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# HORIZON

Journal of the  
Philosophical Research Society

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1952



ISSUED  
QUARTERLY  
VOLUME 12 No. 3

HORIZON  
LINES

AN EDITORIAL

BY MANLY PALMER HALL



## The Thread of Ariadne

THE more closely we examine the mythology of the ancients, the more clearly we perceive the amazing skill involved in the construction of certain fables. Each is, in one way or another, a psychological unfoldment of a vital and urgent theme. These stories have survived and remained popular because we apperceive or instinctively recognize ideas which we may not completely grasp. Many of the great literary monuments of ancient times have perished utterly and will never be restored because they were not written from a sufficient level of insight. Even when they were originally circulated, myths were held in peculiar veneration. They usually involved the exploits of gods or heroes, and frequently recounted divine intercession or intervention in human affairs. Superphysical elements were introduced according to the convictions of the inventors and, like the fairy tales which delight the hearts of children, the myths break through the barriers of the commonplace into an ever-intriguing world of fantasy.

The myth of Ariadne occurs in connection with the exploits of Theseus, the son of Aegeus, King of Athens. After numerous adventures, Theseus reached the court of his father, where he was acknowledged and declared to be successor to the throne. At this time the Athenians were forced to pay tribute to Minos, King of Crete. There



is some difference of reports bearing upon the tribute required by the Cretan king. Some writers say that seven youths and seven maidens were sent each year to be devoured by the minotaur; others describe the event as occurring only every ninth year. By the latter reckoning, Theseus was included in the third group to be sent to Crete.

The minotaur was a monster, part man and part bull, which inhabited a labyrinth constructed by Daedalus. So wonderfully and cleverly was this labyrinth constructed that those who entered its passageways could not find their way out again without assistance. The name of the labyrinth may have originated from a Lybian word meaning *double ax*. This sacred emblem has been found engraved on the walls and pillars of the palace of Knosos. While working in this region, Angelo Mosso purchased from a peasant an ancient silver coin bearing the quadrangular figure of the labyrinth formed of complicated lines. Although this was the emblem of Knosos, the famous labyrinth itself has not been rediscovered. Perhaps the palace of the double ax was the original labyrinth. In the passages of this weird structure, the minotaur roamed about, fed with human victims.

The minotaur, or bull of Minos, was one of a series of hybrid creatures called *composita* which are to be found in the legendry associated with Aegean religion. In early representations, the minotaur is usually depicted with the head and tail of a bull and a human body. There are instances, however, in which the form is reversed and a human head or face appears on the body of a bull. On Etruscan vases, the minotaur is shown naked and unarmed, but occasionally holds one or more stones with a menacing attitude. Among the interpretations of the myth are several which should be noted in passing. According to an early author quoted by Plutarch, the minotaur was originally a Cretan general named Taurus, whom Theseus defeated in an athletic competition. Another version suggests that the minotaur was the personification of Cretan civilization itself, especially its naval power, which was overcome and destroyed by the Greeks. A recent author feels that he has support for the opinion that the minotaur was the Crown Prince of Knosos, who wore the bull mask while partaking in certain rituals of state.

Actually there is no indication supported by archaeological findings that any cult offering sacrifices to a living monster or the image thereof ever existed. There is certainly no solid ground for the modern assumption that the minotaur was merely the masked priest of a sanguine cult, although this theme has been used effectively by fiction writers. Such evidence as does exist all points to a symbolical interpretation of some kind. Herodotus wrote that certain labyrinths in Egypt were actually reservoirs, with their aqueducts used for the accumulation and distribution of water. The Cretans included in



religious rituals certain dances in which the participants wove in and out in a complicated design which has been called the *labyrinth dance*. Several factors may have been combined in the final form of the myth.

According to the legend, Theseus determined to free his countrymen from the calamity of the Cretan tribute or lose his life in the attempt. When the time came for the sending of the seven youths and maidens, he therefore offered himself as one of the victims. When the group reached Crete in their ship with its black sails, they were exhibited before King Minos in order that he might ascertain that only the fairest of the Athenians were offered as sacrifices. Ariadne, the daughter of the Cretan king, was present on this occasion and immediately became enamored of Theseus, who quickly returned her devotion. Resolved to save Theseus, she provided him with a thread, usually referred to as a clue, so that he could find his way out of the labyrinth. He unwound this thread as he entered, and in this way could retrace his steps without difficulty.

Ariadne's part in this adventure presents several variations. There is agreement about the importance of the thread, or clue. She is also supposed to have provided him with a sword, but in the principal account as preserved in classical art, Theseus slew the minotaur with his bare hands. Having destroyed the monster, he escaped from the labyrinth and, accompanied by Ariadne and the other youths and maidens, sailed for Athens. There are also two versions of the conclusion of the myth. According to one, Theseus and his companions halted briefly at the island of Naxos, where Theseus abandoned Ariadne while she was asleep. He committed this action because the goddess Minerva appeared to him and commanded him to do so. Later, Dionysos, returning from India, found her on the island of Naxos, married her, and gave her a beautiful jeweled crown. After her death her crown was placed among the stars as a constellation and she was honored as a goddess. The alternative story describes that she was slain by Artemis on the island of Dia before she could reach Athens with Theseus.

Most Greek legends have some relation to the agrarian cults of the ancient Hellenes. These earlier meanings were later elaborated and expanded according to the philosophical insight of the people. The name *Ariadne* probably means *very holy*, or *very sacred*. There is no certainty, however, as to the origin of the word. The earliest known rituals associated with this deified mortal would indicate that she was a goddess of vegetation and a personification of the processes in Nature associated with spring. In the festivals to her performed at Naxos there were two distinct concepts. First, there was mourning and sadness, in which the circumstances of her death or her abandonment by Theseus were revived. Second, there was a subsequent pageant-



ry of great joy and revelry to celebrate her discovery by Dionysos, her awakening from sleep, and her marriage with the deity. The complete cycle was one, therefore, of death and resurrection.

It cannot be assumed, however, that the classical Greeks were satisfied with such an interpretation of the myth as it unfolded only the progression of the seasons. Nature, apparently deserted by the sun during the winter season, passes into sleep and comes to a symbolic death from which it is awakened or resurrected by the new annular sun-god, Dionysos. Minerva (Greek Athena), as universal wisdom, dictates this procedure, which is contrary to the pleasure and inclinations of mortals who prefer to live forever in the happy atmosphere of summer. This explanation does not fully meet the requirements of the details of the story, which may be regarded as implying a deeper meaning or as later embellishments when a larger interpretation was instinctively demanded.

Theseus is certainly a form of the world hero. He accomplishes prodigious works, rescues his people from numerous dilemmas, and at the same time bears witness to a variety of human frailties. He is the immortal-mortal, in whose composition there is a conflict between divine and mundane attributes. He may well have been a symbol of the "old sun," even as Dionysos personified the "new sun." This parallel is found in most mythological systems, where an old order gives way to a new order, bringing with it greater light and hope. It was the common knowledge of the ancients that all sacred fables had at least seven meanings, and therefore must be unfolded upon seven planes or levels of interpretation or, perhaps, from seven points of view.

The labyrinth of Knosos, for example, can represent the material universe. Those entering the mortal world through generation are unable to find their way out without the assistance of one informed in the mystery. This is the argument which sustains the whole concept of instruction as it was understood in the ancient schools of wisdom. But it could be equally true that the labyrinth suggests the invisible universe about man, which demands tribute from him and in which lurks the embodiment of the unknown, to which we must all offer the tribute of our own lives. If the world beyond the grave is that mysterious "bourn from which no man returns," what more fitting symbol than the labyrinth and the strange creature that roams its passages? Thus the minotaur can be either the tyranny of mortal mind and animal ambition devouring souls, or the equally-fatal tyranny of the unknown luring mortals to their destruction. It would appear that the Greeks favored the concept that the labyrinth was involved in generation which ended in the heroic self being sacrificed to the illusion of objectivity. As materialism and animalism, the minotaur devoured the tribute which was sent to it from the court of Athens,



which, at least to the Athenians, stood for the concept of intellectual liberty and universal enlightenment.

Perseus, in his resolution to overcome the world as a demonstration of his heroic estate, becomes enamored of Nature, which, in turn, falls in love with him. If Perseus, as the self dedicated to the preservation of its companions and the liberating of its nation, sets forth upon this adventure, which is substantially the perilous journey toward liberation, it is assisted, guided, and inspired by Nature with which it forms an alliance. Thus the human mind exploring the unknown must derive its instructions from the operation of natural laws and the observation of natural phenomena. Ariadne, as Nature, gives to Perseus the thread and the sword. The thread is referred to as a clue in the older writings. Essentially, Nature supplies the clue to the mystery of life by inspiring the development of discrimination. The human mind is disciplined against the danger of becoming lost in the labyrinth. The thread corresponds with the reasoning processes on at least one level of interpretation. The sword may be either experience, which arms the informed, or information, which defends the experienced. Equipped, therefore, with the means of escaping from the subterranean passageways constructed by Daedalus, and an active weapon with which to oppose the minotaur, Theseus as the heroic self enters into the final combat with reasonable probabilities of victory. With wisdom (the clue) and courage (the sword) he can face a double dilemma. Courage is not enough, for even if he slays worldliness he must still escape from its influence or perish with the monster he has destroyed.

The outcome of the adventure is successful principally because of the help of Ariadne, with whom the hero-self then forms an alliance. Athena, however, appears in a vision and warns Theseus that he cannot bring Nature back with him to his own native land. Theseus leaves Ariadne asleep on the island of Naxos as part of a larger drama which is predestined and foreordained. Here she laments until the arrival of Dionysos, who elevates her to a semidivine state. After her death, her crown, which represents the higher parts of Nature—its soul or corona—was cast into the sky where it will shine forever. Dionysos was not a mortal hero, but a divine power which had appeared in mortal form; therefore, the god was able to accomplish the awaking and the comforting of Ariadne. As a symbol of fruitfulness, Dionysos releases the sleeping powers of the earth and brings about the splendor of the harvest.

Now let us examine the story on a level of psychology. Theseus becomes the self, or the adventurer. He is the son of a king, acknowledged by his father, and destined to rule over Athens, which is the empire of self. Ariadne is the psyche, or soul, which provides the in-



struments by which the self becomes master over the not-self, or the symbol of illusion. The minotaur in its labyrinth is body and the whole array of negations which are opposed to the victory of self over the conditions of existence. Dionysos is the soul of the world, which forms the mediator, the redeemer, the savior, or the regenerator on the collective plane of manifestation. Minerva is universal wisdom, which interposes itself as a directive force when certain decisions are necessary. In the simple terms of psychology, Dionysos manifests as aspiration, and Athena as judgment or prudence. These various embodiments become the persons of a wonderful dramatic play, for which the world is, indeed, the stage.

To understand the details of this ritualistic drama it is necessary to have some acquaintance with Greek philosophy, especially as this pertains to psychology. All learning has as its legitimate ends the luring forth out of the human constitution those internal resources by which, first, self-knowing and, later, universal-knowing are made possible. The machinery of this wonderful plan was perfected in the very process of creation. Each creature was endowed with such capacities and potentials as were necessary to its own perfection. The Greeks did not conceive of a theology as we know it. With them, growth was not a redemption but a natural unfoldment. The seed, for example, did not imprison a plant unfairly or by some dictate of autocratic divinity. As the little green sprig came through the ground, the plant was not proclaiming an escape from the seed, but revealing the true purpose of the seed. Man is locked within his body as the germ is enclosed by the seed. This is not a misfortune or a punishment or a disaster; it is a perfectly proper and natural fact which must be accepted without extensive moralism. Nature proclaims no feud between the seed and the plant that grows from it; nor should man consider himself at war with his body or in conflict with his ignorance. All conditions are degrees in the unfoldment of life through the wonderful experience of living. Each step of the way is right and proper, and things outgrown become the foundations of future achievements.

There is within man, however, a longing after liberty. We all instinctively resent the limitations imposed by environment. By this we can mean either the intimate environment of our own unenlightened personalities or the larger environment of collective unenlightenment. This very resentment is the human interpretation of the instinct to grow. The resentment itself is an interpretation on the level of thought and emotion. We must dramatize processes which in Nature are simple, direct, and inevitable. Man therefore thinks of his body either as an instrument of gratification or as a restriction upon his ambitions and aspirations. Both attitudes are overtones related to a simple fact. Body itself is in a process of continuous unfoldment and



can supply the human being with means for the accomplishment of a variety of ends. By use, the body sustains and supports; by abuse, it inhibits and destroys. This is not because the body is good or bad, but because its fate is in the keeping of a creature capable of excessive attitudes. We all resent the body most after we have treated it badly.

Unlike other later religious groups, the Greeks highly respected and even venerated the diversified phenomena of Nature. They preferred to live in a good world; that is, in a world of itself essentially benevolent. They were not foolish enough to overlook the possibilities of natural disaster, but they were convinced that most human difficulties arose, not from the tyranny of Nature but from the ignorance of men. Ignorance, and not corruption, was their adversary, which they were resolved to overcome. Instead of assuming that corruption caused ignorance, they were convinced that ignorance caused corruption. Therefore, corruption was not a principle or an energy or an inevitable force, or a corrupt spirit, but simply a false interpretation due to the limitation of human nature. The perversities of childhood are not due to a studied determination to be evil, but to a lack of understanding by which conduct was left without proper direction and control.

Some moderns have been inclined to assume that the Greeks were immoral or amoral in some of their convictions. This may be true if we view them in the perspective of our own time and from the standard of culture which we have fashioned for ourselves. Actually, Greek ethics was little different from later European ethics. In both cases we have a code violated according to human advantages and purposes. Some of the Greeks were among the noblest of mortals, and others among the most corrupt of mankind. We cannot measure the nobility by the corruption, or the corruption by the nobility. Individuals in any social system will live as they please, obeying what satisfies them and disobeying that which interferes with their instincts. Theological morality has not been able to prevent corruption any more successfully than did Greek pantheism. Men are good from within themselves, and being good find good in all things, or they are corrupt within themselves, and being corrupt find corruption everywhere around them. To be factual, therefore, we cannot confuse a conviction with popular conduct. To do so would discredit every fine and beautiful contribution that has been made to human living.

Substantially, the Greeks believed growth to be a joyous journey along the paths of wisdom and faith. They saw no particular virtue in repentance, nor did they feel that the conduct of their remote ancestors was responsible for their difficulties. Strangely enough, they did not expect their gods to be perfect, and possibly hoped that the deities held the same moderate attitude toward their productions. The



individual did the best he could, improved himself insofar as his capacities permitted, tried to keep the faith he knew, knew the faith he kept, and faced the future with a good hope. He did not expect to be challenged beyond his capacities or be held responsible for situations beyond his control. Yet, with it all, he never fell into smugness and satisfaction. His culture always produced types of minds which plagued any conceit that he might seek to maintain. In an atmosphere of skeptics, cynics, critics, and the like, he found endless stimulation and a certain amount of constructive irritation. He must have had some abilities, for he contributed more to the foundations of art, science, medicine, literature, law, philosophy, and religion than any other people of the known world. Others may have had equal or even greater knowledge, but they had no systematic program for the release of that knowledge into the descending channels of human progress.

Most of their contributions were essentially progressive. The Greeks did not have it in their minds or hearts to spend much time on regrets, remorse, repentances, or penances. They conserved their resources to solve problems rather than to debate the deficiencies of the universal scheme. The more they examined, the more convinced they became that solution lay in enlightened understanding. Injustice is an appearance sustained by misunderstanding. The only thing in Nature that requires correction is human perspective. Over this there is no proper cause for grief, especially when we thoughtfully observe that everything necessary for the solution of the dilemma is always present if we have the wit to find it. To the Greek it was more important to know where he was going than to theorize on where he had come from. This may have been a limitation, but it certainly saved some lost motion.

