks of Nature, and these still occur. If such deformities produced composita reminiscent of the animals of mythology, prevailing beliefs would be strengthened.

The folklore of old countries abounds in associations between human beings and other species of life. In time an elaborate idiom of implications developed by which animals, plants, birds, reptiles, and even minerals came to stand for historical, ethical, moral, or cultural truths. In this class belong the lion of St. Mark, the faithful dog of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, the "Turul," the bird of Hungary, and the sacred Golden Kite of the Japanese Dynasty. There are legends involving nearly every species of living and growing things. In time these become inextricably combined. We seldom think of the narcissus without remembering the myth; in fact, we have named many creatures after the legends which have descended relating to them.

Most of the Scriptural writings of the world include animal or bird legends. The fact that a certain form of life is mentioned in a sacred book bestows a substantial prestige. The serpent of Eden, the dove of Noah, the ass which rebuked Balaam, and the monsters of The Revelation are familiar examples of this practice. In a time when theological institutions completely dominated human thinking, no one doubted that a whale, far from its native habitat, could be opportunely present to swallow the prophet Jonah. Nor was it unreasonable that St. Anthony should have seen a satyr trotting along a woodland path. The words and opinions of the venerable were sufficient proof for those content to venerate.

Aesop, the fablist who flourished B. C. 560, introduced a fashion for humanizing the mental lives of birds and animals, and left a rich legacy of potential folklore. Nonhuman creatures were employed as a means for caricaturing the peculiarities of mankind. Probably this literary device was derived from Asia where it had been used successfully at a much earlier period. While Aesop did not use the device of the composita, he did combine attributes of human and animal dispositions, thus fashioning an imaginary composite in terms of psychology. Public imagination extended the supposed analogies and increased the familiarity of such symbolical thinking. Many animals seem to mimic human conduct, and it is not difficult to see in the

antics of two playful bear cubs numerous parallels to the frolicking of small children.

The ancient religious institutions called the Mysteries included elaborate dramatizations of sacred myths. This necessitated the creation of masks and other regalia by which the priestly actors could portray the monsters and fabulous creatures involved in the traditions. The Minotaur of Crete was undoubtedly a priest wearing the head-mask of a bull, and it required some thoughtfulness and skill to present a lifelike and animate embodiment of the three-headed dog, Cerberus, which guarded the gates of Hades. When it was deemed necessary for Apollo to slay Python, elaborate stagecraft was employed, as in modern operas like Siegfried where the hero must kill a fire-belching dragon on stage center. Perhaps the dragon is not quite convincing, but we have grown generous under such conditions.

It is a matter of debate as to whether the beholders of Mystery rituals believed the monsters assembled for the occasion to be real. It is possible that under the tremendous religious pressure of the occasion technical difficulties were overlooked and the symbolism accepted as a genuine participation by superhuman agencies. At the very least, the belief that monsters did exist, even though in some rarified spiritual stratum, was intensified. In medieval Mystery plays grotesques were introduced to vitalize moral lessons, and the prevailing level of intelligence was so low that even masks were taken at their "face" value.

It is noteworthy that the more celebrated composita have frequently been associated with ruling families as their insignia or heraldic devices. The rarity of the creatures and the exalted places in the kingdoms of Nature which they were said to occupy justified their use as symbols of nobility. The degree of intent involved varied in different times, but the spirit of such usage continues. The American eagle, the Russian bear, the British lion, and the Chinese dragon have become emblems of the qualities of states and nations and are no more than a continuation of earlier practice. Solomon sanctified the bee, and this industrious insect later adorned the robes of Charlemagne. The Egyptians had profound regard for the *scarabaeus sacer* and used the scarab for adorning the living and in their mortuary art. The eagle of Caesar so impressed Napoleon that he promptly took the emblem for himself. The feathered serpent, a definite composita, was the principal art-motif of the civilizations of Mexico and Central America. Thus we see the traditional forms exert their pressure upon popular imagination. The various States of the American union have their State flowers, and symbolical devices appear on many of the seals.

The ancient Vedic texts supplied the source material for countless legends and myths. In a time when language was limited, many words came to be used interchangeably and various creatures were defined in the terms of their attributes. For example: the Vedic poet took the word meaning horse and extended its usage with the literary license appropriate to his art. The word for horse actually meant "the swift." In usage, a confusion might arise as to whether the animal itself or the attribute were intended. In the course of time uncertainty resulted in a process of selection, with the result that today *horse* may appear where *swiftness* was intended, or vice versa. Different forms of life were named by observationalists who usually selected a term based upon some obvious attribute or peculiarity of the creature. Hieroglyphical forms of writing emphasize this tendency which survived to a degree even after the written characters were modified.

It is observable that among peoples drifting from hieroglyphical or pictorial toward hieratic and syllabic writing there was a tendency to combine pictorial forms in creating compound words. The Aztecs, for example, when making a new word from the first syllable of the name for serpent and the last syllable of the name for eagle, pictured the compound by placing the head of a serpent on the body of a bird. If they were naming a community by this process, the composite symbol became the name-emblem of the town or village.

We have not yet considered the symbolical processes which take place in the submerged part of human consciousness. Nearly all pressures which set up psychoses in the subjective mental field reveal themselves through dream symbolism. The dream may be intimately associated with the sleep mechanism or come through as a vision under religious pressure or even as a vivid daydream. Fnding no natural symbol available, the subconscious force could, and did, create composite images combining the separate elements of the psychic compound. Most old tribes used mesmeric art, narcotics, and hypnosis to cause trances and catalepsies. These techniques contributed to the release of frustrations and inhibitions through appropriate symbolism devices. Most so-called historical traditions retire toward an origin within man himself. There is no clear line of demarkation between internal experience and environmental experience. The former drifts into the latter by imperceptible degrees, which even the mind itself cannot analyze.

One of the more universally accepted of the composita is the dragon. This monstrous animal-reptile originally represented a negative or malignant force. It was a natural enemy of mankind, and its ways were dark, mysterious, and evil. Evidently it was a production of fear, and to a large degree embodied all that was fearful. Ancient naturalists accepted the existence of dragons and even compiled elabo-

—From *Mythical Monsters,* by Gould

THE FUNG WANG

This form of the Chinese phoenix is said to incorporate all the essential virtues of the human soul. The head represents virtue, the back humanity, the heart sincerity, and the wings integrity. It eats no living thing, and its plumage contains the five spiritual colors.