Although there were many differences of opinion among Greek scholars, there was comparatively little serious bitterness. They contradicted each other cheerfully, and called each other hard names with a good grace. For the most part, however, criticism was a challenge, not an affront. Those who gave it generously had to learn to receive it generously. There was a quality of sportmanship in learning which only ended on the threshold of politics. The Athenian statesmen appear to have been a rather unpleasant lot, utterly deficient in a sense of humor. These were the ones who were responsible for most of the persecutions which afflicted the Greek schools. There is no indication that the philosophers ever attempted any violent persecution of each other. If they disagreed, they gathered up their attitudes and their followers, departed to another corner of the forum, and opened their own academy. As some schools became powerful, it might have seemed that they would attempt to repress lesser groups who opposed



their teachings, but we find no record of this occurrence. The air was a vast expanse large enough to contain the words and ideas of all. That which was good would sustain itself, and that which was worthless would ultimately evaporate.

The theological-minded may be outraged by the prevailing lack of contrition and concern over the heavy burdens of faith. The Greeks, however, frankly declined to accept faith as a burden. They preferred to interpret it as the natural and perfect proof of wisdom, judgment, thoughtfulness, love, and usefulness. Some attained a considerable degree of success in the practice of their own doctrines; others were less notable in this respect. This digression is more or less necessary in order to understand a psychological approach. Without this approach, the grand scheme of life, as the Greeks understood it, would seem strange and inconsistent.



There is much to indicate that by the time the more important schools of Greek philosophy were formed the concept of metempsychosis had gained considerable favor. Rebirth offered a larger perspective on the pattern of human life and destiny. The Greeks undoubtedly received the tradition from Asia, but found it most compatible with their own ideas. This does not mean that all the Grecian schools favored this doctrine. Some rejected it entirely; others considered it in a modified form; but most were aware, at least, that such a belief had a wide and sincere following. The descent of life into form was not necessarily associated with the idea of punishment. The seed that was sown into the earth was not punished when it was cast from the hand of the sower or when it was covered with the soil; rather it was given an opportunity to fulfill itself. If man obeyed the law of Nature and planted the grain, he might reasonably hope that through the bounty of Nature he would reap a good harvest. Man, descending into birth, was not therefore condemned to exile from his native land any more than a traveler who journeyed to a far place. If a man were exiled by his state, he departed and considered himself punished. If he chose to take up his abode in another region, he



traveled there and considered himself fortunate and satisfied. There was no more reason to assume that man's exile was involuntary than that it was voluntary. In a state above and beyond the limitations of body, the self might choose to sacrifice its security and tranquillity in search of a larger and more luminous destiny. Under such conditions, souls flow into birth upon tides which are neither good nor bad, but are according to the divine will.

Men do not regard themselves as punished because they must eat or sleep or care for their possessions. That which is natural is accepted. Birth is natural, and therefore to those of serious mind entirely acceptable. The adversary takes the form of the interval between the present state of the individual and his concept of that which is possible to him. This noble dissatisfaction presses him on to the fulfillment of things inwardly held to be greater truths and greater good. Ignorance should not be regretted; it should be outgrown. That man is not more than he is, is neither fortunate nor unfortunate, but that man is, indeed, wise who, accepting the fact, builds upon it the foundation of things hoped for. In this spirit the universe was regarded as an abode of beings of several orders and classes, degrees and qualities, estates and conditions. Man lives in a populous universe, and in the course of his growth he has had innumerable contacts with creatures of many kinds. From each he learned something, and to each he imparted something. Progress was a mutual interchange of ideas, experiences, hopes, and opinions. Step by step the human being advanced, each apparent delay contributing, finally, to the ultimate accomplishment.

Theseus was the self gradually attaining heroic proportions. His adventures were a veiled report of growth and of those vicissitudes which advanced or seemed to delay the progress of the inner life. The Greeks had no question about the heroic destiny of man. They knew that he must become fruitful and bear his harvest. They required no proof or assurance beyond the evident. Their whole concern was to co-operate as completely as possible with a program which they acknowledged to be imminently suitable. They were not inclined to question the program or to debate about its adequacy. Whether they accepted it or not and whether they agreed with it or not, it was inevitable, and to grieve over inevitables and to defend or attack them was folly. Convinced that the universe bore witness to a sufficient creative purpose, there was no need for debate, but a still pressing need for conscious and voluntary fulfillment.

By instruction, the human mind was invited to reveal itself and to offer its resources to the personality which, to a measure, it sustained. It was not important to become informed in the sense of transforming the intellect into a storehouse for the ideas of others. It was necessary, however, for the truth seeker to experience the inward realization of



his own place in the plan. But, first, he had to be invited to undertake the adventure of self-discovery. Perhaps this required inspiration from others more informed, example from others more proficient, and a statement of incentive with a clear perception into rewards and ultimate compensation. Always, however, the individual must be permitted to experience for himself the dimensions of his own requirements. He was not to be forced, coerced, or converted—certainly not by argument and oratory. Nature gave no example of such methods, yet in her own quiet way accomplished all things.

By a becoming modesty, the Greeks represented the concept of the hero without implying a state of perfection. The hero, to accomplish his purposes, was required to depend upon the help of gods and godlings and the assistance of mortals. He had numerous experiences, of which the labyrinth was an outstanding example. In popular usage, the word *labyrinth* has come to represent involvement and confusion. It can thus apply to any situation on any level of function in which it is possible for the self to become disoriented. What more appropriate device could be used, for instance, to symbolize the human mind wandering in a world of opinions? We live in a state of intellectual contradiction which results in uncertainty and indecision. The hero voluntarily subjects himself to the dangers of the labyrinth in order to perform a signal service for his nation. The mind in its eternal quest for wisdom accepts the challenge of ignorance and enters into the vale of illusion and uncertainty. Having reached the ultimate condition of objectivity, it is unaware of its true position or the means of escaping from the dilemma. The minotaur, as the symbol of the acceptance of materialism, is part animal and part human. What better device could be created to impersonate the physical state of human society?

If objectivity—that is, the illusion of the reality of the material—overcomes the resolution of the self, the mortal world claims another victim. Materialism feeds upon the lives of the youths and maidens. Each generation binds the hopes and aspirations of the future to its own delinquencies, so that the young inherit the tragedy of the past. Obviously, the confusion of our way of life is only a symbol of the confusion within ourselves. The physical personality of man is a composite of animal and human qualities. The bull-headed man has become associated with the concept of stubbornness and relentlessness to accomplish his own purposes at the expense of others. The bull-headed world is, therefore, a state of disaster which justifies and perpetuates itself by irrational addiction to false concepts about life and living.

A Rosicrucian writer of the 17th century was of the opinion that the labyrinth motif as it is found among widely diversified culture-groups is based upon the convolutions of the intestinal tract, and, like



the passageways of Dante's inferno, signify the involvements of the mortal sphere. If the minotaur were armed with no other weapons, it held rude stones to be cast at those who sought to capture or restrain its influence. The blind brutality so often associated with extreme materialistic attitudes is clearly intimated. The Greeks could not consider the minotaur as an embodiment of evil, but they did successfully delineate the qualities of ignorance. The monster in his lair was, therefore, ignorance ruling over confusion, which was its dark and proper abode. It survived by destroying, and received the best as its selected victims. Each one of us is subject to the minotaur in ourselves until, like Theseus, we call upon our heroic resources and overcome the irrational creature.

Even courage, however, is not enough. Like Samson bringing down the house of the Philistines, we may overcome the adversary and then perish with him. This emphasizes the importance of the clue—that is, the thread by which we can retrace our way through the labyrinth to the door by which we entered. Here is a very subtle and, at the same time, most revealing thought. As man descended into the mystery of body according to the laws of generation, he followed a natural course. This means that to free himself he must retrace his steps. Hermes taught the same doctrine in the *Pymander*. Souls falling into generation received vestments, or bodies, of increasing density and opacity until finally they were encased in the physical form. Here they exist like seeds, the germs of which are both protected and encased by the hard shells. Descent is, therefore, the process of becoming seedlike. At physical birth, the physical potential of the seed is released. At adolescence, the emotional potential is set free. At maturity, the intellectual potential is loosened, and at spiritual awakening, the soul-power of the seed is liberated. The physical, emotional, and mental releases may only orient the individual within the labyrinth. He may be inspired to reorganize the tortuous passageways or to transform the dark and mysterious abode into a better world. Even these aspirations, however, do not touch the substance of the dilemma. The hero-self remains captured in the snare until it learns to make use of the clue, or the thread of liberation.

Incarnation in material form does not destroy life; it merely restricts its manifestations. Always there is available the thread by which release becomes possible. Perhaps we can define this thread as a quality of insight, or sight inward. In the course of daily living we must make use of internal resources and environmental facilities. No matter what we do, we are revealing through action a process which is a clue to the solution of our own riddle. It may be that we desire to build a home, either physically or psychologically. Trial and error have revealed the rules which must be followed if we expect a



reasonable degree of success. Whether we organize a business, master an art, become skilled in a science, or attain proficiency in a craft or trade, we are forever amassing clues, which, unfortunately, we do not apply to their most legitimate and natural ends. To succeed in life, we must unfold our schemes and plans according to laws and processes over which we have no direct control. Thus it follows that all mortal learning reveals eternal truths if we can penetrate the mask of outer appearances.

The material world is the shadow of a mystery, and from an examination of the shadow we can gain a quantity of useful information relating to the mystery itself. This we fail to do when we focus attention entirely upon the plane of physical activity. As a result we live unintelligently in relation to ourselves, while we accomplish brilliantly in relation to our external enterprises. We simply fail to apply the facts accumulated through experience to the unfoldment of our own potentials. In this way we give good advice which we never follow, we learn useful lessons without understanding their import, and we become a generation of external successes and internal failures. It may be that we are so concerned with slaying the minotaur that we fail to provide ourselves with the means of escaping from the sphere over which this creature holds dominion.

Between the spirit, which is the true self, and the personal ego, which is the false self, there must always be a valid connection. The false self is sustained by the energies which flow from the causal sphere. So long as animation continues and functions are maintained, the body is suspended by an invisible cord of sympathy from its own divine source. The fact that we live is itself a promise that we can live well if we make the necessary endeavor. A cord, or braided strand, was part of the regalia of many ancient Mystery systems. It represented the umbilicus of the unborn spiritual embryo by which the fetus receives necessary nutrition before it is capable of self-nourishment. Actually, the cord stands for certain magnetic sympathies which bind the living to the source of life. As long as this contact is maintained, creatures encased in bodies can extricate themselves and return to the origin of themselves.

In practical thinking, therefore, the individual should consider himself as the physical extension or shadow of his own true nature. The *Anthropos*, or essential self, is not obscured in the mystery of generation. Rather it permits or causes a fragment of its own eternal living substance to descend into the illusion of matter in order that by this mystery the overself can experience the fact of limitation on the level of generation. The fragment is bound to its parent-source by the cord, or clue, which is referred to in the 11th chapter of *Ecclesiastes* as the silver cord which is loosened at death. As life descends along this



cord to sustain its own projection, the projection itself may ascend back along the cord to reidentity with its own source. The journey outward is toward involvement and illusion; the journey inward is toward reunion with the divine nature. Whether this path be referred to as a narrow road or a thread is comparatively unimportant. Security is the experience of the availability of a means for the restoration in the divine power.

Ariadne as the psyche, or soul, becomes the intermediary between the objective and the subjective. In one interpretation she represents faith which supplies the essential clue. The objective human being inevitably experiences the fact of soul-power in the use of his mental and emotional qualities or attributes. He finds himself capable of thought, a force or power which can lead in two directions and may well be symbolized by a double-headed ax. Thought turned downward makes the material involvement in illusion a certainty. Thought turned upward is an instrument for the release of self through the gradual unfoldment of inner resources. Emotion turned downward brings ruin through excess and through uncontrollable instincts and appetites. Emotion turned upward, refined and sublimated, expresses itself as faith, hope, and love, which also impel the personality to the improvement of its own compound organism. Thus man may contemplate the soul as a source of pressure within his own being by which he is impelled according to the determinations of his character.

It is not unusual for the human being to experience his soul-powers as something superior to his revealed code of conduct. Most will admit that they know better than they do. There is always a conflict between the instinct to nobility and the impulse to physical gratification. We always feel that if the adverse pressures of living were not so intense we would be better persons. We are less likely, however, to take the attitude that if we were better persons there would be less pressure in living. The concept of soul, as it was perfected in ancient scholarship, is summarized in the words of St. Paul: "When I would do good, evil is ever nigh unto me." The good is, for the most part, internal, and the evil a compromise suggested for the sake of physical conveniences. While we are in the labyrinth, we are afraid to permit ourselves to express the more constructive instincts which arise within our characters. The fact of soul, therefore, results from an apperceptive realization of an inner good which is frustrated by the demands of the flesh and the requirements of human society.

Religion builds strongly upon the facilities offered by the nobler instincts of man. The cultivation of these resources is encouraged and the devout are admonished to trust their futures to the dictates of their own nobler instincts. Devotion to this naturally brings conflict, which either strengthens resolution or dissolves the higher purpose.



The small child is usually inspired to a highly protective attitude when a little animal, like a kitten or a rabbit, is given to its care. The average adult is far kinder to children than to others of his own age. Helplessness or dependence releases a powerful protective instinct and, therefore, proves that this instinct is available. Fine art, great music, or a simple landscape in the afternoon inspire a variety of gentle moods. Thus we are constantly reminded that somewhere in our composition lurks a part of ourselves which adores the Supreme One, loves the beautiful, and desires to serve the good. May we not say that the realization of this through experience is the discovery of a clue or, in fact, is actually the clue itself? If we can be better for the moment, we can be better forever. If there is more to us than we realize, that *more* can be fully realized. The science, then, of the unfoldment of our own inner beauty and its application to the problems of life transforms growth from a series of trials and errors to a purposeful and integrated plan. In every function of living we are aware of the largeness of our possibilities as contrasted with the smallness of our achievements. The discovery can lead to wonder and static acceptance, but it can also lead to a determination to accomplish all that is possible with ourselves and through ourselves.

Learning also can be likened to the thread of Ariadne. The moment we dedicate ourselves to the search for knowledge, we advance gradually but inevitably toward the supreme source of wisdom. No matter how humble the beginning may be, we can never perfect ourselves in any branch of learning without extending our endeavors into many fields of research. The simplest arts and crafts offer limitless opportunities for self-improvement if we are willing to accept the gentle pressure of awakening appreciation. It is a pity, indeed, that we are tempted to linger on a level of moderate accomplishment. When we reach that degree of skill or proficiency which enables us to make a satisfactory economic adjustment, we may decide that further progress is unnecessary. As soon as we stop using time, we begin wasting time.

The revelation of internal capacity must convince us that we have resources which can be unfolded if there is sufficient incentive or desire. Unfortunately we have not yet experienced the adventure of self-development. It is wrong to assume that growth is a burden upon our abilities or capacities. Nature is forever inviting us to seek more deeply into ourselves for the enrichment of our characters. Lest we overlook this dimension of essential progress, the clues and symbols are always present. Life, considered as one unit of personal experience, offers numerous inducements to the expansion of our interests and abilities. It is really more difficult to resist the challenge of living than to accept it graciously. Most of the troubles which disturb peace of



mind are due to man's rejection of personal opportunity. We are all in the labyrinth and we are all concerned over the probable appearance of the minotaur in the form of overhanging adversity. Our numerous troubles have a common origin in our spiritual, mental, emotional, or physical inadequacy. At the same time we have a solid conviction that we are adequate if we are minded to discipline our faculties. This is a good idea, but it implies a continuity of effort which we regard as distasteful. We want the harvest without the labor of tending the field. Yet, who among us will rise and admit incapacity? We prefer to assume that we can do everything, and then do nothing. The sense of superiority in us is also a clue to our latent abilities. To take an attitude of being superior without justification is to be egotistic. The proof of ability is always demonstrated on the plane of utility. In the Greek fable, we are assured that when we descended into the obscuration of materiality we took with us a thread so that we could not become hopelessly lost. If we follow this thread back into our own causal natures through the assistance of religion, philosophy, and science, we need not fear the terrors of the subterranean world. We are not seeking a strange and distant land as we unfold our resources; we are simply returning to a state that is natural and intended. The journey toward truth is always the journey home.

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FOR AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO  
ALL OUR FRIENDS & READERS, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 79.

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### THE EASTER BUNNY

Because Easter is determined by the position of the moon, it has always been regarded as a lunar holiday. The Egyptian name for the hare was *un*, which also means *open* or *to open*. Hares are born with their eyes open, which caused the belief that they were sacred to the moon. The year was represented by the paschal egg and was opened or broken by the date of Easter. Probably the entire association of the bunny, the Easter egg, and the Lenten ceremony originated in Egypt.

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### LITERARY NOTE

A young Jewish lady, by name Rebecca Gratz, was the model for the character of Rebecca in Sir Walter Scott's novel, *IVANHOE*. Miss Gratz was a close friend of Washington Irving, and when Scott published his novel in 1819 he wrote to Irving that he had been inspired in his delineation of Rebecca's character by the beauty, charm, and piety of Miss Gratz. She was born on the 4th of March 1781, and lived to the age of 88 years.





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## Julian The Apostate

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FLAVIUS Claudius Julianus, surnamed Julian the Apostate, was born at Constantinople on the 17th of November, A. D. 331 or 332. He was of noble descent, although his ancestry presents a rather confused pattern. Julian was the son of Julius Constantius and his second wife, Baslina, the grandson of Constantius Chlorus and his second wife, Theodora, and the nephew of Constantine the Great. Julian was no exception to the general rule that those born near to the purple lived precariously. Constantius II, the son of Constantine the Great, upon his accession ordered that all the male descendants of Constantius Chlorus and his second wife, Theodora, be massacred. Julian and his elder half-brother, Gallus, were spared because they were small children who could not be regarded as dangerous to the ambitions of Constantius II. The emperor caused the two boys to be educated in strict confinement in different places in Ionia and Nicomedia.

Julian, as he reported in his epistles to the Senate and people of Athens, was treated with all the honors and considerations appropriate to his station, but was constantly surrounded by spies eager to report the most harmless of his words and actions to the emperor. Between his fifth and fourteenth years, Julian received a careful and learned education, and with his half-brother, who joined him in the castle of Macellum, he was instructed in the basic principles of the Christian religion. It is recorded that the teachers of these young men were Nicocles Luco, a grammarian, and Ecebolus, a rhetorician. These scholars were under the supervision of the eunuch, Mardonius, who was suspected of being secretly a pagan, and of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia.

In 351, Gallus was released from his genteel imprisonment, appointed Caesar, and made governor of the East. He exerted his most



benevolent influence, and through his mediation Julian found his condition improved, but his liberties were still curtailed. Gallus took up residence at Antioch, and Julian, taking advantage of his new privileges, renounced his Christian education and was initiated by the Master Maximus into the Mysteries at Ephesus. He then continued his education at Constantinople under the learned Ecebolus and Nicocles Luco. In A. D. 354, Gallus was deprived of his authority and executed in Dalmatia by order of Constantius. It was only by the greatest good fortune that Julian survived the resulting upheavals.

Because of the zeal with which the Emperor Constantius had eliminated his own relatives, Julian was the only other surviving male of the imperial family. The emperor was without male issue, and the preservation of the imperial descent became a pressing matter. Constantius therefore recalled Julian, who had visited Greece to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries. After his initiation Julian was for some time closely confined at Milan, where he was again constantly spied upon and lived in hourly dread that he would share the fate of his half-brother. In this emergency he found a powerful friend in the Empress Eusebia, a woman of strong character and a sincere affection for Julian. Through her intercession the young prince was able to obtain a personal interview with Constantius. The scholarly and honorable character of Julian allayed the emperor's fears and suspicions, and the prince was permitted the liberties of a private citizen at Athens. This famous city was still an important center of Greek learning, and among the philosophers, scholars, and artists of Athens, Julian spent the happiest years of his life. Among the company of young men with whom the prince associated in the pursuit of knowledge was Gregory Nazianzen, who afterwards became a celebrated Christian orator. Almost immediately Julian attracted attention both by his talents and his knowledge. He was dedicated to Greek literature and philosophy, and of all the imperial Romans he possessed the largest attainments in these fields.

During this same period Julian succeeded in being initiated into the Rites of Mithras, which increased his standing among the learned. In the meantime the Emperor Constantius was heavily burdened, not only with the interior problems of Roman politics, but also with the threat of invasion of the Persians in the east, and the Germans and Sarmatians in the west and the north. In opposition to the advice of his council, but according to the insistence of Eusebia, the emperor summoned Julian from Athens, and on the 6th of November 355, the young man was solemnly proclaimed Caesar, and as a guarantee of imperial sincerity was given the hand of the emperor's sister Helena, the youngest child of Constantine the Great. It has been said that Julian obeyed the summons reluctantly, because the Greek Minerva



had more charms for him than the Roman Jupiter, and he was too well-acquainted with the mythology of his ancestors not to know that even the embraces of Jupiter were sometimes fatal.

When he was proclaimed Caesar, the young Julian was invested with the governments of the provinces beyond the Alps, but he did not set out for Gaul until somewhat later. Accompanied by 350 soldiers, he wintered at Vienna, devoting his time to literary pursuits. Between 356 and 360, he was generally victorious in his campaigns and found time to continue his philosophical and literary interests. While wintering in Paris, he wrote his oration on the death of Sallust. In April of the year 360, Constantius ordered the flower of the Gallic legions to march into the East. The move was inspired by the politicians in the court of Constantius. Realizing that Julian was gaining in public favor, they advised the emperor to send his troops to Persia under a different commander. Julian at first objected, but acknowledged allegiance to the emperor and submitted. When the troops reached Paris on their way to the East, they mutinied against the command of Constantius and resolved to proclaim Julian as emperor. On this occasion the prince used every method at his command to persuade the legions to submit to the imperial will. There is no historical indication of personal ambition on his part.

Julian, like many of the Latins who came under Greek influence, was strongly addicted to a belief in omens. Strange happenings were held to indicate divine favor, and even Pythagoras predicted events from the flights of birds. It was a custom when a prince of the imperial family took over the command of his army to hang crowns made of laurel leaves in the streets through which the procession passed. In the first Gallic town which Julian entered, one of these crowns was detached by the wind and fell upon his head. Later, while Julian was marching through Vienna, he was greeted by an old woman, who impressively saluted him as emperor and one favored by the gods. These foreshadowings of future events certainly impressed the prince and may have influenced his later conduct.

When Constantius ordered the Gallic legions to engage in the Eastern war, the soldiers were quick to air their grievances. Many of the legionnaires had married Gallic women and had come to look upon this territory as a second homeland. Many of them, and certainly the officers, were aware of the true motive behind the command of Constantius. The army, devoted to Julian, rose as one man and proclaimed him emperor. After his remonstrances failed, the prince retired to the palace of Thermes, where he concealed himself and refused to have any part in the uprising. Deputies from the legions appeared before the palace shouting: "Long live Julian-Augustus!" Still the prince remained in seclusion. After darkness settled upon



the city, armed multitudes bearing torches filled the streets.

The prince was faced with a heavy decision. He longed to return to Athens and devote his life to learning. He thought of his books and the shady groves where the philosophers gathered. He knew that if he accepted the imperial office his life would be burdened with the problems of state and the conspiracies of the court. It is said that while he hid himself in the palace of Thermes he resorted to the magical rites which he had learned in the temples of initiation. He asked that some omen or indication be given to him as to the course which he should pursue. As he practiced the sacred ritual, he drifted into a state of consciousness which was neither sleeping nor waking. In this trance he knew his soul to be released on the threshold of strange and fantastic regions. What then occurred, he later recalled and recorded.

Suddenly Julian seemed to see a handsome young man surrounded by a radiance standing beside him and holding in his hands a cornucopia. The apparition resembled a sculptured work of art in the Roman capital, which represented the genius of the empire. "Julian," said this mysterious being, "I have planned your destiny since your birth. Without seeing me, you have heard me speak to you in your dreams, but your weakness of spirit often kept me away. Today, if you refuse the empire, my protective mission is ended; if you accept, I shall be your guide to the end of the span which the Supreme God has allotted to you, and you shall see me once more when your career nears the end."

It can never be known whether Julian's theurgical experiment invoked the supernatural power, or the voice of his own ambition came as a voice from heaven. In any event, he was awakened from his reverie by the sound of the soldiers breaking through the barricades of the palace. The impatient army was resolved to bring him forth dead or alive. A thousand hands hastened him forward by the light of the torches. The hands were gentle but insistent, and he could not resist the will of his soldiers. A crown was improvised from the gold chain of a soldier. It was placed on the brow of the new Augustus, and the purple flags of the legion fell upon his shoulders. No other Roman emperor was elevated by a more sincere enthusiasm than this quiet man who wished to live in a world of learning.

Julian next sent a conciliatory message to Constantius demanding to be acknowledged as Augustus and to be invested with supreme authority in those regions and provinces over which he had ruled as Caesar; namely, Gaul, Spain, and Britain. Finally, after long negotiations, it appeared evident that no reconciliation between Julian and Constantius would be possible. For a time it appeared that a terrible civil war was inevitable. The gods, however, had decreed otherwise, and



Constantius died suddenly in Cilicia on the 3rd of November 361. It was reported that on his deathbed Constantius officially designated Julian as his successor. Regardless of this, however, the results would have been the same. Julian made his triumphal entry into Constantinople on the 11th of December of the same year. Soon afterwards, the body of Constantius was brought to the Golden Horn and, by the edict of Julian, was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles with all solemnity and magnificence.

It is worthy of note that although Julian ordered Christian burial for the body of Constantius the new emperor had long renounced the faith for himself. Several circumstances influenced his mind away from the new faith. He was certainly dominated by his love for Greek learning and the teachings of the classical philosophers. Perhaps more directly he was appalled by the hypocrisy, cruelty, and baseness of Constantius who claimed the religion as his own. Julian was further convinced that Constantine the Great had embraced Christianity from the most unworthy political motives and he was further disillusioned by the cruel and persecuting spirit with which the various Christian sects were exterminating and discrediting each other. Although privately a pagan since boyhood, Julian did not publicly announce himself as a follower of the old gods until he was proclaimed emperor. This was not a political problem, however, and had no effect upon his prestige. Once his apostasy was known, there was general consternation among the Christian groups who feared a repetition of earlier anti-Christian demonstrations.

All the sects who nursed misgivings were variously relieved of their fears or hopes. Julian immediately issued an edict in which he proclaimed perfect toleration for the sincere members of all parties. There was some consternation among the Christians when Julian allowed the Jews to rebuild their great Temple at Jerusalem and he collected funds from both Jewish and Christian groups to be used for the erection of pagan temples. In all, he certainly favored non-Christians in public life, but made no effort to complicate their private beliefs. There is no solid historical ground for the tradition that Julian embraced Christianity shortly before his death. This story seems to have been invented to solve a theological dilemma.

From the date of his entrance into Constantinople in 361, the life of Julian followed in the courses which he had most feared. In December of 362, while wintering, he composed his books against the Christian religion. The following February he wrote the *Misopogon*, and shortly after marched against the Persians. On the 26th of June 363, the rear of the Roman army was suddenly attacked by the Persians. Julian, who commanded the vanguard, hastened to the relief of his troops without his cuirass, because the heat of the region made heavy



armor almost insupportable. The Persians were repulsed, and fled in confusion. Julian was pursuing them with the utmost bravery, when in the midst of the confusion he was shot by an arrow through his liver. He fell from his horse mortally wounded and was carried to his tent. Fully aware of his approaching death, he took leave of his friends with touching and beautiful words and with most sincere religious and philosophical convictions. He died the following morning at the age of 32 years. He was emperor less than two years, and by his own request his remains were buried at Tarsus.

A summary of the character of Julian must depend largely upon the authorities consulted. One writer has said that the pagans extolled Julian far too high, and the Christians debased him far too low. His character has been burdened by his apostasy, upon which most judgments are based. To quote one biographer: "Julian was great as an emperor, unique as a man, and remarkable as an author." It has also been said that his talents, his principles, and his deeds were alike extraordinary. He desired more than anything else to be considered a philosopher, yet it cannot be said that he lacked courage, prudence, or judgment. As a military man he was outstanding; yet in the midst of battle he reserved time to advance his mind and to aid the causes of his friends. His literary productions were numerous, consisting of orations on various subjects, historical treatises, satires, and letters. His more intimate writings were never intended for public circulation. There is no indication that Julian possessed any exceptional creative genius, and, as he himself fully realized, his life did not permit him to become a master of learning. One point is clear, however; he wrote always from his own heart, sincerely desiring to improve the quality of his own mind and to instruct others.

The philosophical convictions of Julian were essentially Neoplatonic. While he was devoted to the writings of Plato, he was by nature inclined to mystical preoccupations. His early Christian training, his lonely years of virtual imprisonment, and his later acquaintance with teachers and philosophers associated with Neoplatonism intensified the tendencies of his disposition. The popular report that the emperor was given to superstitious rites and practices merely indicates that he was a transcendentalist and a thaumaturgist according to the Neoplatonic implications of these terms. Even today an inclination toward mysticism is sufficient to cause even the most respectable thinker to be convicted of vagary.

Julian believed himself to be a re-embodiment of Alexander the Great. Like the Macedonian, Julian was called from his studies to become the head of an empire concerned principally with the maintenance of its temporal power and domains. Alexander slept on the battlefield with the books of Aristotle serving as his pillow, and Julian



held the writings of Plato in similar veneration. He was accompanied on his campaign by philosophers and scholars, and on his deathbed conversed with Maximus concerning the immortality of the soul in a manner reminiscent of the last discourse of Socrates. As an initiate of the ancient Mysteries, Julian could scarcely have rejected the transcendental implications of these rites. He obviously accepted them and practiced their disciplines insofar as he was able.



THE DIETIES OF THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

While in the city of Ephesus, Julian formally renounced his Christian baptism, and was initiated into the cult of the Mother of the Gods in subterranean chambers beneath the Temple of Hecate, which was one of the vast complex of buildings which composed the sanctuary of Diana. At that time the Ephesian Master of the Neoplatonic sect was the aged and venerable Maximus of Ephesus, a disciple of Iamblichus and a celebrated Adept in the secret science of theurgy. Julian had been referred to Maximus by Edesius of Pergamus, who then presided over the Neoplatonic School. According to Madame Blavatsky, the ritual used on the occasion was Mithraic, and it should be remembered that Neoplatonism had already permeated all of these systems and embraced their secret rituals. She writes: "When Maxime, the Ephesian, initiated the Emperor Julian into the Mithraic Mysteries, he pronounced as the usual formula of the rite, the following: 'By this blood, I wash thee from thy sins. The word of the Highest has entered unto thee, and His Spirit hence forth will rest upon thee NEWLY-BORN, *the now*—begotten of the Highest God... Thou art the son of Mithra.'" (See *Isis Unveiled*.)