—From *The Book of Lambspring*

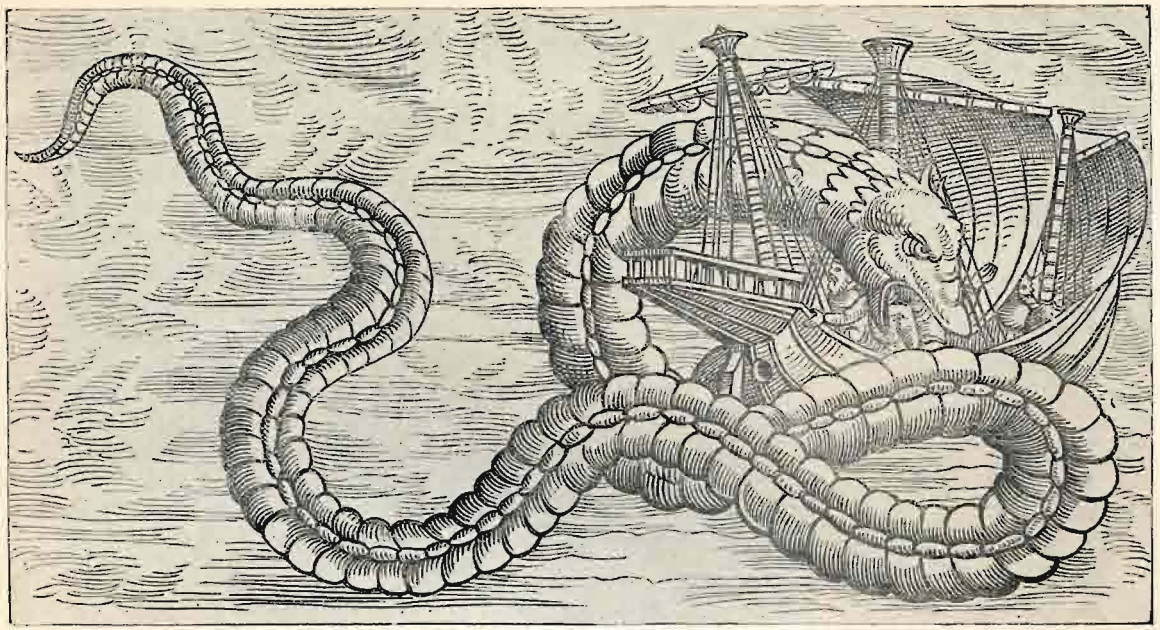
THE DEER AND UNICORN IN THE HERMETIC FOREST

As used in this curious 17-century alchemical work, the unicorn was not regarded as a real animal, but as a symbol of a mystical formula for the regeneration of man through the transmutation of the base elements of human nature.

—From *The Book of Lambspring*

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FIRE OVERCOMING THE ELEMENTS

In this alchemical figure, the dragon represents the natural substances of the corporeal universe which are conquered by the flame of the human will.



—From Olaus Magnus

A SEA SERPENT ENGULFING A SHIP

Olaus Magnus, writing from accounts current in his time, describes a sea serpent two hundred feet in length and twenty feet in circumference, which could raise itself above the mast of a vessel and devour seamen.

rate descriptions of the appearance and habits of these creatures. They frequently appeared in old legends as guardians of treasures and as adversaries of the folk hero. As this hero was always the heroic self, man's estimation of his own indomitable being, the dragon was interposed between the self and the objects or objectives to which the self aspired. The monster, therefore, typified the principle of obstacle as this was revealed through a variety of actual impediments.

That which imposes itself between us and the fulfillment of our ambitions is our enemy. Often the dragon had the power to change its appearance and to assume at will innumerable shapes, large and small. It might even appear in some pleasant or friendly guise, but continued its basic treachery. This is a key to the meaning, for obstacle is forever varying its forms; in fact, we may say that form itself is the primordial adversary. All creatures are limited, and against limitation each turns its impatience. In most legends, the dragon typified the principle of form. It was inertia forever absorbing activity, devouring men, thwarting their plans and purposes until it was vanquished by the hero self. Once the concept had taken its place among the familiar emblems, it was given support from the existing zoology. Among the Egyptians, the dragon was substantially the crocodile, and in regions where huge serpents abounded they contributed important particulars of appearance. In each case, however, the mythical monster played the same role. Apollo slaying Python, Izdubar fighting the dragon of Chaos, Siegfried slaying Fafnir, who had assumed this monstruous form, and St. George of Cappadocia are all examples of dragon lore. Wherever a myth spreads and becomes a dominant element in folklore, we may rest assured that we are in the presence of a psychological fact grotesquely represented.

Man's struggle with himself gradually modified his convictions about external things. As fear gave place to natural curiosity, the unknown lost many of its terrors. The symbolism lingered, but the factors were given new and less frightening interpretations. In the case of the dragon, an important reformation occurred. This creature came to represent cosmic energies, strong but not necessarily malign. The wind, invisible but powerful, was believed to bear witness to the motion of an enormous invisible creature, and the sky dragon brought both the storm and the summer breeze. The world was accepted as overpowering because of the enormity of the forces involved in its creation and maintenance. Against this enormity, the resources of the human being were small and ineffective. As ethical and moral institutions increased, primitive humanity developed the concept of survival through obedience. The resources of the good dragon of the world were available to all who accepted his sovereignty. It punished only the disobedient, and rewarded the faithful with innumerable

favors. The evil dragon thus came to represent a principle of retribution. The wrongdoer found himself in the coils of a cosmic monster from which he could not escape.

There was no clear concept of what constituted right and wrong. The dragon, therefore, had the disposition of a tyrant; it had to be pleased, and, if doubt arose, its moods were modified by sacrifices, prayers, offerings, or festivals. Dragon worship should not be considered as a form of demonism. It was really an early kind of Nature worship. It was the acceptance of the reality of the universal power which served those who used it wisely, and punished any who misused its resources. The good dragon even warred against its evil counterpart. Nature's forces seemed locked in an eternal struggle. Man, in the midst of this conflict, found himself involved in this gigantic play of universal energies. He oriented himself by the development of an ethical code, and conquered the terror in his heart with the positive conviction that right would be victorious. He must, therefore, stand with right and dedicate his own strength and ingenuity to the service of the good principle.

In China, the lore of the dragon resulted in this creature becoming the imperial symbol. Here it represented authority, wisdom, skill, and worldly sovereignty. It was the embodiment of Heaven, the Supreme Deity. When pictured with five claws, it could be used only by the imperial family. Its motion, which was undulating like that of a serpent, signified the universal rhythm of the life principle. Thus it was a Taoist device to typify Tao itself. It was usually represented surrounded by clouds, in the midst of which it seemed to writhe and twist and turn. Perhaps the symbolism was influenced by the serpentine courses of rivers and streams, which in themselves were benevolent life-giving factors in Chinese economy. The Confucianist valued the dragon as an embodiment of the principle of cosmic mind. The creature was not only all-powerful but also all-knowing. It was the vehicle of the mind of Heaven, whose thoughts resembled splendid dragons in the mental atmosphere of the universe. Even Buddhism accepted the implications and some of the Bodhisattvas and Lohans were pictured riding on dragons or seated on thrones ornamented with dragon attributes.

Buddhistic psychology could interpret the dragon in several ways. It might represent the power of the Eternal Mind or the terrible force of illusion with its infinite progeny of errors. Buddhism seldom opposed prevailing beliefs or undermined traditional acceptances. It slew the dragon of error merely by bestowing enlightenment. It quietly reformed or reoriented concepts which were incompatible with its own teachings. The use of the dragon in China, like that of the feathered serpent in Yucatan, indicated that it overshadowed or protected the

human ruler. As sovereign of all natural creatures, the dragon subjugated the world to the supremacy of man. The emperor of China was the man-dragon, holding by divine right the balance of power between heaven and earth.

There can be no doubt that together with other composita the dragon signified the adept or initiate of the esoteric system. It was a flying or winged serpent uniting within itself the attributes of earth and air. The Chinese recognized this monster as the emblem of a secret society. It signified the whole invisible hierarchy of superior powers that guarded and protected the empire. Its presence sustained the ruling dynasty, and in myth and legend its wonderful and miraculous attributes were appropriately described. Certainly in China it was a life symbol and was not regarded in any way as a creature of evil. We have already mentioned that the bones of dragons were regarded as a wonderful medicine by the old Taoist physicians, and are still a favorite remedy among the Chinese. These bones actually are the fossilized remains of prehistoric mammals and reptiles.

Almost as widely distributed as dragon lore was the belief in the existence of a wonderful bird called the phoenix. It appeared on fine Chinese and Japanese paintings and was among the objects reserved for the aristocracy. There was some question as to whether more than one phoenix could be alive at a time. Male and female phoenix birds were often depicted, sometimes with their young. In the Near East, Europe, and North Africa, the phoenix was believed to be a solitary creature which reproduced itself out of itself by a wonderful process. It had a nest in a remote place. This nest was in the form of a blazing altar, so that it was said that it nested amidst flames. It lived for five hundred years—some say longer—but when the time came for it to die, it gave birth to the new bird inside of its own body by its own generating power. Knowing its end to be near, the phoenix then flew to its nest where it died amidst the flames. At the very moment of its death, its body broke assunder and the new bird issued forth.