A proper estimation of these elements in the forming and developing of the mind of Julian is essential to an understanding of his literary remains. The principal works of Julian which have survived are his eight orations, his letters, numbering approximately eighty-six, four books, and several epigrams. The most controversial of his productions, *Adversus Christianos*, originally in three books written during the Persian campaign, is now considered lost. Theodosius II ordered all known copies to be destroyed. It happened, however, that Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, in his *Contra Julianum*, in his attempt to answer the charges of Julian, preserved a part of the emperor's original text. This was translated and published by the English Platonist Thomas Taylor, London, 1809, under the title, *The Arguments of the Emperor Julian Against the Christians*. Cyril of Alexandria has gained a dubious notoriety for his part in the assassination of Hypatia and his share in the disappearance of the valuable utensils from the high altar of his church. Even in 19th-century England, Mr. Taylor found that the remarks of Julian on this highly-controversial subject were extremely distasteful, and the greater part of the edition was suppressed and destroyed.

Cyril confessed that in his *Contra Julianum* he had refrained from presenting several of the weightiest arguments against the Christian sect which were included in Julian's original survey of the situation. By inference, Cyril had no ready answers for these charges and considered discretion the better part of valor. It is always a pity when important records are destroyed, even though they be contrary to prevailing fashions. There is no practical end to be gained by a detailed examination of the fragments of Cyril. They reveal substantially the attitudes of most enlightened pagans in those centuries of conflict which finally resulted in the overthrow of classical philosophy. Had Julian not been considered an apostate, his contributions would have been given far greater consideration. As one recent author has pointed out, the objections advanced by Julian have never been answered, and references to them are met with an attack upon the man himself.

The letters of Julian are devoted to various subjects and have solid historical importance. Some were addressed to his half-brother Gallus, and others to priests, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, and private persons. Julian's veneration for scholarship is clearly indicated in his correspondence. When he addressed himself to the learned, it was with humility and genuine affection. In such letters there is no intimation that Julian was a prince, Caesar, or emperor. In several of the epistles he entreated scholars to write frequently because he was constantly in need of their encouragement and friendship. When, however, he addressed the Senate and people of Athens, he emerged as a statesman and carried his high office with grace and ease. The emperor





FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS JULIANUS

Circa A. D. 331-363

From Thomas Taylor's translation of *Arguments of the Emperor Julian*





—From Christian's *Histoire de La Magie*

THE GENIUS OF ROME APPEARING IN A VISION TO  
THE EMPEROR JULIAN





—From the *Works of Gustave Moreau*

### THE TRIUMPH OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The Emperor Julian was personally convinced that he was the re-embodiment of the soul of the Macedonian conqueror. This belief caused Julian to abandon dreams of worldly power and to cultivate ways of peace and philosophy.





—From Christian's *Histoire de La Magie*

SCENE FROM AN INITIATION RITUAL OF THE  
EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES



seemed to have a keen sense of humor and an aptitude to recognize his own shortcomings. He told of the awkward and ineffective measures which marked the beginning of his temporal authority. He acknowledged his own mistakes and was appropriately apologetic. The letters were well written and indicate that Julian was capable of expressing his thoughts and emotions clearly and effectively. Very few of the letters are of great length, and of several, only fragments are preserved.

Under the heading of *Orations*, there is a variety of productions. Although he certainly had slight respect for the Emperor Constantius, he prepared an encomium in which he put as good a face as possible on the deeds and character of his predecessor. As a rule, however, Julian was extremely critical of the whole imperial family, and found it in his heart to censure severely even Constantine the Great. Julian did, however, reserve words of the sincerest admiration for his patroness, the Empress Eusebia. The most important of the orations of Julian were the two, *Oration to the Sovereign Sun* and *Oration to the Mother of the Gods*. In these the emperor unfolded his own convictions with sincere emotional intensity. He visited the Temple of Cybele (the Mother of the Gods) at Pessinus and caused her worship to be restored. Thomas Taylor, in his translations of these two orations, supplied an extensive introduction and useful commentary showing the importance of Julian's references to the Pythagorean, Platonic, and Neoplatonic doctrines. The orations cannot be compared in profundity with the writings of Proclus or Plotinus, but they are dignified and reveal considerable scholarship.

There are also two orations on true and false cynicism, a letter of oratorical proportions to Sallust, and another, actually a dissertation, addressed to one of his former teachers, the philosopher Themistius. In this, Julian unfolds his own limitations to the end of demonstrating that he never could fulfill as emperor the high aspirations and expectations of his beloved tutor.

Of the books of Julian, special mention should be made of *The Caesars, or the Banquet*. This satire was composed after Julian had become emperor, and was influenced by the disillusionment of this high dignity. It consists of a discourse between Julian and a friend, probably Sallust. In the fable thus unfolded, Julian analyzed the virtues and vices of the Caesars according to his own estimation of their characters. The story unfolds thus: Romulus, founder of Rome, sacrificing at the Saturnalia, invited all the gods and Caesars to attend a banquet. Below the moon, in the highest region of the air, the repast was given. The Caesars were wafted upward to this tenuous region by the lightness of their immaterial bodies and by the revolutions of the moon. Four magnificent couches were spread for the superior



deities: Saturn, Jupiter, Juno, and Rhea. Somewhat less pretentious accommodations were arranged for the other deities according to their seniority. Silenus, a short, flat-nosed, and rotund divinity, acted as a court jester, his principal occupation being to discomfort the Caesars.

When the repast was ready and the gods were present, the various Caesars appeared, and, as a special concession, Alexander the Great was included in the group. The first to appear was Julius Caesar, of whom Silenus observed that the haughty Julius was ambitious enough to endeavor to dethrone Zeus. Then came Octavianus, who was given into the keeping of Zeno to be educated. Next appeared Tiberius, who was followed by the monster Caligula; after him, Claudius, and then Nero. Silenus observed that Nero, who was playing a harp, had made Apollo his model. "I shall soon uncrown him," replied Apollo, "He did not imitate me in everything, and when he did he was a bad imitator." It is not necessary to list all the Caesars and their contributions to the fable. The moral of the satire is that it is of greater utility to be a royal philosopher than a royal hero. Although Julian has been accused of including several complimentary remarks about himself in the satire, his actual purpose was to advance his conviction that learning was most necessary to those who occupied places of high authority.

The *Misopogon*, or the *Antiochian* is probably the most curious of the works of Julian. The *Misopogon* or *The Enemy of the Beard*, was directed against the inhabitants of Antioch. The circumstances which led to the project are well revealed through the severity and pertinence of the satire. Julian, while residing at Antioch, was ridiculed by the people of that city. Several aspersions were thrown on his beard in particular. It seems that the Antiochians had a preference for smooth chins, and ridiculed Julian because he allowed his beard to grow in ancient fashion. They took the attitude that his hirsute adornment was unstylish and decadent. Julian, in turn, had a case against Antioch. He held that the inhabitants were addicted to licentious and effeminate manners and had lost all ethical convictions.

Although Julian could easily have exercised his military and political powers and have revenged himself for the embarrassments to which he was subjected, he was contented to plead his case with an appropriate essay. It has been noted that such an inoffensive mode of retaliation would have been beyond the patience and power of most princes. He had been insulted by satires and libels, and his only revenge was his book, *The Enemy of the Beard*. In this he made a more complete and authoritative confession of his own faults than his adversaries could possibly have compiled. This imperial reply was publicly exposed before the gates of the palace, and the *Misopogon*, to quote an earlier writer, "still remains a singular monument of the



resentment, the wit, the humanity, and the indiscretion of Julian." (See Gibbon.)

A few sentences will indicate the tempo of Julian's remarks: "And, first, I will begin with my face. To this, formed by Nature not over beautiful, graceful, or becoming, my own perverseness and singularity have added this long beard, to punish it, as it were, for no other reason but because Nature has not made it handsome. Therefore I must suffer lice to scamper about it, like beasts through a thicket: I cannot indulge myself in eating voraciously, and must be cautious of opening my mouth wide when I drink, lest I swallow as many hairs as crumbs."

Later Julian adds: "Another circumstance, well known to you, I will also mention. Not satisfied with such an uncomely person, I lead a very rigid life. I absent myself from theaters, through mere stupidity; nor do I allow a play at court, such a dolt am I, except on the calends of the year, when I resemble a poor farmer bringing his rent, or taxes, to a rapacious landlord; and when I am there, I seem as solemn as at a sacrifice.... As to domestic affairs, sleepless nights on straw, and food less than enough, give a severity to my manners, totally repugnant to a luxurious city. Be not offended with me for this. A great and foolish mistake has from my childhood induced me to wage war with my stomach."

There is a fragment from a larger work now lost called "*The Duties of a Priest*." In this, Julian wrote to some high priest, referring to the obligations of those spiritual leaders who must set a noble and proper example to their followers. In this work Julian writes thus of the responsibilities of the rich and the powerful: "We ought therefore of our abundance to be communicative to all men, but especially to the virtuous; and to the indigent, as far as will relieve their necessities. I will add, though it may seem paradoxical, that it is a duty to give clothing and food to our enemies; for we give it to their natures, and not to their conduct."

In his *Epistle to the Athenians*, Julian refers to the incidence of his childhood: "Why should I mention those six years [345-351], in which we were educated in a kind of foreign country, and as strictly guarded as if we had been in Persia, no stranger, nor any of our friends, being admitted to us; where, secluded from all liberal studies, and debarred all intercourse with families of rank, we were forced to associate only with our domestics? From thence, by the assistance of the Gods, I was at length happily released; but my brother was most unfortunately inveigled to court. If there was any thing rustic and uncivilized in his deportment, it was owing to that mountainous education. He, therefore, who doomed us to it is justly chargeable with the blame. Thanks be to the Gods, philosophy has purified me; but this blessing was denied to my brother. For after he had exchanged the country for the



court, and had been invested with the purple, he immediately became an object of envy; nor did that envy cease, till, not contented him of the purple, it had accomplished his destruction. Yet though he might be deemed unfit to govern, surely he was not unworthy to live."

Libanius, in his panegyric on the counsulship of Julian, refers to letters which Gallus, then Caesar, received from Julian. There is every indication that these letters were written from the most sincere affection, and Libanius notes: "If his brother had attended to his letters, we should now have had two princes. For he who did not reign dared to admonish him who did." Julian insinuated that a conspiracy had been formed against Gallus by underlings resolved to make their fortunes. Constantius was of no assistance, as he preferred the advice of his own cook above the pleadings of his family. Gallus was beheaded in prison with his hands tied behind his back without even the formality of a trial.

In a brief work named *An Allegorical Fable*, Julian veiled thinly the crimes and misfortunes of the family of Constantine. The fable describes "a certain rich man," i. e. Constantine, thus: "So gross was his ignorance, that he thought nothing necessary but riches; nor in that art had he much experience, having acquired it, not by any fixed principle, but rather by use and habit.... Thus thinking that the number of his sons would sufficiently secure the continuance of his family, he used no endeavor to make them virtuous." This seems to conflict with other statements made by Julian that Constantine had given his children the most excellent education that could be conferred upon princes. Actually, Julian undoubtedly implied that the education had not been extended into the sphere of ethical philosophy. Of the fourteen princes descended from Constantius Chlorus, only five died natural deaths, and with Julian the male line of the Flavian or Constantine family ended.

Sixteen letters to Julian from Libanus are preserved. From them can be gleaned many useful impressions of the emperor and his philosophical interest. Libanius, the Sophist, was a native of Antioch and a man of many abilities. John Chrysostom was among his scholars. It was thought that Libanius assisted Julian in the composition of the *Misopogon*. The emperor paid the following tribute to this scholar: "Libanius loves me more than ever my mother did; he is not attached to my fortune, but to my person." When Julian entered Constantinople, Libanius made no effort to welcome him. If the emperor appeared preoccupied or indifferent, Libanius immediately withdrew. He never attended Julian without a formal invitation, taking the attitude that the emperor might command the obedience of a subject, but that he must deserve the attachment of a friend. It has been said that,



because of Libanius, Julian forgave the vices and follies of the people of Antioch.

The gentle but mature thinking of Libanius is revealed in his remarks concerning Elpidius, a mutual friend. In a letter to the emperor, the Sophist writes: "Wise kings are formed by converse with the wise, but the wisdom of a king improves also his friends in virtue. So serviceable have you been to Elpidius, making him not only richer but better. Though younger than he, you have been his instructor in these laudable pursuits, in equity, in an eager desire to assist his friends, to treat courteously those whom he knows not, and by so treating them, always to retain their friendship. For all, who have approached and conversed with him, have first admired and then instantly loved him, or rather have discovered your ideas in all that you have entrusted to him."

The philosophical writings of Julian are so closely related to the Platonic theology that they can be estimated only in terms of the degree of the emperor's insight. In some matters his learning was imperfect, but at least a part of the deficiency was compensated for by the sincerity of his convictions. He considered the search for truth and the perfection of his own character as his principal pursuits. That which pertained to the imperial office was his duty to the state and the people and could not be neglected. He deemed it most profitable, however, to both Rome and himself that he continue the extension of his own understanding toward those summits of enlightenment where felicity abides.

Julian's principal disagreement with the Christian communities involved his attitude toward the importance of essential learning. He insisted that the only proof of faith was conduct in obedience to that devoutly held to be true. He could not accept a doctrine of vicarious atonement or intercession, nor could he justify the cultivation of ignorance as a direct means of salvation. Probably he misunderstood many of the Christian teachings, and even more probably he was misinformed by the very advocates of the faith. In any event, he held to the end of his life the strong and unchangeable opinion that it was the duty of the human being to regenerate his own nature by personal courage and devotion. For him, the ultimate felicity of his soul depended entirely upon the cultivation of virtues and graces and a deeply reverent acceptance of the universal will as this manifested through the works of Nature. By the urgings of his own character he approached the gods, not as a penitent sinner pleading for forgiveness, but as a man they had fashioned, with the limitations which they had imposed, and the resolutions which they had conferred.

According to Julian's understanding of Platonism, the summit of the universe was the One from whose eternal and unchanging nature



flowed the innumerable fountains of the beautiful and the good. From such an exalted and uncontaminated source nothing could emanate which was essentially evil or debased. Existence bore witness to eternal and unbounded benevolence, and, when so accepted and so understood by the devout human heart and mind, bestowed a serenity of spirit sufficient and unassailable. It was the weakness of man himself which detracted from this serenity and made possible unreasonable doubts concerning the goodness of providence. The ignorant man sees evil and analyzes it with his mind, becoming more confused as his thinking proceeds; but the wise man, experiencing only good within himself, meditates upon the wonders of the divine nature, and attains peace. Certainly Julian, by every circumstance of his life, had provocations for negative thinking. With the exception of a few years of scholarship he lived precariously and constantly devoted to enterprises not to his liking. He suffered from the corruption of his officials, the crimes of his family, the perfidy of his friends, and the physical hardships of long and dangerous campaigns. Yet, in all these distasteful situations he found time and opportunity not only to practice his faith, but to confer it generously upon all who were inclined to be receptive.

There is much evidence that Julian especially admired the mental and moral constancy of Socrates. He resolved to model his own conduct upon the example of the great Athenian. If he possessed but one virtue, Julian was resolved that it should be dedication to conviction. Life, deprived of the security of internal honor, was unendurable. It was better to sacrifice all for principle than to sacrifice principle and cling to the temporal benefits. The faith of Julian was extraordinary. Although he realized that he had not experienced the ultimate illumination which was reserved for those of perfected internal insight, he was convinced of the validity of their path of discipleship. Julian frequently intimated that he must depend upon the wonderful plan operating throughout the universe for the perfection of his own character. That which could not be accomplished immediately would be completed ultimately. Rebirth extended the span of mortal opportunity. He could depart from this world consoled by that which he already knew and eager to discover that as yet unattained. He left his cause with the gods, who alone could examine his heart and determine his most secret motives. Men are mortal and can misunderstand, but the gods are immortal and are without deficiency in the powers of comprehension.

In his *Oration to the Sovereign Sun*, Julian made use of the glorious orb of day as a symbol of the primordial light of the world. As Apollo brought the dawn to the sleeping creation, so wisdom conferred the sunrise upon the slumbering soul. It was the privilege of each man



to invoke the dawn within himself. The light of truth was no more distant and mysterious than the light of day. Each of those in whom the sun has risen can also confer a measure of light upon others whom they love and serve. Julian earnestly desired to bring the dawn to impious and corrupted Rome. He longed to restore the honors which his family had betrayed. Unfortunately, his reign was of such brief duration that the emperor was unable to consummate his program, and Jovian, who succeeded him, was of an entirely different mind and calibre. The dreams of Julian perished with him, and Rome never after regained its splendor.

By the example of his own inclinations, Julian wished high offices of the state to be occupied by scholars, especially such as were skilled in the philosophy of government. He also wished to inspire the sons of patricians who would later come to authority to attach themselves to learned professors, who would counsel them in the refinement of their tastes and the development of their moral characters. Whether he could have succeeded or not we will never know, but it is very possible that the ideals of Julian would have destroyed him at home had he survived the Persian wars. The words of the old Greek should be remembered, when he said: "I have escaped the dangers of the battlefield only to return to the greater dangers of my own community."

As an initiate of pagan Mysteries, Julian was undoubtedly aware of the great program which these sacred institutions were attempting to perfect. The substance of this program is clearly revealed in the writings of Plato. The world was waiting for the Philosopher-King, and at the same time was consumed by fear at the possibility of the event. Julian certainly resolved to embody insofar as he was able the attributes of the Philosopher-King. By circumstances almost miraculous and through the intercession of his Genius, Julian, the philosopher, had been elevated to supreme power in the world of his day. Fear mingled with resolution, and Julian acknowledged his numerous inepititudes. Yet he was resolved to try to bestow as much learning and good example as was possible. As a practical man he realized that if he went too far he would destroy everything. He therefore chose a quiet determination, unfaltering in its allegiance, but tempered to the needs of the hour.

No other Roman emperor ever carried the imperial authority with so deep a conscience as Julian. Julius Caesar was more brilliant, Marcus Aurelius more eloquent, and Octavian more splendid. These men won the applause of the many, but Julian desired to win the souls of the just. He rejected all pomp and circumstance, lived more as an ascetic than a king, flattered few, and was suspicious of all who flattered. He was inclined to forgive all honorable enemies, and reserved his greatest displeasure for those with dishonorable motives. So brief was his



term of office that his patterns were scarcely formulated and set no fashion in the Roman mind. Had he ruled long he might have impelled a restoration of historic importance. But the good he did mostly died with him, and his mistakes were perpetuated by his religious enemies.

In his *Oration to the Mother of the Gods*, Julian makes direct reference to the Mysteries and leaves no doubt of his own participation in the sacred dramas. He writes: "But if I should touch upon that arcane and mystic narration which the Chaldean, agitated by divine fury, poured forth about the *seven-rayed god*, and through which he leads souls back again to the courts of light, I should speak of things unknown, and indeed vehemently so, to the sordid vulgar, though well known to theurgic and blessed men; and therefore I shall be silent respecting such particulars at present." By *Chaldean*, Julian probably referred to one of the initiates named Julian the Theurgist. The emperor then continued his analysis by reference to the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries, noting that the Rites of Ceres and Proserpina were celebrated when the sun was in Libra, and that the Greater Mysteries were held when the sun was in Aries.

Julian has been accused of restoring emperor worship, deifying himself, and attempting a general revival of pagan practices. Even Gibbon, the historian, depreciated such accusations. As emperor, Julian was Pontifex Maximus, the high priest of the State Mysteries, the great bridge builder, a title later assumed by the Roman Popes. The personal humility of the emperor as attested through his letters and writings would give no support to the opinion that he regarded himself as deified. He strangely respected Alexander of Macedon, and was fully aware that Alexander had refused deification. Julian, however, did believe with the Neoplatonists that a ray of the universal Deity dwelt in all men, and that the blessed God revealed himself through those who were initiated and dedicated to the works of heaven. If Julian favored paganism, it was not the Roman type which held his respect. His various published remarks emphasized a lofty ethical and moral doctrine firmly established upon personal integrity. It has been said that he copied the Christian virtues while renouncing the faith. This probably was his effort to distinguish between principles essentially good and practices which fell away into corruption.

The name of Julian should certainly be included in the descent of the Platonic system. If he were not a proponent of the doctrine, he was most assuredly an exponent. He was one of a small group who followed the classical admonition: "Make philosophy your life." Perhaps Julian would have been a good man regardless of the world in which he lived, and a better man had the world been better. His virtues were of his own character, but he enriched them through cul-



tivation and dedicated his numerous abilities to the service of good as he understood the meaning of that word. Plato rejected politics and resolved to devote his life to learning. Julian attempted the difficult role of carrying his ideals with him when he assumed the imperial crown. From Iamblichus, he gained a peculiar insight into a transcendent state and sustained an amazing personal fortitude. He was an example of mysticism preserving the soul even while the body was involved in the most aggressive mundane activities. Perhaps Julian should have refused the crown and remained a student. He chose the most difficult of courses, because he sincerely believed that he was required by destiny to become the father of the Romans.

It might be well if more modern leaders followed his simple instructions. The ruler of a state has a threefold obligation: to his God, to his people, and to himself. That which is the greater good for one is also the greater good for all three. To fail one is to fail all. To govern without the grace of God is to govern badly. To seek the grace of God without accepting the responsibility of public service is a clear evasion of duty. To serve self at the expense of God and the people is tyranny. To govern without self-respect must end in corruption. The wise man, strengthened by the vision of heaven, seeks to bestow the benefits of things internally known upon all men. This substantially was the code of Julian the Apostate.

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#### VITAL-STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

The system of chronology using the eras B. C. and A. D. was invented by Dionysius Exiguus about A. D. 532. Charles III of Germany was the first to add "Anno Domini" to his official pronouncements, about A. D. 879.

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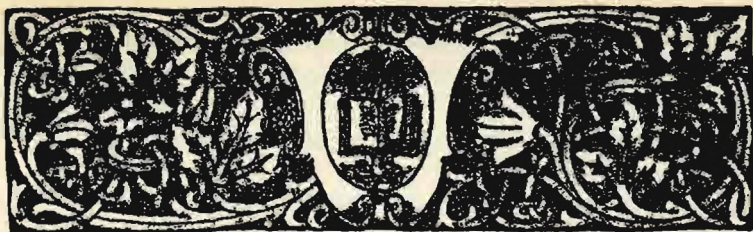
Voltaire, on the religious state of England: "If there were but one religion in England, its despotism would be formidable; if there were only two, they would throttle each other: but there are thirty, and they live happily and peaceably."

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#### MATRIMONIAL DEPARTMENT

The word *honeymoon* comes from an old custom which flourished among the northern nations of Europe. Newly-married couples were supposed to drink a kind of wine made from honey for thirty days after the marriage. From this came the term honey-month, later changed to honeymoon. Attila the Hun was reported to have drunk so much of this honey wine at his wedding feast that he died of the results.





## In Reply

# A Department of Questions and Answers

### IN DEFENSE OF SELF

**QUESTION:** *What is your attitude toward the familiar religious idea that those seeking spiritual advancement should become selfless; that is, renounce their own personal inclinations and convictions, and resign themselves completely to the divine will?*

**ANSWER:** To be entirely factual, we hear a great deal about selflessness, but seldom observe an outstanding example of the practice. Too often the so-called selfless person has merely transferred his allegiance from one group of his own opinions to another. It is extremely difficult to dedicate oneself to the will of God while the intents and purposes of the divine will are themselves obscure. Usually we come to some decision of our own as to what is pleasing or displeasing to Deity. Having reached this estimation, we confer upon it an authority far greater than it may deserve and strive to arrange our conduct accordingly. It has been my observation that in most instances the will of God is merely a moderate refinement of our own personal tastes and desires. By an amazing coincidence we come to the conclusion that God wants us to do that which we ourselves most desire to accomplish.

Several cases have come to my attention in which individuals resigned themselves completely to the fulfillment of their own most intense prejudices and conceits under the broad formula of resignation to the will of God. As a result of this noble motivation they continued all their previous practices with a new and exalted justification. This is one extreme misuse of a concept, and there is another equally unhappy. A number of devout men and women have taken the attitude



that the will of God requires a grand frustration. The individual is never completely virtuous until he is entirely uncomfortable. Unfortunately, we do not suffer alone, and a frustration from any cause must have a disastrous effect upon the environment in which we live. Atheism and agnosticism are frequently to be met among the children of the devout. These young people have experienced the faith of their parents as little better than a theological tyranny. That which does not promote happiness and normalcy will not be generally acceptable.

Each human being has a character of his own, and because he has received this endowment it may be inferred that he is supposed to use and perfect this phase of his personal resources. To develop a mind through thousands of years of evolutionary process and then to disable it entirely by doctrine appears unprofitable. I have never been able to appreciate the notion that we are enriched spiritually, mentally, and emotionally only that we may voluntarily impoverish ourselves. There are certainly excellent reasons why the conscientious mortal should not permit the negative attributes of his personality to dominate his life. There is a great difference, however, between self-discipline and self-abnegation.

It is the conviction of idealistic philosophy that each human being contains within himself an immortal spirit which is itself an extension of the divine nature. This spark from the eternal flame sustains not only the physical processes of existence, but also those nobler energies which impel to the search for truth. It is proper and desirable to clarify the inner life and to dedicate one's faculties and abilities to the advancement of the greatest good. Unless we preserve the integrity of the consciousness itself, we destroy the validity of both conviction and decision. It is because we are existent creatures that we may choose to improve ourselves, to serve others, and to contribute to the preservation of all that is beautiful and necessary.

It seems to me that many mystics and metaphysicians have misinterpreted the concept of humility. They have assumed that by relinquishing personal control of their destinies that this control inevitably passes back to Deity. There is no actual proof that such is the case, unless internal enlightenment directs the procedure. Until we are far better acquainted with the divine plan than is the present degree of vision, we must remain the directors of our own destinies or we will drift into precarious situations. It may well be useful, therefore, to consider, for a moment, those foundations upon which we build our convictions about the purpose of heaven.

To discover the will of God, we search the Scriptures for those basic statements of integrity which we regard as absolute and final. Even in these fountains of religious instruction there are contradictions; and as theology expanded, the confusion increased. Many normal virtues



which we commonly admire pass unmentioned, and other apparently inconsequential practices are elevated and glorified. In the end, our interpretation of the divine will is a compound of dogma and experience. We pattern our conduct after our heroes, and reject that which is rejected by those whom we admire. If we belong to a sect or creed, it determines in many details our estimation of right and wrong. Thus we accumulate, not truth, but opinion, and addict ourselves to patterns imposed by human authority.

Theoretically speaking, we can go further. We may seek within our own natures for a more direct and intimate revelation of God's requirements. Practically, it is almost impossible for the average mortal to discriminate between his spiritual convictions and his psychological pressures. Lack of ability and lack of skill are likely to result in delusion rather than illumination. The imperfect mind and the undisciplined heart cannot confer a quality of inspiration which transcends their limitations. Experience has proved the fact of this statement, even though it may conflict with beliefs and inclinations. It is far wiser to live in those moderate distances and dimensions where we are able to censure our conduct with common sense than it is to seek a more rapid growth by attempting to transcend judgment and reason.

I have frequently emphasized the dignity of motives. The search for God is not always the gentle quest of sovereign realities; it is nearly always a pressured rebellion against some immediate limitation or an intense desire for immediate help in time of trouble. The proof of this is the comparative success and failure of religious organizations. Those flourish most who promise most and require least in personal effort. The simple search for truth because it is truth has seldom enjoyed popularity. We are more inclined to seek the help of God for our present infirmities than we are to offer ourselves unselfishly to the fulfillment of the divine plan. Our ulterior motives inevitably disfigure our beliefs and ideals. As long as we remain unaware of this danger, we cannot cope with it on the level of our spiritual needs.

The personal pronoun *I* has been wonderfully and terribly abused. When the average person says "I," he means anything from the impulses of his spirit to the insistences of his liver. Most definitely and particularly he means that complex of pressures and desires which he has come to regard as his own true and immortal self. This complex does not even have the virtue of consistency. Tomorrow the "I" may firmly deny that which today it strenuously defends. It is also a proved fact that the "I" can make most solemn pronouncements on subjects with which it has no familiarity or even acquaintance. It is usually but a mask, an unchangeable expression concealing inconstant moods and notions. To deify this "I" and to assume that it manifests a divine



intent would be ridiculous. Perhaps this is the self from which we must all escape. Certainly it is a tyranny of opinionated energy which has little time or consideration for anything or anyone opposing its purposes.

In growing, however, we must ascend gradually from that which we are toward a state which transcends the immediate. Actually we have no means of growing except through experience and reflection. We use the faculties we have, training and directing them in order that they become more skillful in the estimation of values. There can be no sudden change by which, by a single energy of the will, we can transcend the complex pattern of personality pressures. One by one these pressures must be exhausted until we experience the futility of error. It would be nice to hope that there is a royal road to enlightenment. Some claim that there is, but are unable to substantiate their claim in any practical way.

By the proper unfoldment and direction of our selfhood, we can, in the fullness of time, reveal the dynamic individuality which is our birthright. Our contribution to the enlightenment of our world will be peculiarly our own. This does not mean that we shall possess a truth unique or different, but rather that we shall have our own way of revealing the potencies of universal life. It is good that there should be a Plato and a Michelangelo. Gutenberg, the printer, and Beethoven, the composer, are necessary and proper. We would gain little if enlightenment bestowed only conformity of ideas and practices. Each, because he is a person, interprets and expresses, releases and reveals, creates and unfolds according to himself. All use the same divine energy, all may gather inspiration from the same divine source, but each ministers according to his faculties and propensities, and the world profits accordingly. The flowers of the field are different, but share in a common principle of beauty. The poet, the scholar, the philosopher, the scientist, and the priest are interpreters of some radiant reality which can be known only through its interpretation.

The self in man is likewise the source of interpretations, although in substance it cannot be interpreted. We are expected to take the talents which we have, the abilities which reside within us, and from these to fashion our revelation of truth. Little can be gained by criticism or comparison. When the individual fails to be himself, when he frustrates the initiatives which impel him to his own accomplishments, he loses internal security and gains nothing in its place. We must each, like Lincoln, serve the good as it is given us to understand the good. We are not expected to be all-knowing or all-wise, yet each of us has a faith in his own heart, and it is his duty to keep that faith. By so doing, each merits enlargement of his convictions, and this enlargement will inevitably come. The sincere desire to know and the cour-



age to live in harmony with what we know are the natural causes of spiritual growth. We prove our right to larger understanding by serving honorably the best that we already know. How few of us can do this, and how busily we will be engaged in such an enterprise.

The simple and reasonably-obvious virtues, which both intuition and reason impel us to practice and which experience demonstrates and sustains, are enough for today. Many of the greatest tragedies of the race could have been prevented had we refrained from theorizing and committed our conduct to a program of kindness, gentleness, thoughtfulness, and peace. Yet these homely virtues are unpracticed and evaded as the mind hastens on to great and wonderful abstractions allegedly divine. The health of the human being, the security of his home, the usefulness of his living, the preservation of his society, and the survival of his world depend upon the conscientious acceptance of a general code of co-operative behavior. We need no more light than is already available to reveal the unhappy interval between noble theory and ignoble practice. Before we give ourselves to God, why not first give ourselves to the works of God as we already understand them? Why not realize that in a universe governed by wisdom and love we should be practicing these qualities to the utmost of our ability. It is written in the Scriptures that we cannot love God whom we have not seen if we do not love our brother whom we have seen. Experience proves, however, that it is much easier for us to hold an attitude of personal affection for our Deity than for our neighbor.