In appearance the phoenix combined several orders of birds. It was of considerable size, and its plumage was of burnished metal. It was especially marked by a curious tuft of feathers on the top of its head. As represented in early drawings, it may be confused with an eagle, except that its neck and legs are longer and its crest plumes are higher. It lived without food and inhabited the air, seldom coming to rest upon the earth. It could ascend to incredible heights, and it was the priestly prince of all flying things. Nearly all fabulous birds which were regarded as messengers between God and Nature were forms of the phoenix. It is the quetzal of Guatemala, and the thunderbird of the North American Indians.

The phoenix has always been intimately associated with religion. It was the spirit bird and the peculiar emblem of priesthood. As Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, was his own father and his own mother according to the Biblical account, so the phoenix was parent to itself. It represented truth forever replenishing itself and renewing its life out of its own abundance. It was the esoteric tradition reproducing its own nature through the adept-soul born from the womb of the Mysteries. The phoenix was also a Messianic symbol, for its life span measured the dispensations and intervals between the reappearances of world teachers. The Egyptians philosophized much about the powers and attributes of this mythological bird. The human soul was represented in their mortuary art by the Benu, or human-headed heron. This was shown either hovering over the mummy of the deceased or seated on the tomb. As lord of all the birds, the phoenix was the leader of these bird-souls and the guardian of the human spirit-bird.

Initiation was a philosophical death and resurrection. Those reborn through the Mysteries were therefore also properly represented as human-headed birds. Over the empire of the adepts ruled the adept-king—the phoenix. The bird, therefore, stood for the hierophant of the Mysteries. Even Horus, the golden hawk, was required to obey the will of the phoenix. The early Christian Church borrowed the symbolism and associated it with their bishops and later their Popes. It has long been a symbol of immortality and of the transformations which bring with them the release of consciousness. In poetry, folklore, legendry, and heraldry, the phoenix stands for the birth of the new out of the old, the inevitable will to survive, and the restoration of life from the ashes of death. It is also a promise of the future, which is hope vanquishing fear, the future rising victoriously from the burned-out embers of the past. It is tomorrow escaping from the limitations of yesterday, and spiritual determination conquering the inadequacies of the flesh.

Somewhat less widely distributed but equally interesting was the graceful unicorn, which was said to combine the structures of the horse and the deer, and to carry on its forehead one slender, twisted horn. Vertomannus, who traveled extensively in the year of grace 1503, described two unicorns which he saw or claimed to have seen at Mecca. He wrote: "The one of them, which is much higher than the other, yet not much unlike to a colt of thirty months of age; in the forehead groweth only one horn, in manner right forth, of the length of three cubits. The other is much younger, of the age of one year, and like a young colt; the horn of this is of the length of four handfulls. This beast is of the colour of a horse of weesell colour, and hath the head like a hart, but no long neck, a thynne mane hanging

only on the one side. Their leggs are thin and slender like a faun or hind. The hoofs of the fore-feet are divided in two, much like the feet of a goat. The outer part of the hinderfeet is very full of hair."

The traveler explained that these unicorns had been given to the Sultan of Mecca by a king of Ethiopia, and were regarded as great treasures. The Portuguese Jesuit, Father Lobo, who visited Abyssinia in 1622, stated that he had seen a unicorn, but was unable to approach the creature closely because it was timid and quickly ran into the forest. He described this unicorn as similar in shape to a beautiful horse of a bay color with a black tail. It was very timid, and never fed except when surrounded by other animals that defended it. It was reported in 1719 that a hunter in Russia, pursuing what he believed to be a stag, captured instead a unicorn which he drove to his village and showed to the people. He afterwards killed and ate the animal and sold the single horn to a combmaker in Tara for the equivalent of fifteen pence. The horn was of a brownish color, about twenty-eight inches long and twisted. The ever-helpful Abbe Huc decided that unicorns actually existed in Tibet, especially along the shores of a certain lake. One of these animals was believed to have been in the menagerie of the Rajah of Nepal.

These fragments taken from an extensive literature show that the belief in the unicorn was firmly established. The horn was highly prized, and the drinking goblets of several European princely families are still believed to have been fashioned from unicorn horns. Like dragons' bones, this horn was also an important medical property. Whether imposture was used and horns were fastened to the foreheads of deer or colts is not known, but it is difficult to imagine that all who have reported the unicorn were motivated by a common impulse to deceive. Something was certainly amiss, and few regions remain unexplored where such a creature could lurk. We must assume, therefore, that in its traditional form it was a mythical monster.

The use of unicorn symbolism is less obvious than in some of the other composita. A study of its supposed habits leads to the suspicion that it was an emblem of the human spirit. If this was so, then the single horn represented the power of will, which is the peculiar attribute of man's internal life. The unicorn was frequently shown in a kind of enclosed garden where it was very gentle and friendly. In emergencies, however, it could become quite ferocious. If imprisoned or captured, it usually pined away and died. It loved freedom and quiet, secure places. It seldom left the protection of forests and was glimpsed only occasionally by those hunting other game. It was most likely to show itself to children or young women. To see the unicorn was a good omen, but those who pursued it seldom returned.

In *The Book of Lambspring,* a most curious alchemical rebus, the unicorn appears among the diagrams. Its use certainly implied that it represented the spiritual energy or resolution which led to the accomplishment of the Philosophers' Stone. As the spiritual will, this creature, concealed from general observation, must be diligently sought and its assistance enlisted. The single horn is the single purpose—the one-pointedness which is indispensable to the accomplishment of the Great Work. The animal did not defend itself with the horn, but great good fortune came to the mortal who could approach the animal and tie a silken scarf to the horn. It is one of the supporters of the British royal coat of arms, an evident survival of the belief that fabulous animals protected the ruling houses of Europe. It is referred to in Deuteronomy, XXXIII:17. There is some doubt, however, whether the Hebrew word refers to the unicorn as it is now known.

In China, the unicorn appeared in slightly different form as the chi-lin. The name is a dual word, the *chi* representing the male, and *lin* the female of the creature. The *chi* has been described as "a fabulous auspicious animal, which appears when sages are born; the male of the Chinese unicorn. It is drawn like a piebald scaly horse, with one horn and a cow's tail, and may have had a living original in some extinct equine animal." The Japanese version, called the kirin, is simply a borrowing from the Chinese original. The Easterners believe that this animal is so sacred and so dedicated to harmlessness that it will not even tread upon an insect and, as a result, is seen skipping about avoiding the small life beneath its feet. It is also held that the kirin will sometime appear in human shape, incarnating as a perfect man who will reveal mysteries, both supernatural and divine, and will be a great lover of all mankind.

The *chi* was not exactly a handsome beast, but what it lacked in appearance it compensated for by admirable qualities. According to the *Shu King,* the *lin* had the body of a stag, the tail of an ox, the feet of a horse, and was of a yellow color with round hoofs and one horn. The tip of the horn was fleshy rather than hard to further emphasize the peacefulness of the animal. It would not live in herds, and could not be captured in snares or pitfalls. Only when the monarch was virtuous did this beast appear. It will be remembered that five sages, leading in their midst the chi-lin, appeared on the roof of the house where Confucius was born on the night of this wonderful event. The chi-lin was said to have been captured shortly before the death of this sage. When Confucius was told of the circumstance, he explained to his disciples that this was an omen that his time of departure was near.