For one thing, it is always easier to absorb ourselves in a generality than to become efficient in any particular. The very fact that we have not seen God, that he has never contradicted us, never borrowed money, never gossiped concerning our private lives, and has never interfered obviously in our various activities makes him intensely loveable. We can easily imagine that he is industriously engaged in advancing our causes, with which he has become acquainted through our numerous prayers and petitions. Neighbors and relatives, on the other hand, can be consistently troublesome. They can energetically differ from us on politics, religion, and the proprieties. From such causes, our affections expand wonderfully toward God and contract correspondingly from all whom we personally know.

It has always appeared highly reasonable that the beginning of dedication to a principle of good is the resolution to live graciously, generously, and kindly. Nor should this demeanor be limited to our environment; it should be applied specifically to our own internal conduct. To love the God in others and to plague the God in ourselves appears somewhat inconsistent. If we are the living temple of an eternal Deity, why should we change this house into an abode of fear,



fretfulness, agitation, controversy, and other discords infinitely worse than merchandizing. The most religious people I have known have been the most uneasy. They were either storming the gates of heaven or raising an army against the hosts of Satan. At the same time, they were bemoaning the strength of the flesh and the unwillingness of the spirit.

One day I stood in the great Cathedral of Notre Dame. Outside was the bustle and confusion of Paris, but these sounds scarcely penetrated the massive walls of the ancient shrine. Tall columns rose about me, and the soft glow of the afternoon sun lighted the magnificent stained-glass windows. The building was filled with an atmosphere of stillness and peace appropriate to the high altar upon which stood the symbols of the faith. Even those most profane spoke in whispers, for the spell of the place was upon them. Why should we not have the same inspiration when we enter into the sacredness of our own inner lives? When we seek rest through the contemplation of spiritual mysteries, should we come into a place of confusion, prejudice, and spitefulness? Is it not proper that we should first cleanse the inner sanctuary before we begin to speak of the will of God? If we want the spirit of the eternal to abide with us, we must prepare his house and set it apart to works of holiness.

In all our striving and struggling after Godliness, let us never forget the need for personal peace. I do not mean that contentment which comes merely from the satisfaction of our worldly ambitions, but a much deeper and more sacred quietude. Before we concern ourselves with speculations about the proportions and dimensions of universal cause, let us prepare an appropriate setting for such abstract musings. We should be able to enter into the closet of our hearts and find there a simple and gentle reverence. Never should this condition be the tension which follows a desperate striving after righteousness. Such an exhibition of energy results not in enlightenment but in exhaustion. When we are ready to explore the wonders of heaven, we will have consecrated our own lives by the gentle insistence of consciousness and conscience.

Most of those who have come to me with their religious difficulties have failed completely to organize their own inner resources in accordance with the specific instructions of their faith. It has not even occurred to them that the presence of God requires peace of mind. They have assumed that, like the knights of old, they would be ennobled upon a battlefield. The more stress, strain, worry, and anxiety they exhibit, the more quickly God will be mindful of them. Alas, such mindfulness can be little better than a fatherly concern. It is the right and privilege of self to decide the course of conduct. As master of the bodily complex, the self can lead and direct the heart



and mind and bestow enlightened purpose upon the person. If we used the self more for the conversion of our own natures and less for the spreading of some doctrine, we would finally come to a fuller appreciation of values.

Let us then think of self as the power of self-estimation. Regardless of our vanity and our ambition, we have within our own complex of powers a means to know what we need and how we may accomplish it. If we will gather our courage to the sticking point, we can subject our own sentiments to a most useful analysis. Here again, however, we must not trust the verdict to the instability of our emotions. If we begin to perceive quite correctly that we are not everything, we may then fly to the conclusion that we are not anything and be appropriately distressed. When we discover that we have not succeeded, this is not equivalent to an admission of failure. The end is not that we humiliate ourselves by the recurrent tendency to moan over shortcomings. Regardless of our personal attitudes or opinions, we are all somewhere 'twixt heaven and earth and in a predicament. It may be convenient to deny the predicament and hasten on to cosmic business, but, I assure you, it is a mistake.

In public we will use every persuasion available to prove that our shortcomings are virtues unappreciated by others. We will defend to the bitter end those very infirmities of spirit which are responsible for most of the infirmities of our flesh. Oh, no, we are not critical; we are merely discriminating. We are not unkind; we are only honest. We never gossip, but there are things that should be said. We are not envious; we just wonder why God should be so unjust in the distribution of his benefits. We are not intolerant, but why should we support the mistakes of others? Sometimes we defend ourselves so eloquently that, like certain lawyers, we are inclined to believe our own words. In this case, as in most others, autohypnosis is no solution. Folks with everything in the world wrong with them come to me and carefully explain how all their thoughts and actions are above reproach. Always others are to blame. How does it happen, then, that such beautiful and enlightened characters have no strength with which to defend themselves against the petty slights and injustices which so perturb them? Knowing all, they have no heart for forgiveness in regard to those who know less. Their faith has not even given them a security against the ordinary misfortunes of mankind, yet they are convinced that they are ready to bear the extraordinary burdens of heaven.

It is almost impossible for an average person to be selfless, because he has nothing to substitute for the self-focus as a motivating agent. When he departs from his new orientation, he is in a state of chaos, and must depend upon blind instincts and pressures as guides to conduct. It is wiser, therefore, to re-educate the self rather than to deny



its existence. Although the person in the body may possess faculties and functions beyond those associated with physical activity, these internal resources must be integrated in terms of utility. In other words, we must find useful and practical outlets for ideals and aspirations. This requires rational and logical thoughtfulness. We cannot trust the weight of living upon beautiful but unproved abstractions. The idealist is nearly always disappointed and disillusioned, because he has not estimated correctly the human society of which he is a part. It is better to do small things well than to fail in vast undertakings. In Nature, growth is sequential, and ultimates are not immediately attainable. We advance by degrees. Each step of progress becomes the foundation for further expansion.

In Buddhist philosophy the self is called the *sattva*. Its attributes and qualities reveal the composite state of the personality at any given time. The objectionable expressions of the *sattva* are due to limitations throughout the character. It is not the self that causes our troubles; rather it is the inadequacy of our attainment which results in the symbolical pattern which we call the temperament. As we unfold our spiritual capacities, the self bears witness to the progress achieved. It can never be inconsistent with attainment, but it can conflict with pretensions. If, therefore, we have one level of conviction and another level of accomplishment, these may appear to contradict each other. The solution lies in first converting ourselves, so that we actually experience as fact such noble inclinations as we have accepted on the level of concept.

Eastern metaphysics regards the self as an obstacle to spiritual growth, and Western mysticism holds the same general doctrine in a modified form. Egotism is an abuse of self-consciousness, but egoism cannot be destroyed without causing a sequence of disasters. Again it is a problem of cultivating moderate attitudes in a world dedicated to excess. It is not necessary to destroy utterly or to glorify unconditionally. Nature bestows only that which is useful. It does not require that we deform ourselves in order to correct the errors of universal procedure. We have been given a focus of inner intensity in order that we may use it and not develop negative convictions about its importance. When we assume that the ego testifies to eternal truths and is therefore an infallible and irresistible entity, we transform a benevolent agent into a despot. If, conversely, we resolve to ignore the egoic equation, we disproportion the character and deprive ourselves of part of our available psychomental equipment.

There are analogies on the physical plane. A prominent surgeon, who specialized in the removal of miscellaneous parts of the human body, said to me—of course, unofficially: "It is often necessary to remove diseased or damaged organs in order to preserve life, but I can



assure you that the human body has no spare parts." The same is true in the superphysical constitution. Every part of our mental-emotional complex exists for a reason, and it is wiser to discover the proper use than to belittle the unknown. The primary function of the ego is to establish the experience of individual existence. It makes possible the unfoldment of man's personal experience of moral ethics. Unless we possess the power of individual decision, we are incapable of dedication to principles of any kind. It is true that the ego maintains the illusion of separateness or diversity, but in so doing it makes possible all self-directive action. We choose, discriminate, and bestow allegiance because of the conviction that we are free agents capable of voluntary decision. We acknowledge self-responsibility, and by this very admission we recognize the need for growth, adjustment, and unfoldment. The experiences which inevitably follow such convictions are the most valuable that we know. Obviously we are creatures in a state of transition, and therefore will outgrow the limitations resulting from the present level of the personality complex. When the proper time comes, we will completely understand the implications of selfhood, and through such knowledge can chart further courses. Until then, however, we have the obligation of right use.

The obvious by-products of the ego are a series of symbolical declarations which amplify and extend the concept of *I*. For example, "I am," therefore, "I exist." It would be surprising how many philosophies have attacked the validity of *I am*, and have demonstrated with convincing logic that personal existence itself is an error of the mortal mind. Yet, strangely enough, it is the fact that *I am* which makes it possible for the *I* to pronounce with solemn finality, "I am not." If *I* do not exist, then my opinions have no validity, and denial is as illusory as acceptance. The state of *I am* immediately broadens into *I want*, or *I believe*, and *I object*. In a very short time the extensions of *I* create a negative definition for the *I* itself. Thus the character of *I* is defined by what *I want*, and what *I do not want*. Little by little the pronouncements attributed to the *I* cause an abstract image to emerge which is recognizable by both ourselves and others and becomes likewise acceptable or unacceptable.

The quality of *I determinism*, if we may judge causes from their effects, is really an abstract statement of a complex of convictions, resolutions, and desires. It is demonstrated in daily living that *I* can be educated or re-educated. The tastes of one day can be, and are, changed by thoughtfulness and experience. Only the unhappiest of mortals can say honestly that his present inclinations are identical with those of his youth or even the less remote past. Music appreciation grows and refines rapidly as the result of training faculties and enriching the power of appreciation. It is seldom, indeed, that we immediately ap-



preciate the best in art, literature, music, philosophy, or religion. Beginning with the familiar, we proceed automatically to increase familiarity until we transform degrees of the unknown into levels of acceptable facts. Immediately, that which is accepted becomes appreciated, and so the wonder grows.

Living is both an art and a science, and growth is a gradually unfolding experience resulting in appreciation. We are assisted in orienting our own standard of values by tradition and authority. We observe, for example, that highly advanced musicians acknowledge the superiority of certain compositions. At first we wonder why, but because we respect high achievement we feel that the decisions of the informed merit our thoughtfulness. We ultimately learn that appreciation is a matter of levels, and that as we ascend within ourselves we gain new satisfaction and reject, in some measure, that which was previously sufficient to our taste. In this way growth differs from reform. If the individual at present addicted to bebop were ordered by human authority to reject this quaint medium and to vote only for the three "Bs" of music—Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms—he would rise in righteous indignation against the tyranny of musical high-brows. If there were nothing he could do to prevent the despotism of the classics, he would look forward to years of misery in which the tempos that he loved would no longer be available. He would then refer to the powers behind such a campaign as reformers, meaning by that *meddlers and nuisances in general*.

If it happens, however, that our bebop artist and defender permits his own taste to evolve through increasing insight into the principles of harmony, he will accomplish naturally in himself a completely satisfactory growth. Without shock or strain, appreciation gently inclines the mind and the emotions to greater discrimination. Good music then becomes a necessity of the soul, and change is painless—in fact, normal and pleasant. This analogy is equally true on the levels of religion and philosophy. We progress by internal impulsion rather than by external compulsion. It is entirely possible to outgrow without stress all attitudes and habits which we now oppose strenuously and belligerently. Instead of battling our perversities on the objective level, we can conserve many valuable resources by cultivating the potentials of our internal faculties. In this task the self is indispensable. It bestows the resolution needed to attain proficiency and superiority. We may begin competitively, but growth itself brings about the union of testimonies.

It is observable that those most respected for their contributions to human progress have been moved by inner strength and a broad conviction of personal responsibility. Perhaps they were not completely correct in all their conclusions, but they had integrated resources by



an exercise of enlightened will. As a result they became heroes and often martyrs. By any standard, however, they were self-moving and were applying their energies to the ends for which these energies were intended. We must, therefore, come back to an early phase of our discussion: the difference between selflessness and unselfishness. Actually, the immediate virtue is concerned with the unselfish uses of our innate selfhood. Realizing that most of our wrong decisions are motivated by self-interest and self-seeking, we have an immediate problem requiring attention.

Motivation impelled by the ideal of the greater good for the greater number will seldom lead us astray. We are at our worst when self-interest compromises the integrity of decision. Ulterior motives are seldom honestly exhibited or straightforwardly revealed. We want to conceal even from ourselves such inclinations as we know to be unworthy. A few days ago I was present when a man committed a selfish and spiteful action. Even before he observed any reaction from other onlookers, he began an elaborate apology and defense of his conduct. His every word indicated that he was fully aware that others would not approve of his action. He also revealed that he could not defend what he had done even to himself. For selfish reasons he did not retract the action, but he was embarrassed by the level of cupidity which he exhibited. In this case his own ego convicted him, and this frequently occurs. We cannot blame the self for selfishness in all cases.

There is considerable skill required in the practice of intelligent unselfishness. In no other group of motivations can there be more self-deceit. It is rare to find genuine generosity in conduct, and even rarer to detect it on the level of the mind. Nearly always we are practicing what we regard as a virtue in order to gain something for ourselves. We also discover that unselfishness without discrimination and thoughtfulness becomes a dubious virtue. It is seldom wise to bestow upon others that which they have not earned or that which they do not evidently and obviously deserve. When we reward failure, we encourage failure. When we serve others who do not appreciate or value this service, we are trying to gain soul growth at the expense of other folks' soul growth. An effort to practice attitudes which are harmful to those around us, simply because these attitudes gratify our own inclinations, can be very selfish. Nature rewards effort and punishes those who refuse to meet their proper responsibilities. The pattern is seriously injured when some well-meaning or good-hearted person steps in with platitudinous thinking and impulsive assistance.

Those easily imposed upon gain a reputation for gullibility and soon accumulate a circle of parasites. There may be some satisfaction in playing the bountiful friend, but in so doing we set in motion pat-



terns which are contrary to the integrities of living. In this way, what passes for unselfishness is only the gratification of our own instinct to bestow our worldly goods. Courses of action must be internally lighted by understanding or we are hastening on to future disillusionments and disappointments. The ungrateful friend has been placed in an awkward situation. Receiving from another that which has not been merited, there is slight inclination toward genuine gratitude. On the contrary, resentments will be born which will increase unless the generosity is continued. Those who help the unworthy will finally be condemned because their gifts are not larger and more numerous.

When unselfishness is without ulterior compromises, we are not inclined to demand or even expect reciprocity. Those who do good for the joy of serving are not offended by lack of appreciation. The moment we become unhappy over this type of disregard, the existence of false motivation within ourselves is clearly demonstrated. It is not the spirit of giving that is at fault, but man's immediate impulse to profit from his own good deed. Effects follow their causes according to both the impulse and the integrity involved. Before we become generous, it is our duty to become wise. If we really want to help, we will become wise, but if we desire only personal satisfaction, we will be content merely to become generous.

Let us think for a moment about the internal nature of self. The sense of *I* implies the quality of oneness or wholeness. The capital *I* is the same in form as the number 1. In the Pythagorean system, one (1) can be either the first or unity. Unity means that which is not divided and is one in terms of completeness. When we use the word *I*, therefore, we mean either the first or highest part of ourselves or the whole of ourselves. By the first can be inferred spirit or cause, and by wholeness, the complete character and all its dependent parts. When we say, "I want," we infer that the spirit wants or that the whole nature requires. The fallacy of such definitions is immediately obvious. The statement "I want" seldom indicates a spiritual requirement, and even less often witnesses to the complete needs of the personality. To want, in this sense, is to desire, and there is no proof that the spirit desires anything unless it be the full internal apperception of its own divinity. Certainly the spirit does not want an expensive fur coat or a beach cottage, etc., etc. It is equally unlikely that our wants reflect the requirements of our composite personalities. Many of the things that we want are harmful to the body and disturbing to the mind and the emotions. In substance, the entire pattern is semantically unsound.

In practice, therefore, *I* as a synonym for self is used as a simple and convenient term to cover immediate acquisitive pressures. Instead of wanting that which we need, we declare ourselves to need that



which we want. Once the desire is sanctioned, all available resources are dedicated to its fulfillment. It is noticeable that nothing is as unsatisfactory as a desire once it has been satisfied. When we get what we want, we lose all interest in it and develop new desires as rapidly as possible. This is because we were satisfying a whim rather than a need, and the satisfaction brings no release from internal pressures. We gain what release we can from the process of fulfilling and not from the fulfillment.

The real and essential needs of the *I* on the human level of function are mostly idealistic. The self most urgently requires vehicles properly refined, faculties adequately developed, emotions constructively directed, and activities purposefully controlled. This maturity of the personality is being accomplished by experience. Mistaken practices teach by indirection. They show us what is wrong with our policies and practices, but we are not overjoyed by such revelations. The simple answer lies in clarification and the resultant simplification of personal policies. Until we organize our own thoughts and emotions, we cannot expect them to bear proper witness or to judge righteous judgment. Functioning from internal confusion, we can see no clear course of procedure. At such moments, dramatic addiction to pressure is totally unsuccessful. First of all must come the integration of faculties and members, so that the *I* actually stands for a collective testimony by decision. We cannot afford hasty judgments. They are responsible for many of the world's disasters.

By recognizing two interrelated definitions of the word *I*, philosophy offers a valuable guide to the growth of character. At this time in our evolution, the *I* decidedly stands for the collective personality-compound. There is first the partnership of the mind, the heart, and the hand. These must work together, each making possible the manifestation of the others. Grammatically we must tolerate the term *I* even though it conveys a distinctly false impression, not only to the listener but to the user. In a way we must become worthy of the word if we are to use it with proper authority. As Diogenes observed long ago, the moment we begin to integrate ourselves our wants become fewer and our desires less intensive. The old Cynic said: "The gods are divine because they need nothing, and men are mortal because they want everything." As we approach a diviner state, we bear true witness to our elevation by our gradual and natural detachment from the objects and objectives of our external natures.

The self, therefore, is not the source of our cupidity, but rather the victim thereof. Overindulged with nonessentials and deprived of those qualities most necessary, the self is unable to express its intentions and purposes. Also such measure of expression as it may have is usually ignored. There are moments when we feel genuine and powerful



urges to escape from the trivial and to cultivate the real and the necessary. Usually we give thanks when such a mood passes and hope that it will not return. The personality is a heavy burden upon the self and remains so until it is refined by conscious effort. What passes for the unworthiness of the self is usually our unworthiness *to* the self. We misrepresent the best parts of our own compound almost constantly, and then take refuge behind the excuse that the self is to blame. How can that be condemned which is never permitted to exhibit its proper form and appearance?

The ancients believed that the ego or entity brought with it into incarnation the substance of its previous experience. This formed a base or platform upon which the new incarnation was unfolded. The resources of the self are available, but do not dominate the structures which are fashioned. The search for the will of the self is much like the search for God. It is a journey inward along confused paths. The experience of self comes only when the personality takes a receptive position and permits the internal dynamic to reveal its true constitution. For this reason all religious systems recommend development through relaxation. Such a release from pressure requires a more-than-ordinary dedication to the laws governing human progress. We are only sincere in our search for truth when we are willing to accept the universal plan. This acceptance must be complete and unconditioned or some spirit of rebellion will survive to confuse our efforts. The larger rewards are reserved to those who sacrifice their own opinions upon the altar of the sovereign good.

It is true that the self in us conflicts with the self in others on the plane of phenomena. This is not, however, a serious misfortune. The greater tragedy is internal conflict in which the parts of our own temperament cannot abide together under the same roof. We can meet external confusion if internally we are well-ordered. Where shall we turn for peace, if we can find it neither in the world nor in ourselves? How can we bestow the blessings of the spirit when these blessings are not even available to our own hearts and minds? We have the right and possibility of gathering our resources around that selfhood which is the axis of our characters. The proof that we have accomplished such an integration is our justification for public service. When we reform one confusion with another, there is no solution, only further complication.

In terms of abstract philosophy, we know that the egoic center is in some way in conflict with the complete universality of divine consciousness. Ultimately it must experience the reidentification of itself with infinite life. Actually all growth is a motion toward universals; therefore, it is unnecessary to make a particular issue of this problem at any special time. Ultimates are not immediate, and between the



present state of the human being and his final condition there is an interval which must be slowly and wisely bridged. We must outgrow the self, not merely attempt its assassination. When the time comes, the concluding step in our spiritual emancipation will be both reasonable and inevitable. Until then, discrimination invites us to make the best possible use of the faculties and abilities now at our disposal.

One technique used in psychology to break up complexes is to exhaust them. The ego is in itself a complex, all the elements of which must be rescued from their several false intensities. Opposed to the inclinations of the spirit are the requirements of personal orientation on the objective plane. Sustained by the testimony of the senses, the mind accepts certain partial truths as real and inevitable. It is folly to insist that the intellect should refuse the experiences of which it becomes aware. The pressure of environment is much more insistent, continuous, and intense than the occasional testimony of internal apperceptive faculties. In spite of every effort we make to discriminate correctly, material interests affect judgment and condition character. The self is objectively aware of its relation to other selves and to the entire phenomenal sphere. Even our most precious convictions are, to a degree, materialistic, and we are inclined to interpret the unseen in terms of the seen. The inner life of the average person is but an attenuation of his outer life. Heaven is a regenerated earth, and spirit a luminous personality. Until we have developed much further, we cannot formulate concepts of our relationships with divine source except through symbolism. We extend the known and the experienced into the unknown and the unexperienced and strive for useful definition. We achieve in part, but not completely, and from the imperfection of our judgment we cannot afford to pronounce inflexible determination.

In summarizing, let us assume that the self exists in order that we may have certain opportunities of growth and unfoldment. When we have fulfilled the purposes for which the ego came into existence, we can then proceed beyond the limitations which it imposes. We must outgrow the negative attributes of egotism before we can conquer the principle for which they stand. Growth is always through fulfillment of the constructive potentials of a condition. Growth is not only an improvement of structure, but also a corresponding release of consciousness. Each step of development equips us for the next step, but we cannot afford to proceed more rapidly than consciousness itself sustains progress. If we attempt to skip grades in the cosmic school, we find ourselves deficient when emergencies arise. There is an element of timing which decrees that works performed out of time lead to trouble. We may all be potential dragon slayers and



eager to prove our heroic estates. Wisdom dictates patience and reminds us that when we are ready to drive the sword of the Volsung into the scaly body of Fafnir there is every probability that the dragon will already have dissolved or have been transformed into a better shape. By the time we are ready to slay the ego with spiritual determination, we will have learned its true mystery, and by so doing have overcome its negative influences within ourselves.

### HINTS-TO-MOTORISTS DEPARTMENT

If you expect to be driving in Saudi Arabia in the near future, you should peruse High Order No. 2195, dated January 9, 1950, titled Automobile Drivers' Regulations. We will point out a few useful items.

The driver of a licensed vehicle must stop if requested to do so by a passenger at prayer time or be fined.

A driver must sound his horn continuously at the mere approach of pedestrians, mounted men, camels or other animals. If the camels or other animals become frightened, the driver must cease sounding his horn, stop the vehicle, turn off the motor, and wait until he can safely proceed.

If a driver hits another vehicle, he must stop at the spot of collision and not move his vehicle even a hair's breadth until he has notified the police. (With practically no phones, the police may arrive after several hours or several days.)

If a person is struck or run over lightly—and it is clear that the victim has

gotten in the way of the vehicle—the driver shall be released on bond.

Other regulations provide punishment for not slowing down and sounding the horn when passing in front of a police station. Also, passengers riding on the sides or roof of the vehicle shall not be permitted. The load must not extend more than eight feet beyond the sides or end of a vehicle.

When all other laws are insufficient or inconclusive, recourse may be had to the Koran. It is also permissible for officials to make laws as needed, and these can be made retroactive to cover any situation that arises.

Those guilty of a collision in which vehicles are overturned shall be liable for damages and shall be given fifty lashes in the presence of a group of drivers.

Any circumstance not covered by the above rules should be approached with loud and continuous honking.

### RING-OUT-WILD-BELLS DEPARTMENT

In ancient times church bells were inscribed with prayers and supplications to God. After the Reformation, the inscriptions were changed and addressed to men or were of a laudatory nature. On a fire bell cast in England in 1652 is an inscription which combines prayer and injunction. The words read: "Lord, quell this furious flame." Then with a practical turn of mind is added advice to the firemen: "Arise, run, help put out the same."



—  
Ishtar  
of the  
Seven Gates  
—



THE Babylonian goddess Ishtar was probably of Semitic origin, and in the development of the myths she emerged as a compound of several earlier deities, and was later merged with divinities of other Near Eastern peoples. At the maturity of her cult she was invested with the attributes of the Great Mother, and therefore symbolized the principle of fertility as this manifested throughout Nature. It is believed that the cult of Ishtar originated at Erech, and gradually extended its influence through the regions of Western Asia, Greece, and Egypt. The several names under which this goddess is known may be merely deities which were absorbed into her worship. The word *ishtar* has been traced from the Akkadian *astar*, a *light-maker*. *Astar* is the source of our word *star*, as a radiant light in the heavens. From Ninevah to Ionia, Ishtar was accepted as a form of Venus, and this planet was assigned to her. Among her titles was "Lady Eye-of-heaven." She was also Nina or Nana, the foster mother or nurse.

Lewis Spence considers Ishtar as a goddess of the class of Persephone or Isis. Her other attributes, both military and amatory, are more or less incidental. In later Assyrian lore she was the consort of Ashur, the principal deity of the Assyrian pantheon. We must realize that the occupations and preoccupations of a people have a decided influence upon their religious concepts. The Assyrians were distinguished as a warlike nation, and it followed that their gods and goddesses should lead them into battle and bestow victory upon their arms. At the same time, the more peaceful employments, especially agriculture, could not be entirely neglected. Conquering tribes are inclined to extend their concepts more rapidly than peaceful groups.



As the Assyrians absorbed surrounding culture-groups, they were influenced, to a degree, by the religions of their neighbors and the arts and crafts with which they became acquainted.

The Seven Tablets of Creation, brought from the library of Ashurbanipal at Ninevah, are now in the British Museum. Although the Tablets are devoted principally to the account of the struggle between Bel and the dragon, a brief summary of the cosmological beliefs of the priests of Babylon is included by way of introduction. In the beginning a formless darkness hovered over a measureless expanse of waters. Neither heaven nor earth had come forth from the primordial ocean, whose fertile depths were untroubled by the life that slept within them. In those times there were neither gods nor men, and the destinies of worlds and heroes were undetermined.

Several names were given to the abyss from which the cosmos emerged. It was called Mammu Tiawath, or Tiamat. The Assyrian form was *tiamtu*, the eternal ocean. It was also referred to as *apsu*, which means *abyss*, but was later referred to as "the house of knowledge," because it was the abode of the Supreme Deity. For practical purposes the Babylonian creation-myth is identical with the opening verses of the Book of Genesis. At an early time the practical form of the religion differentiated a primordial negative trinity, making use of certain terms arbitrarily. This triad consisted of Tiamat, Apsu, and Mummu. These hypothetical powers may have originated at a remote time, and their attributes were unsatisfactory as the culture level was gradually raised. In any event, Apsu, the opposer of good, and Mummu, who resolved to declare war upon the deities of the region of light, were gradually absorbed into the nature of Tiamat, who became the personification of the principle of the adversary.

Tiamat was a feminine power representing the negative aspect of space. It was said of her that "she labored without ceasing." From the abyss, which was herself and over which she presided, she caused to come forth terrible monsters, dragons, composite creatures part human and part animal—all ferocious and horrible. This legion Tiamat placed under the command of Kingu, her "only husband," and she promised him that he should rule over the whole world after the good gods had been destroyed by his army of monsters. Here we are certainly in the presence of a veiled exposition of the esoteric doctrine. Nature produced a riot of extraordinary forms, but these were not as yet ensouled by the spirits of light. Chaos waited the coming of the cosmic pattern, which was to give organization and purpose to the spontaneous principles of growth.

It is interesting that the great creator gods, the good spirits, only appear in the myth after the conspiracy of Tiamat was revealed. It was Ea, the god of the waters, who first brought the report to Ansar,



his father. Ansar, the great god, roared with anger and filled the heaven with the sounds of his displeasure. He then went to his other son, Anu, ruler of the sky. He told Anu to reason with Tiamat, who had emerged in the form of a great dragon. Ansar told his son to take away the anger of Tiamat so that the world could be in peace, but the great dragon only snarled its hatred; and when other deities attempted to calm Tiamat they were also repulsed. At this point Merodach appeared. He was the prototype of the traditional dragon-slayer. Merodach (also spelled Marduk) was the son of Ea, and did not occupy a prominent position until he was called upon to champion the cause of the hosts of light. Merodach agreed to undertake the adventure under the condition that all the superior divinities would unite and bestow upon him their skills, powers, and authority.

Thus equipped, Merodach, accompanied by the seven winds which he had created by magical powers, approached the abode of Tiamat. In the terrible conflict which followed, the great dragon was destroyed. The ancient tablets unfolded the story in the form of a great poem. In substance, Merodach dismembered the body of Tiamat, fashioning from it the heavens and the earth. He then established the places of the great gods, also the stations of the stars and the constellations. He ordained the year and divided it, and gave to each of the planets a dominion over part of human life. Although the tablets are defective, it has been implied from them and certain other remains that Merodach also fashioned mankind and gave them a wonderful code similar to the Ten Commandments. This opened with the words: "Towards thy god shalt thou be pure of heart, for that is the glory of the god-head."

From the extracts preserved of the history written by Berosus can be gained the Babylonian version of the Deluge. Xisuthros was the tenth king of Babylon. It was to this good ruler that the god Kronos came in a vision, warning him of a flood which would destroy humanity. Kronos ordered the king to write the history of the world and to put the record in Sipper, the city of the sun. Then Xisuthros was ordered to build a ship into which he could bring his relations, certain of his friends, and every kind of beast and bird. The king did as he was instructed, and the flood came upon the earth. When the waters began to abate, Xisuthros sent out birds to see if the land had reappeared, but they found no resting place and returned. Later they flew forth again and came back with mud upon their feet. The third time they did not return. After the ship came to rest upon a mountain, the king made a sacrifice, and immediately after he and three of his companions were taken up to heaven. After that he spoke to the other survivors and told them that the ship had rested in a place called Armenia, and that they were to return to Babylonia and recover



the books hidden at Sipper. Thus Babylon was again reinhabited. (See *Babylonian Religion and Mythology*, by L. W. King.)

The Babylonian cosmogony is greatly confused by the mingling and blending of several cycles of creation legends. For our present purpose it is sufficient to point out that, like most other ancient peoples, they recognized a threefold division of the world. There was, first, heaven, a vast expanse of aboveness, which was the abode of the principal deities and their courts, attendants, ministers, and messengers. Then there was a middle world corresponding to the surface of the earth, and here dwelt mankind and the other visible kingdoms of minerals, plants, and animals. In this zone there was also a host of invisible creatures, spirits, ghosts, goblins, and elementals. These could at time affect the destinies of mortals. The third sphere was the underworld, the dimensions of which were similar to those of the Greek Hades. This dark subterranean place was not necessarily associated with punishment, but was the natural abode of the dead and was regarded as dismal and wretched by the living. This dark and melancholy sphere was under the rulership of Sin, the god of the moon. In the Babylonian system the moon was a masculine divinity.