The Chinese explained that if the chi-lin, or unicorn, could be tamed or brought under the discipline of the enlightened sage it gave con-

—From Gould's *Mythical Monsters*

THE CHI-LIN, THE CHINESE UNICORN

trol to the three hundred and sixty kinds of hairy creatures over which it governed. This would seem to be a thinly veiled reference to the spiritual principle in man. Assuming the chi-lin to be the androgynous spiritual self, the "transcendent being" of the Taoist mystics, the control of this principle would bestow rulership over all the animal attributes of the human disposition. The wonderful sagacity of the chi-lin also supports such an interpretation. Likewise, the appearance of the mysterious animal—that is, the manifestation of man's divine nature—would herald the advent of a great teacher or seer. By applying the same explanation to the device as it occured in the alchemistical tradition, the essential secret of transmutation or regeneration becomes evident.

About the only so-called mythical monster which lingers in the sphere of possibility is the sea serpent. Considerable evidence has been accumulated even in recent times to support the existence of some immense animal or reptile inhabiting the ocean. Allowing for a large amount of nautical exaggeration, we are not yet in a position to deny the possibility of an unknown creature existing in the sea. Even scientists are not of common mind on this subject. *The Zoologist,* published in 1873, contained an account of an incredible

animal seen in the waters off the western coast of Scotland by two respectable clergymen. They described an undulating creature at least forty-five feet in length, and followed its motion with their binoculars. The editor of the journal appended to the description his own observations, concluding: "I have long since expressed my firm conviction that there exists a large marine animal unknown to us naturalists; I maintain this belief as firmly as ever."

The captain of Her Majesty's ship *Daedalus* submitted a description of a sea serpent seen by the personnel during a passage from the Cape of Good Hope to St. Helena. The official report to the Admiralty says that the creature resembled an enormous serpent at least sixty feet in length. The head and fore part were about four feet out of water. It seemed to have no fins, but may have had a manelike adornment along its upper back. It was fifteen to sixteen inches in diameter behind the head. Additional reports are dated in 1849, 1857, 1879, 1881, and there have been several in the present century. A sea serpent described in 1857 was stated by the boatswain and members of the crew of the ship *Castilian* as being double the length of the vessel, which would mean between four and five hundred feet.

The enormous amount of water constituting the several great oceans and seas of the earth has never been fully explored. We know it only as a vast surface beneath which is a world of living creatures. Many forms of life never come to the surface and could not survive in the reduced pressure of shallow waters. Each time a diving bell or other scientific equipment explores some small portion of the sea, new types of marine life are reported. Certainly the whale would not be believed to exist without evidence, and there is no reason to doubt that other prehistoric forms may have survived. Strangely enough, the sea serpent is not commonly included in mythological accounts. There are references to such monsters, but they are comparatively rare. It may be that the very existence of the sea serpent made it too factual or real for the purposes of the symbolists. It is not, strictly speaking, a composita, although early descriptions sometimes included fantastic elements.

If the sea serpent still has some zoological respectability, the mermaid is without scientific standing. Several explanations have been advanced to cover this whimsical creature. Some opined that certain birds or animals seen at a distance might have suggested the combination of human and ichthyological attributes. The penguin, for instance, resembles to a degree a respectable gentleman wearing a dinner jacket and well-starched linen. Seals or even walruses, because they are animals with fins, could have inspired the belief that further modifications existed. Early navigators seeing primitive peoples swim-

ming or sporting in the water might have permitted imagination to contribute unrealistic details.

It is more likely, however, that mermaids should be included among the orders of elemental spirits accepted and venerated in ancient times. The Greeks were convinced that groves and fountains were inhabited by nymphs, trees by dryads, or hamadryads, the fire by salamanders, and the earth by dwarfs and gnomes. The mermaid would belong to the class of undines or water sprites, and the legends relating to elementals and their occasional appearance in human form are to be found throughout the world. By means of these intermediary intelligences it was possible to explain types of natural phenomena which otherwise seemed baffling. Socrates supported this concept of Nature spirits when he said that he was convinced that there were races of creatures inhabiting the shores of the air as mortals inhabit the shores of the sea.

Living in a world which appeared to be intelligent in all its parts, our ancestors were convinced that each order of life had its protectors and administrators. It was more convenient to assume that flowers and shrubs were guarded and tended by benevolent agencies than to accept the notion that things just happened without rhyme or reason. In some mysterious way, old mystics and theologians came to realize that it is the limitation of our own perceptive powers that causes it to appear that we are surrounded only by empty air. Actually we could be living in an environment teeming with life and inhabited by innumerable creatures. These we cannot see because our vision is limited. While in the condition of sleep, trance, or catalepsy, our sensory perceptions can become more acute, thus ennabling us to have temporary awareness of beings otherwise invisible. After all, God is invisible and so are the divine hierarchies which administer his laws. Even the angels can be seen only when they will to be seen. If angels can exist without being visible, St. Thomas did not consider it unreasonable that other beings might also inhabit the airy dimensions.

Fairy lore interprets ethically through a symbolism of the availability to man of Nature's diverse resources. Wonderful potentials resided just beyond human knowing. Man could explore the forces of Nature, control them, bind them to his will, and adapt them to his needs. When he used this magic, however, he must keep its rules and never offend the spirits or break faith with them or misuse the powers which they bestowed. How do we know that the energies which we adapt to our various occupations are not themselves also entities or living things? Is electricity, for example, merely a force or is it a being manifesting from a plane of life beyond our understanding? We still know so little about the cosmos that we cannot disprove the evidence advanced by one savant before the French Academy,

when he insisted that there were two kinds of electrical energies: one intelligent, and the other irrational. No doubt many eyebrows were raised, but no one had proof with which to refute the assertion.

The remarks about Nature spirits cover the numerous references to giants, cyclops, demons, and other submundanes, both benevolent and malevolent. They are simply personifications of natural energies and the power resources of Nature. These should not, however, be included among artificial elementaries or the ghosts of deceased mortal creatures. Paracelsus listed among invisible creations the larvae or by-products of human thought and emotion. Man, according to the Paracelsian doctrine, has limited creative abilities. He may fashion from his own thoughts and emotions composite beings which survive as parasites nourished by his own intensities. If he permits his imagination to create evil entities, he may finally be obsessed by these larvae, which attach themselves to his personality like some parasite and ultimately vampirize him to death. It was customary to represent such larvae as the incubus and the succubus as composita. They were monsters bred of perverse instincts and appetites, and became the active agents of the retributional processes of the world.

Perhaps the larvae of Paracelsus have survived in the concept of fixations, phobias, neuroses, and complexes. The ancients would have considered these as demons created by negative emotional and mental practices. Their therapies were the same as those now in use even though the diagnosis was different. As we caricature the peculiarities of human disposition, so it was customary to represent psychic pressures by deformed or monstrous shapes. After a time these monstrosities were accepted as literal representations of the principles which they symbolized. During the medieval period, such symbolism was classified in books on demonism, and remedies recommended. Often these remedies were effective because they approached the matter psychologically. One conviction was used to unseat another. The victim who believed that a demon was annoying his sleep was given an appropriate ritual with which to oppose the infernal agent. If he believed in the remedy more than he believed in the demon, the disturbances ceased. This not only proved the effectiveness of the cure, but also, in the thinking of that time, the reality of the distress.

Another unpleasant composita was the were animal. The exact type of creature involved differed with locality, but the principle was consistent. Human beings could change themselves into various animals. The transformation usually occurred during sleep, and the unhappy lycanthropist might be entirely unaware of his own actions. Usually, however, he discovered the facts because of some telltale evidence that he brought back with him from his nocturnal foragings. He might wake in the morning and find muddy shoes beside his bed

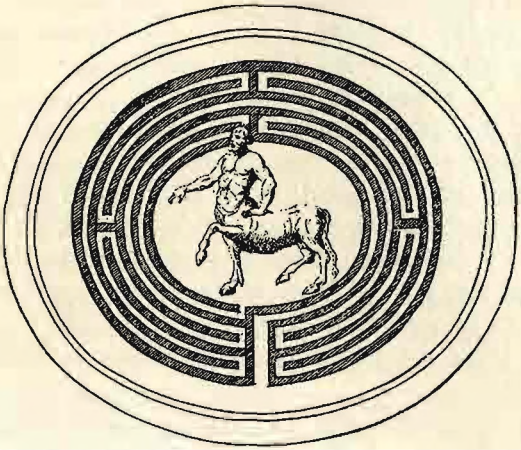
or discover that he had brought home some article or object from a distant place. The obvious solution to the evidence which terrified him was somnambulism. Sleep-walking is not an especially rare phenomenon, but, in an area where the belief in were animals was strong, could have terrifying implications. There are also zoological explanations for monstrosities in the animal kingdom which could, and did, provide rare but apparently conclusive evidence.

The unusual behavior of some animal or bird might attract attention and cause the speculation to arise in the untutored mind that it was a magician or sorcerer in disguise. Incidentally, a sincere conviction as to the reality of were animals is still held by several million persons living within the boundaries of the United States. Even today in remote regions, were animals are hunted down and killed and there is nearly always the report that the suspected sorcerer died mysteriously at the same time. Bats have come to be included in magic largely because the creature appears to be a natural composita. Man is suspicious of the peculiarities of Nature and nearly always suspects some magical circumstance to be involved. There is considerable legendry also about parasitic plants because they derive their sustenance from the air or from other living organisms. Thus the mistletoe came to be especially venerated by the old Druids of Britain and Gaul, and there are many myths involving orchidaceous growths throughout Asia.

Unusual areas, remarkable for some natural phenomenon, were also held in veneration. Volcanoes, for example, were considered as beings or entities or as the abodes of powerful spirits. Regions where geysers, hot springs, or sulphur pits existed were nearly always involved in elaborate mythology and legendry. Even mountains, rivers, ravines, etc., were held to be exceptional, and many bear, to this day, names suggestive of old veneration or abhorence. Irish folklore abounds in reports about the "little people" and their involvement in human activities. Beliefs long held and strongly visualized become deeply seated in the human subconsciousness. If we believe anything long enough and strongly enough, we may bestow upon it so clear an internal imagery that it may seem to be visible to our objective sight. After all, seeing is actually a mental phenomenon as well as an optical one. If we see with the mind, it will appear that we have seen with the eye. There is no doubt whatever that description of nonexisting creatures are, in many cases, reports of sincere belief.

It is hardly necessary to go into detail about all possible composita. The principle involved is the same and the details can be deduced from the elements combined to form the fabulous creature. Long after the unfolding mind of man had outgrown a general acceptance of fables, he found it useful to continue the symbolism for other and more valid

purposes. Nearly all the mythological monsters of the past were gathered into the elaborate symbolical devices of the Hermetic philosophers. On the pages of their extraordinary manuscripts are ferocious dragons, docile unicorns, proud phoenixes, ambling centaurs, flying horses, winged serpents, and human figures with two or more heads and an excessive number of hands and feet. This should not be interpreted as indicating a belief in the literal existence of such creatures, but as an elaborate method of instruction, by using the elements of symbolism in the statement of formulas which were intended to be intelligible only to those with the proper key.



Religious persecution, political tyranny, and scientific despotism made it desirable to operate behind an elaborate machinery of ciphers, codes, and enigmas. In each case, however, the mythical monster was related in some way to the older belief and legend. Take the centaur. It was well-reported in mythology that Chiron, the most learned of the centaurs, was the mentor of the hero, Achilles. Where the centaur appeared, therefore, it implied instruction. Chiron, with his human fore part rising from the body of a horse, was a compound of human and animal. His wisdom was therefore the wisdom of Nature, for he dwelt with his kind in the forest and lived upon the abundance of the earth. He was properly the personification of man's experience, as humanity itself grew from an animal to a human estate. Chiron was Nature, "the all-sufficient guide." He was also the personification of tradition, legendry, folklore, and all those moralisms which arise from the impact of Nature upon man. The centaur was aspiration, the emergence of man from an animal way of life. In fact, he was man himself with a human nature bound to an animal body. After all, the human being is the most amazing of all the composita.

Pegasus, the winged horse, was always the companion of the Muses. With the passing of time, Pegasus became the symbol of an assembly of literati or of poets or of those dedicated to the service of the arts. The winged horse, to follow an alchemical analogy, was art perfecting Nature. Later the Rosicrucians used Pegasus to conceal the assembly of their adepts. He was the life-giver because he stamped with his hoof upon the earth and brought forth the stream of water which was to make beautiful and fertile man's aesthetic consciousness. The ancient symbol of Britain was the dancing horse or the great white horse. When wings were added, they represented elevation of motive, and the flying horse was therefore indicative of the ensoulment of Britain by a great artistic, literary, or social inspiration. It was used by Lord Bacon as a symbol of his literary Society.

In passing, we may mention Lord Bacon's use of the boar on his crest. Obviously this was a family device, but, as an astute fableist, his lordship found a most happy analogy. Remembering the circumstances which induced Bacon to create an elaborate social-literary Society for the advancement of universal learning and further remembering that it was essential for him to conceal both his own identity and his purpose, we may read the opening paragraph of the chapter dealing with the hog in *Zoological Mythology,* by Angelo de Gubernatis. This learned mythologist opens the section thus: "The hog, as well as the wild boar, is another disguise of the solar hero in the night—another of the forms very often assumed by the sun, as a mythical hero, in the darkness or clouds. He adopts this form in order sometimes to hide himself from his persecutors, sometimes to exterminate them, and sometimes on account of a divine or demoniacal malediction."

As this analogy apparently has remained unnoticed by all Baconians and those investigating his lordship's subtle ways, we can appreciate the importance of studying such kinds of symbolism. The effort will more than repay itself if we discover the secret intent behind the scientific use of the mythical composita. Many important clues can be found in the religious symbolism of Eastern nations, especially Brahmanism and Northern Buddhism, where various attributes are bestowed symbolically in order to indicate ethical principles. The many heads and arms of Eastern deities with the animal vahans or vehicles associated with them, and the creation of imaginary creatures to impersonate ideas are in many cases most fortunate contrivances. They instruct by implication, leaving the student to explain the details according to his own unfolding appreciation of spiritual values.

Carl Jung, in his *Psychologie Und Alchemie,* expressed his opinion that the curious symbols used by the Hermetists were productions of

subconscious processes going on in the human mind. They represented efforts to express or to release certain abstract pressure-impulses by creating a pictorial alphabet of idea forms. Consciousness is blocked in its objective expression by the limitation of suitable word or thought patterns. This is especially true in those languages which are deficient in terms suitable to mystical and superphysical experiences. To break the communication block, the mind instinctively rearranges the elements of familiar patterns, and by creating new combinations finds means for conveying otherwise incommunicable concepts. A semantic problem is involved. Only by escaping from the limitation imposed by the traditional meanings of words and terms can we achieve self-expression. Thus as an architect finds release through the creation of structural forms and the musician through composing etudes and symphonies, so the instinctive symbolist designs pictorial images by rearranging natural elements in new or unusual compounds.

Through association we develop a mechanism of analogies. The metaphor and the simile are well-known examples of the substitution process. For example, the line: "Now is the winter of our discontent," associates a phase of human disposition with the inclemency of an austere and rigorous season. In the Freudian technique, the substitution is recognized when a person dreams of being alone in a storm. Adversity may be symbolized by a flood, discouragement by a famine or a drought, and in his sleep-experiences the subjective pressures of the individual take on appropriate pictorial devices. If his own reactions are especially complex and no natural symbol fulfills the requirements, then composita introduce themselves. To interpret the pressure, the compound must be separated and the various elements examined.

That which is true of negative pressures is also true of man's natural instinct to define or formalize that which transcends his conscious knowledge. He therefore instinctively bestows superhuman attributes upon his abstract concepts of superhuman beings. Angels are of human form, but winged and without sexual differentia. Deities are invested with attributes such as universal sensory perceptions and the ability to change their forms at will. This is no more than the acceptance by man that the universal energies may present themselves under numerous shapes and aspects. Compounds intended to express noble sentiments are orderly and beautiful, while those associated with negative or destructive abstractions are deformed or horrible.

The innumerable images and figurines excavated in the areas of ancient cities are frequently in the forms of composita. Wherever this is the case, they were the products of man's eagerness to present formless principles through some tangible shape which conveyed a tran-

scendental idea. It is not likely that these representations were considered literal by those who devised them. Sometimes, however, familiarity with the symbolic designs caused those less informed to assume that they were real and genuine likenesses of invisible principles. Thus the ideal became embodied in the idol. The more generous modern thinker has long outgrown earlier repugnance for the productions of idolatry. He knows that he is in the presence of a sincere desire strong in the human heart to tell a story or to share a deep and noble conviction. The idols themselves may be totally inadequate and even repugnant to those who have not penetrated the surface of man's spiritual life. After all, civilization itself is a vast composita, the symbolical expression of the human conviction about the divine plan as it operates in the material world. Through imperfection of vision and the unsuitability of the form medium, the compound may at times appear grotesque. The parts may actively war upon each other or be irreconcilable, but the compound itself combines the diversity of mortal aspiration, ambition, and resolution.

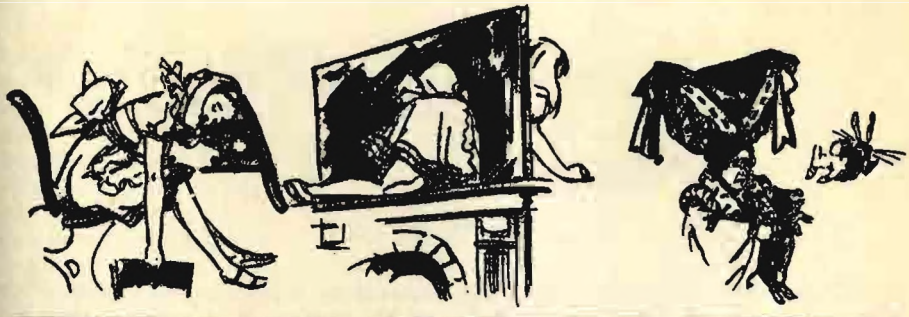
On the plane of ideas, most individuals create composite thought forms. Very few of us live completely free of the pressures of fantasy. Facts are surprisingly unimportant, and men live and die in the defense of opinions. If these opinions were reduced to mathematical patterns, they would be asymmetrical; but because they are without formal dimensions, the inconsistencies are ignored. Each of us, to a degree at least, lives his convictions, and the obvious contradictions of conduct bear tangible witness to intangible defects in our personal codes. Conduct is evidently a composite, for it combines conflicting determinations and decisions. The individual finds himself in a series of dilemmas for lack of integrated convictions. It is probable that he would be much more inclined to mend his ways if he could diagram his policies. He would find the pattern unattractive to his objective sensory perception, but without this censorship he has no available reference framework.

There are many ways in which the study of symbolism becomes a useful aid to the release of internal consciousness. Symbols may or may not have arbitrary meanings, but we know from experience that we interpret the unfamiliar in the terms of our available insight. Thus the device becomes a mirror which reflects and reveals the resources of understanding. Having thus interpreted the device, it would be well for us to analyze the interpretation. In this way we can familiarize our conscious mind with the subconscious instincts which are latent in our natures. A general lack of interest in symbols reveals a deficiency of the observational faculties. It means that there is not sufficient internal life to seek an explanation of self. The individual who does not wish to explore his own constitution guards

against exposure to such stimuli. The instinct to be intrigued by symbols is very old and deep-seated. Training in objectivity, especially modern materialistic endoctrination, blocks native curiosity which is the beginning of inquiry.

Symbolism is indispensable to artists, for they find in it a means of transmitting their emotional convictions. All great works of art are ideas captured in some appropriate formal composition. Impact is the effect produced upon the beholder. The dynamics of the design attract the attention. The symbols intrigue the curiosity, and inevitably comes the question: What does this mean? The answer must be one that satisfies the mind by exhausting the potentials of the symbol. The beholder may not come even near to the artist's intent, but curiousity continues to plague him until his solution satisfies him. The satisfaction is nothing more than the internal resources brought into activity by the challenge of a symbol.

In reading old legends and fables, in studying the myths of ancient nations, and in approaching the grand theme of folklore, the student must be alert to the double meanings inevtiably present. In this way, and in this way only, can he unlock the subconscious of the composite human mind. He will then discover that many seeming absurdities are veiled truths well worth the knowing.



Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

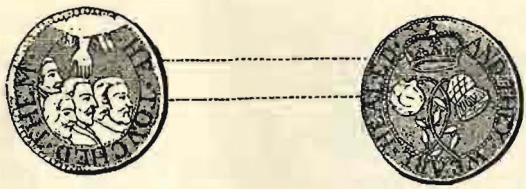
Touching for the King's Evil

Among the relics which have descended from the accumulated tradition of ancient times was the "royal touch." It should be mentioned that this does not imply that His Majesty was borrowing money. Actually the ruler was merely exercising one of his assumed powers and prerogatives. Long ago it was believed that sickness was sent by the gods as an evidence of their displeasure. The healing of disease, therefore, was according to the divine will. The divinities governed the world through the princes whom they selected, and these terrestrial governors exercised authority by divine right. It appeared logical, therefore, that the king could heal the sick in the name of the Supreme Sovereignty.

It did not follow that royalty engaged in the general practice of medicine. One disease, extremely common and at the time incurable, was selected. Thus it came about that the treatment of scrofula became a royal duty and privilege. It is not certain why this disease was selected. Possibly it was because it corresponded in general with the Biblical description of leprosy. The Bible (Lev. 13:9) instructs that those suffering from leprosy shall be brought to a priest. The curing of this malady was also included among the miracles of Jesus. Scrofula was the old name for tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands, and particularly those of the neck and throat. Left without proper medical control, the disease caused chronic absesses, and even if these healed there were disfiguring scars.

Both the French and English kings attempted the treatment of scrofula by combining an impressive state ceremony with certain religious observances. The procedure was called "touching for the king's evil." It was introduced into England in the 11th century during the reign of Edward the Confessor, but did not unfold into an elaborate ritualistic procedure until the time of Henry VII. In the "good old days," the times appointed for the bestowal of the "royal touch" were seasons of high festivity. All common occupations were suspended, and it was one of the few opportunities for direct contact between the sovereign and his people.

When Charles II returned from exile, one of his first official acts was to proclaim the day on which he would



ENGLISH TOUCH COIN

"touch" the sick. The time was especially important because the people had been deprived of this privilege for seventeen years. His Majesty was enthroned with his entire court. The high officers of the state, prominent physicians, and dignitaries of the Church were gathered about him in the full regalia of their offices. The medical delegation supervised the bringing of the sick. Some walked, others were supported, and those unable to come in any other way were carried in upon stretchers. It was required of the king that he treat each case separately. He stroked the faces of the patients, using both hands at the same time. Then he recited over each the words: "He put his hands upon them, and he healed them." Immediately in some instances, and a little later in other cases, His Majesty then presented to each patient a gold coin suspended from a white ribbon. It was also required that the king place this about the necks of the sufferers with his own hands. After the ritual, there was a reading with liturgy, prayers for the sick, and the ceremony closed with blessings. The Lord Chamberlain and the Comptroller of the Household then brought a basin, a water jug, and a towel so that the king might wash his hands.

Occasionally, the ritual of the "royal touch" led to complications. The ever-penurious Queen Elizabeth decided that the gold coin bestowed upon the sick represented too large an expense. She therefore ordered them to be reduced in size. There were also rulers who failed to accept the implications of the ceremony. William of Orange considered the practice mere foolishness, and, as a result of his attitude, he was publicly accused of failing in his responsibilities to his people. It is reported that William bestowed his "royal touch" but once, accompanied by the brief remark: "God give you better health and more sense."

The celebrated English lexicographer, Dr. Samuel Johnson, was "touched for the king's evil" by Queen Anne. He was not cured, however, and suffered throughout his life. The Queen believed in the spiritual vitality of the ceremony and insisted upon its perpetuation. There is a proclamation, which was issued during her reign, postponing the "royal touch" because she was sorely afflicted with the gout in both hands. By the reign of Louis XVI, the scientific men of France had decided that it would be a good idea to make a serious investigation of the whole subject. They checked on over two thousand cases which had received the "royal touch," and in only five instances was there any convincing evidence of improvement. As such research became more general and the nature of scrofula was better understood, the ceremony passed into oblivion.

The royal touchpieces have continued to exercise considerable influence in the rural districts of England, Wales, and Scotland. Many of these have been preserved for centuries and are still held to possess therapeutic virtues. They are used by the poor and in those emergencies where medical skill is either unavailable or insufficient. Some of these coins have become famous and have taken on the attributes of holy relics. Sometimes touchpieces were taken from the regular mintage, but a few were coined for the purpose with special inscriptions. Obviously, the bene-

fits derived from "touching" diminished as the ritual lost its hold on the popular mind. The history of mental therapy cannot be lightly rejected. There is abundant proof that a devout faith can influence physical health. The power of the mind over the body, whether that power be exercised for better or for worse, is real and profound. Perhaps the "touching" ceremony would have had greater success had the sufferers been more devout and enlightened in their religious convictions. While many of them were desperately sick, they lacked the capacity for a deep and abiding faith.

The tubercle bacilli are communicated orally, usually from infected milk or direct contact with persons already infected. The rapid developments in sanitation and hygiene are largely responsible for limiting the spread of such diseases. Actually no cure is as yet available. Treatment now consists of arresting the development of the ailment. By this means, cases which are not too far advanced can be controlled so that the patient regains a large measure of health and can look forward to a normal life-expectancy.

The modern medical attitude toward the "royal touch" may be essentially sound but does not entirely explain the phenomenon. It appears incredible that a ceremony of this kind could flourish for centuries with the full confidence of the population unless it bestowed some real or practical benefits. Even if we wished to accept the assumption that the citizenry was illiterate, gullible, and superstitious, the average man was not without a degree of common sense. Those who had received the "royal touch" returned to their communities where relatives, friends, and acquaintances were in an excellent position to estimate the results. If no improvement were ever noted, it is hardly likely that the days proclaimed for this ritual would have continued to be gala events. Ignorant men are shrewd and thrifty. The English merchant, tradesman, shopkeeper, and artisan suffered the common heritage of scrofula. They saw its ravages and could not have been completely oblivious to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of remedies.

It is far more probable that the ritual of "touching," like various faith-healing methods which are still practiced, produced noticeable improvement in a fair percentage of cases. We resent such implications because we are devoted to a material medical procedure. Christendom will continue to believe in the possibility of spiritual healing as long as it accepts the life and example of Christ. Jesus himself bade his disciples to go forth and heal the sick. Religion is a medicine for the soul, and psychosomatic research justifies the concept that the powers of the soul are available to the body and can contribute to the attainment and preservation of health.

●

Vesapasian, when an Egyptian philosopher proclaimed him emperor, exclaimed: "O Jupiter! May I govern wise men, and may wiser men govern me."

"Old friends are the best," remarked King James I of England, as he called for an old pair of shoes.

According to Dr. Johnson, "the present time is never a happy state to any human being.

Library Notes

By A. J. HOWIE

Zen Traditions

(*Conclusion*)

"Literature is helpful only when it indicates the way, it is not the thing in itself." Suzuki.

When we read or study about various systems of religion or philosophy, some impact or reaction is bound to affect us. It may be a simple assent to a self-evident truism. It may be a sharp realization that we prefer our own methods of worshiping God. Or it may be a reluctant admission that even the heathens may "have something".

To the occidental insistence on obvious delineations of divine purposes, Zen is in baffling contrast with the enigmatical turns and twists it gives to the traditional answers for the most serious questions. The purpose of this paper is not to suggest the making of converts to Zen. It is unlikely that many Westerners would prove apt pupils were a Zen master available. But Zen can give us a new perspective, a new set of psychological devices for meeting the problems of daily living. Zen attitudes are not fixed. The correct answer today may not be the correct answer tomorrow. Zen is dynamic and adaptable. Zen is individual and personal. The practice of Zen principles will make better Christians, Mohammedans, Brahmans, sectarians of any kind, of any one —and all—of us.

There are innumerable anecdotes in the Zen tradition. All of them have stood the test of time—hundreds of years of retelling. Suzuki, Sensaki, Paul Reps, and The First Zen Institute of America, Inc. at New York are names for reference at your local libraries. Reference to these writers will lead you further into the available Zen literature.

The following selections are somewhat more obviously pointed than most of the Zen anecdotes. These are kindly, with little of the Zen roughness usually emphasized. Under gruff exteriors the Zen monks and masters hide a sturdy idealism. They are not willowy, otherworldly dreamers. They are strong so that they may not be destroyed nor yield to destructive pressures from whatever motive. They deride stupidity, and equally, vanity in book-learning however vast unless it bears fruit in the life of the individual. They cry out loudly against insincerity. They seem to know where they are going along their mystic path even if the guide-posts vanish under the searchlight of analysis. Unitedly they emphasize that the practice of Zen is a full time dedication regardless of whether one is a menial in the kitchen, a laborer in the fields, a king on

his throne, or a teacher of others. Zen is for all of the time.

* * * * *

Lin-chi, one of the greatest masters of the 9th century, might well be addressing a modern occult study group in the following:

"Each of the ancient masters had his way of helping others. My method is to prevent you from being deceived. If you want to use what you have within yourselves, use it. Do not stand hesitatingly. Why is it that today (9th Century) students are unable to attain realization? They do not sufficiently believe in themselves. When you lack self-confidence, you will be buffeted about by your environment. Enslaved and moved by objective situations, you have no freedom—you are not masters of yourselves.

"Stop running after outward things and you will be like the old masters. Do you wish to know what the old masters were like? They were not different outwardly from any of you listening to me right here. Where faith is lacking, there is constant pursuit after outward objects. What you gain by pursuit of mere literary excellence is far from the life of the old masters.

"There is no rest in this triple world, which is like a house on fire. It is an abode for a short time only. The evidence of impermanence may visit us at any moment regardless of rank or age. The triple body is the ultimate reality of things, and it ceases to be a mystery when one halts the pursuit of outward objects.

"When Buddha is sought after, he is the cause of transmigration. Do not commit the grave mistake of convulsively looking around your neighborhood and not within yourself. You make a mistake in trying to master Zen, to master the Way, to learn words and phrases. Fools recognize all kinds of things, they see spirits, they see ghosts, they look hither and yon, they like fair weather, they like rainy weather—but they do not know good from evil. Be not as these. Look within yourself."

* * * * *

A learned professor went to a Zen master to inquire about Zen. Observing the etiquette of the time, the master poured tea for his visitor, but he kept on pouring after the cup was filled. The professor cried out that the cup was running over.

The master observed: "Like this cup, you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I teach you Zen until you first clear your mind?"

* * * * *

Shih-chin mounted the speaker's dais and paused, remaining silent for a long time while the monks stood waiting with growing uneasiness. Finally he spoke: "I am ashamed of not having anything special today. But if you are merely to follow my talk and listen to my voice, you had better indeed retire into the hall and warm yourselves by the fire. Good night, monks."

* * * * *

A master once came up to the pulpit and for a while remained silent. Then he asked: "Are you all here, or not?"

"All here, master."

"I withhold my discourse until another one turns up."

"I will tell you when no one turns up," said one monk.

"Difficult indeed to know the man," the master remarked.

* * * * *

Ban-Kei was growing old, so his pupils began discussing how they might make things easier for him. The cook thought he might serve him a little choicer food than that served to the rest, so he placed only the freshest of soy cheese before him. Ban-Kei was quick to notice that the others did not have such nice *miso*. He called the cook and demanded an explanation.

The cook answered that he thought because of the master's age and position he should eat only fresh *miso*.

"Then you think I shouldn't eat at all," Ban-Kei shouted as he left the table and went to his room, locking the door behind him.

The crestfallen cook rushed to the door begging the teacher's pardon. Ban-Kei made no response. For seven days the cook sat outside, and Ban-Kei within.

Finally, one of the other monks called loudly to Ban-Kei: "You may be quite right, old teacher, but this young disciple here has to eat. He cannot go without food for ever."

At that Ban-Kei opened the door. He was smiling. He told the cook: "I insist on eating the same food as the least of my followers. When you become the teacher, do not forget this."

* * * * *

A young Zen pupil who still had not overcome the restless urgings for excitement and gaiety, frequently used to slip out of the dormitory after everyone was asleep, climbing over the wall to hurry into town. Sen-gai, the master, on a tour of inspection one night, missed the pupil, and also discovered the high stool he used to scale the wall. Sen-gai removed the stool and stood in its place. When the gay pupil returned and jumped lightly down to where he expected to find the stool, he put his feet on the master's head. He was completely surprised and embarrassed as he stammered his excuses.

Sen-gai replied: "It is very chilly in the early morning. Do be careful not to catch cold yourself."

The pupil never repeated his escapades.

* * * * *

Haku-in was unjustly accused of fathering the child of a young girl who wished to conceal the identity of the true father. Friends and neighbors were quick to pronounce judgment on the elderly Zen master, thinking how awful it was for a supposedly holy man to be guilty of such an act.

Haku-in's only comment was, "Is that so?"

He took the child and provided for its every need. He pursued his usual ways although he retired from all contact with those who condemned him.

About a year later, overcome with remorse, the girl confessed the identity of her young lover who was the real father of the child. She came to Haku-in and asked for the child, begging forgiveness for having caused him so much suffering. The former friends and neighbors came also and urged him to come back to his old haunts.

But still, Haku-in's only comment was, "Is that so?"

* * * * *

Zen instruction to a student of fencing.

"It is most important in the art of fencing to acquire a certain mental attitude which may be described as 'immovable wisdom'. This wisdom is acquired intuitively only after a great deal of practical training. 'Immovable' does not mean to be stiff and heavy and lifeless as a rock or a piece of wood. It means the acquirement of an immovable center about which the greatest freedom of motion may be expressed. The mind then may alert itself, poised to direct its attention in any direction it is needed. When the attention is diverted or arrested by the striking sword of the enemy, you lose the first opportunity of making the next move by yourself. You think how to parry the blow, but even the most fleeting deliberation gives your opponent the opportunity to strike you down. The artful fencer does not give him that chance. Body reflexes follow the movement of the sword in the hands of the enemy, leaving the mind free to make its own counter-movements with no interfering deliberation.

"The non-interfering attitude of mind constitutes the most vital element in the art of fencing as well as in Zen. If

DARUMA, THE FOUNDER OF ZEN,
RETURNING TO INDIA, CARRYING ONE SHOE

there is the least pause between two actions, this is interruption. When the hands are clapped, the sound issues spontaneously. Let your defense follow the attack without a moment of interruption; there must be no two separate movements known as attack and defense. The immediateness of action on your part will enable you to take advantage of any lack of immediacy on the part of your opponent.

"Immediateness of action is not to be confused with mere quickness. The idea is to develop an uninterrupted movement of life-energy. That is why Zen students are trained to immediateness in answering questions put by the master."

* * * * *

There was a Zen master nicknamed "Bird's Nest" because he used to practice his meditation perched on the branch of a tree. One day a visiting dignitary observed him and remarked: "That is a dangerous seat."

"Yours is far worse than mine," retorted the master.

"I am the governor of this district, and I do not see what danger there is in it."

"Then you do not know yourself! When your passions burn and your mind is unsteady, what is more dangerous than that?"

The governor then asked: "What is the teaching of Buddhism?"

The master recited:

"Not to commit evils,
But to practice all good,
And to keep the heart pure—
This is the teaching of the Buddhas."

The governor protested, "Any child of three knows that."

"Any three-year-old may know it, but even an old man of eighty finds it difficult to practice it."

* * * * *

Chuang Tzu's wife died. One of his pupils called expecting to comfort the teacher in his sorrow. The pupil was surprised to find Chuang Tzu singing and beating time on a pot. The pupil protested that this was not proper.

The teacher replied: "I could not help being affected when she died. But then I remembered that my wife had already existed in a previous state before birth. And now, by virtue of a further change,

she has passed to another phase of life. For me to go about crying and sorrowing would be to deny my knowledge of these natural laws. Therefore I refrain."

* * * * *

Gu-do, Zen teacher of the Emperor, was accustomed to mingle with the people frequently as a wandering mendicant. On one occasion he was caught in a heavy rain. Thoroughly drenched, his straw sandals ruined, he approached a small farmhouse on the outskirts of the village to see if he could buy a new pair. The woman, seeing how wet he was, suggested that he come and dry himself until the storm was over. Gu-Do observed that the woman, her children, and the grandmother all seemed depressed, so he asked if anything were wrong.

"My husband drinks and gambles. Drink makes him abusive, and when he loses, he borrows money. Sometimes he does not come home at all. What can I do?"

Gu-Do said he would help. He gave her money to get a gallon of wine and some delicacies to eat. When she brought these to him, he told her that she might retire in peace while he would meditate before the family shrine.

About midnight the husband came home quite drunk. He shouted for his wife to bring him food.

"I have something for you," said Gu-Do. "I got caught in the rain and your wife gave me shelter for the night. I sent out for some wine and fish which you may as well eat."

The husband unquestioningly drank the wine until sleep overtook him and he rolled over on the floor. Gu-Do sat in meditation beside him. In the morning the husband awoke with only a befuddled memory of the night before. He demanded to know who Gu-Do was that still sat meditating beside him.

The Zen master replied: "I am Gu-Do of Kyoto and I am going to Edo."

The husband was completely ashamed. He apologized to this famous teacher of the Emperor.

Gu-Do smiled. "Everything in this life is impermanent. Life is so short. If you persist in gambling and drinking, you will have no time left to accomplish other things. And then your family will suffer too."

Understanding seemed to awaken in the husband. "You are right," he declared. When it came time for Gu-Do to resume his journey, the husband asked to be permitted to accompany him a short distance. Each time a few miles had been passed, he begged to be allowed to go a little farther. Finally he declared: "I am going to follow you all the rest of my life."

And this was Mu-Nan, the man who never turned back.

* * * * *

When Yuan-chih and Yun-yen were attending on the master Yao-shan, the latter said, "Where human understanding fails to reach, refrain by all means from putting in any words; if you do, horns will grow on your head. Brother Chih, what would you say to this?"

Yuan-chih without saying a word left the room.

Yun-yen asked the master, "Why did not Brother Chih answer you?"

The master said, "My back aches today. You better go to Chih himself and ask, for he understands."

Yun-yen now sought out Brother Chih and asked, "How is it that you gave no answer to our master just now?"

Yuan-chi remarked, "It's best for you to ask the master himself."

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