The place of Ishtar in the pattern is uncertain because of the incompleteness of the surviving inscriptions. It has been noted that she was the one goddess who remained independent and unchanged throughout the long and involved descent of the Babylonian-Assyrian religion. She absorbed into herself the attributes of the World Mother, and her name was a wonderful word of power. There is no doubt that she was essentially benevolent, although the qualities of her virtue were brought into harmony with the convictions of her peoples. The most important episode in the career of Ishtar was her descent into Hades. In order to appreciate the story, the hero and solar deity Tammuz must be introduced. Tammuz was distinctly the mystery god; that is, one whose story was ritualized and formed part of the initiation drama of the Babylonian esoteric cult. In an Akkadian hymn, Tammuz is called "Shepherd and lord, husband of Ishtar (the lady of heaven) lord of the under-world, lord of the shepherd's seat." This statement is most provocative, for the title *shepherd* was bestowed upon the priestly Adepts of the State Mysteries. Tammuz was a form of the hero of the world and received upon himself many of the attributes of Merodach, the slayer of the dragon.

Ishtar was at different times represented as the wife and mother of Tammuz. She, in turn, was regarded as the daughter of the sky god, Anu, or the child of the lunar deity, Sin. The worship of Tammuz was long established before his association with Ishtar was taught or accepted. In the areas where the worship of Tammuz had been prevalent, the cult of Ishtar increased in popularity and finally replaced that



of the Akkadian solar deity. The circumstances which led to the untimely death of Tammuz are not clear, but in some accounts Ishtar was directly responsible. She was quick to punish those who displeased her, and her good will and magical powers were sought by king and commoner alike. She was a judge of mortals, and through her the ministers of the state made their judgments. She was the interpreter of the god, and her images and shrines gave oracles.

When Tammuz died, his soul descended into the underworld, and Ishtar mourned for her lover. Although the ancient tablets do not stress the details, there seems little doubt that Ishtar descended into the abode of the dead in search of the husband of her youth. A few lines of the original poem will indicate the dramatic level of this strange and powerful work:

"To the land whence none return, the place of darkness,  
"Ishtar, the daughter of Sin, inclined her ear.  
"The daughter of Sin inclined her ear  
"To the house of darkness, the seat of the god Irkalla,  
"To the house from which none who enter come forth again,  
"To the road whose course returns not,  
"To the house wherein he who enters is excluded from the light,  
"To the place where dust is their bread, and mud their food.  
"They behold not the light, they dwell in darkness,  
"And are clothed like birds in a garment of feathers;  
"And over door and bolt the dust is scattered.  
"When Ishtar drew near the gate of the land whence none return,  
"She spake to the porter of the gate:  
"Ho! Porter! Open thy gate!  
"Open thy gate that I may enter in.'"

Then follows a further description in which Ishtar threatened to smite the door and shatter the bolts and raise up the dead to devour the living unless she was permitted to enter the dark region. The keeper of the gate then called upon Allatu, the mistress of the underworld, and recited to her the words of Ishtar. This Allatu was also Ishtar's sister, and she was displeased by the demands of the goddess, but instructed the porter to permit Ishtar to enter, subject to the rules of the region. According to some accounts Ishtar was not actually seeking Tammuz, but was desirous of obtaining the waters of life to bring about his restoration.

According to the rules of Allatu (Aralu) those entering the somber domain were required to pass through seven gates, each guarded by an ancient custodian. At each gate Ishtar was forced to remove a part of her adornments or robes. At the first gate the guardian



took her magnificent crown. At the second gate she sacrificed her earrings; at the third her necklace; at the fourth her breast ornaments; at the fifth her jeweled girdle; at the sixth her bracelets; and at the seventh her cincture. On each occasion Ishtar protested, but the answer of each keeper of the gate was the same: "Enter, O lady, it is the command of Allatu." At last, entirely unclad, Ishtar came before Allatu. The mistress of the underworld, who resented the intrusion, then caused the plague demon, Nantar, to smite Ishtar from head to foot with all manner of diseases and sickness. Even the pride of heaven was humbled in the dark world of Sin. Ishtar was then confined within the domains of Allatu, for she had no safe conduct to bring her back again into the abode of the living.

At this point in the story the parallel with Persephone is specially evident. While the goddess of night and fertility was in the dark land of no return, all the creatures of the earth languished and it seemed likely that several kingdoms of Nature would perish utterly. Then Ea, mindful of the complaints of Shamash, the great glory of the sun, created a wonderful being full of magic, and sent this creature into the land of Allatu to demand that Ishtar be restored. Allatu, although she cursed the messenger of Ea, could not resist the conjuration of the great god, so she caused the earth-spirits to pour the waters of life over Ishtar. The messenger of Ea, the embodiment of magical arts, then led Ishtar back through the seven gates of Allatu. At each of these gates the articles of adornment and attire which had been taken from her were restored. In the end the goddess returned to the middle earth, but, strangely enough, there is nothing to indicate whether she succeeded in her original purpose. Those who desire a happy ending may assume that she brought with her some of the waters of life and was able to revive Tammuz.

The present explanation of the Ishtar-Tammuz cycle generally advanced by mythologists would explain everything on the level of the vegetation cult. The romance between the sun and Nature includes the annual tragedy of winter, when the solar power departs and the earth is left forlorn to mourn for its lord. While this may have been involved in the primitive structure of the myth, it cannot be assumed that the people of Babylon could have been satisfied with such an interpretation of a sacred ritual. Nor would it be likely that the story would have found favor among the Greeks and other scholarly peoples had such been its most secret meaning. Tammuz reappears as Adonis, or Attys, and the hero cycle which contained the account was latter identified with the exploits of Alexander the Great. In one form or another several religions, influenced by Assyrian culture, perpetuated the broad structure of the Ishtar-Tammuz cycle.



The recognition of a stratified universe ascending from the earth through the spheres of the seven planets is a familiar element of comparative cosmogony. The similar stratification of the underworld into seven planes or abodes is to be traced from the most remote regions of Central India to the planes of North America. The cosmogony of the eastern Amerindian tribes of the United States is almost identical with the Babylonian concept. To a degree at least, Dante's *Divine Comedy* accepts this pattern, and it is more than intimated in the Egyptian mortuary rituals. In the Mithraic Mysteries of Persia candidates for initiation descended into a subterranean room by a flight of seven steps, and Mohammed on his night journey to heaven ascended through seven spheres and was accosted by the guardian of each gate.

It is most likely that a true explanation of the Babylonian myth should be based upon a study of comparative religious symbolism. Although the original tablets are defaced and several entirely missing, the best way to restore the original tradition is through other nations which accepted the symbolism while it was still a vital force in human belief. Fortunately, several initiated scholars of the classical period and even the later Neoplatonists paused to consider the Babylonian philosophy. From them and from revivals of the cult certain facts are immediately revealed. The first and most important of these revelations is the direct association of the Ishtar legend with the initiatory rituals of the secret philosophical and mystical societies. The story is not essentially a myth, but a dramatic spectacle used to instruct neophytes in the secret doctrine of their people. Obviously, some of the old lore is lost beyond recovery, but enough remains to reconstruct the broad framework of the concealed teachings. We can parallel, for instance, Ishtar's search for Tammuz with Isis seeking the body of Osiris in order that she might restore the god with her magic powers. The descent of Orpheus into Hades to rescue Eurydice also suggests useful commentary material. Kore bearing her torches as she tread the threshold of Hades to rescue her abducted daughter Persephone became an essential element in the pageantry of the Eleusinian Mysteries. By bringing these accounts together, a sufficient key can be fashioned to unlock some of the recondite phases of the ancient legends.

The Gnostics and Neoplatonists, following the earlier tradition, considered the underworld to be a secret symbol for the entire mundane sphere. To them the material state in all its forms and extensions was a dark region and the proper abode of the dead. In this case, by the dead they implied *living creatures locked within corporeal bodies*. Forms were shrouds, and the earth was one vast tomb which received into itself and imprisoned, by the power of its elements, all creatures





THE BATTLE BETWEEN MERODACH AND TIAMAT  
From two limestone slabs in the British Museum,  
reproduced by L. W. King.





SHAMASH, THE GOD OF THE SUN, RISING  
THROUGH THE EASTERN DOOR OF  
THE HEAVENS



THE GODDESS ISHTAR REPRESENTED AS  
WINGED AND STANDING BESIDE  
A SACRED TREE

From Babylonian seals in the British Museum  
reproduced by L. W. King





THE GODDESS ISHTAR SEATED, RECEIVING  
THE OFFERINGS OF HER PRIESTS AND  
SURROUNDED BY SYMBOLS



ISHTAR, THE CENTRAL FIGURE IN THE  
ABOVE GROUP, REPRESENTED IN HADES  
DEPRIVED OF HER GARMENTS  
AND ADORNMENTS

From intaglios reproduced in Maspero's  
*History of Egypt, etc.*





—From Landseer's *Sabaeen Researches*

A DEITY, PROBABLY ISHTAR, SEATED AND RECEIVING THE  
VENERATION OF PRIESTS

The goddess holds a ring of circles, possibly referring to the Pleiades.



who entered into the mystery of generation. The orbit of Saturn, the furthestmost of the planets recognized by the ancients, was the circumference of the underworld, and the entire domain was therefore governed by the old god who devoured his own children. The orbits of the seven planets (which included the sun and moon) formed a ladder, or stairway, symbolically a series of gates through which souls, descending into generation, passed on their journey to physical birth. The sublunary abode, the domain of the god Sin, finally captured the soul in a dark web of dreams over which ruled Allatu with power to conjure all manner of terrible afflictions.

A careful study of the attributes of Ishtar indicates that she was a personification of the human soul. Like the Sophia of the Gnosis, Ishtar was venerated under a diversity of forms. Sometimes she was the daughter of the sun god, and in other versions the offspring of the lunar deity. In a sense, therefore, she was the Hermetic child of the sun and moon. There are intimations that she was occasionally worshiped as an androgenous divinity, and there are references to a male Ishtar. As protectress of life she was also custodian of wisdom, and the emotional aspects of her nature revealed numerous inconsistencies. She was both warlike and peaceful, benign and malevolent, creative and destructive; yet in all her forms and moods she was wonderfully sacred. It is obvious, therefore, that she delineated a power or quality of life which assumed different appearances, each of them highly significant.

There are also occasions on which the reversal of myths indicate the entire structure of an important religious concept. In the Greek form, Orpheus, the spirit, seeks to rescue Eurydice, the soul. In the Babylonian version, Ishtar, the soul, journeys into the underworld to secure the waters of life that she may restore Tammuz, the spirit. The difference in the philosophical perspective reveals an entirely changed mystical conviction. Tammuz is presented without clearly defined characteristics. Whether he was slain by Izdubar, a primordial deity representing animal-humanity, or died from the magic spell cast by the vengeful Ishtar herself is not stated. As the women moaned for the dead Adonis by the gates of Jerusalem, so the Babylonians performed elaborate rites of lamentation to the memory of Tammuz slain. Always he was considered as one deprived of life, and his rituals were mournful and grief-laden.

The cult of the stricken hero, dead by treachery, betrayed by those he trusted and loved or by some malicious agency, reappeared in the Nordic and Gothic rites in the tragedies of Balder, the beautiful, and Sigurd, or Siegfried, the hero of the *Volsung*. The psychology of the drama is not difficult to explore. The martyred hero is always the locked spiritual potential of the human being. Man, possessed of a



will to accomplish all, is frustrated by the limitations of his own personality. He senses resources in the center of his own being which are not available to him. He moans his own isolation, and is impelled by subconscious pressure to release his consciousness from the clutches of the threefold adversary: ignorance, superstition, and fear. He was instructed in this symbolism by the sacred institutions which flourished in ancient times. He regarded himself as one dead in a living universe, thus reversing the more recent theological conviction that man lives in a dead universe.

It would be proper, therefore, that man should weep when he contemplates his own estate. The circumstances which led to the human misfortune were outlined in the anthropological parts of the mythology. Izdubar, as brute force, overcame and destroyed Tammuz, spiritual strength. In the same way the Titans slew the infant Bacchus and devoured his flesh. Even in the Babylonian fragments the identity of Tammuz with the inner spiritual nature of mankind was strongly intimated. In this way the tragedy was universally personalized. Each man re-enacted the cosmic tragedy and shared in the formula of redemption. There is a strong parallel between the descent of Jesus into the underworld and Tammuz wandering in the abode of Sin.

In the Babylonian version Ishtar, like Sophia, takes on the attributes of the Messiah. She becomes the embodiment of divine love which undertakes the perilous mission of rescuing the sleeping self. She is not, however, merely an emotional concept, for she is a mistress of magic and wisdom, and all of her most secret accomplishments are involved in the strategy which she developed. It is interesting that the fountain of the waters of life should be in the deepest and most obscure region of the material sphere. It is the same in the Nordic account, where the living waters take the form of a stream flowing in the underworld and sustaining the roots of the great world tree, Yggdrasill. When Odin, the All-father, desired the eternal wisdom, he went under the earth to the pool of Mimir, which was hidden among the roots of the world tree. Here, in exchange for universal enlightenment, he cast one of his own eyes into the pool of the ageless memory.

Gradually Ishtar is recognized as the overself, which does not descend into generation, but remains on the plane of self-consciousness. It is from the overself that the atoms or vortices which form the seeds of a new physical body fall into a material condition. The ego, or extension of the overself, which becomes the nucleus of the new embodied personality, falls into the embryo at the time of the quickening and there seems to die. It is locked completely in the developing physical form, from which it can release itself only by the gradual



processes of growth. Thus the human being is born and grows with little or no recognition of its origin or destiny. It seems completely alone, left to the accidents of time or fortune, separated from God, yet incapable of accepting a condition of perpetual ignorance. As the Greeks so wisely observed, the growth of the body does not of necessity bring about the release of the imprisoned entity. To the degree that we accept the reality of the mortal sphere, we remain unaware of our own potential, even inevitably, divinity. As we build, not only stronger bodies but a more intense physical society, we become the victims of the limitations which we have arbitrarily bestowed upon the principle of consciousness. We may even forget completely that there are purposes beyond daily activity. We substitute the trivial for the essential, and come in the end to wonder the reason for our own existence.

To combat this spiritual inertia, the world teachers created the religious Mysteries and the philosophical schools. These bore witness to the oracles of the overself, and are generally represented as descending from above or from the source of life to rescue man from his own ignorance. Because these inspired institutions were manifestations of the world soul, they venerated this Mother of Mysteries, and the initiate-priests regarded themselves as the sons of the Virgin of the World. The great goddesses were revealed to mankind through their sanctuaries, which were wombs of spiritual rebirth. The human soul, or overself, was also the Rishi, the Jadadguru, and the Sotar. The salvation of the incarnate fragment depends upon the intercession of the Anthropos—the One above.

The relation between the overself and the personality was that of parent to child, but on a much higher level than such a human relationship. It was not the purpose of the overself to become an autocrat imposing growth or illumination; it merely responded slowly but inevitably to the yearnings and aspirings of the locked ego. It was an essential doctrine of Chaldean philosophy that superior natures are aware of the vicissitudes of their parts and extensions, but that the dependent personalities may not be conscious of the causes from which they are suspended. Thus the overself is the father, or parent, ever-mindful of the needs of the child. The most secret thoughts, prayers, and aspirations of the person ascend to the overself where they are known and accepted. By intuition the person becomes aware of the reality of his own causal being, and by inspiration, which is the true oracle, the oversoul conveys its messages to its offspring.

The Greeks were convinced that the soul approached the personality in dreams and visions, and was drawn into proximity in moments of great stress, pain, or sorrow. When the child becomes responsive to the parent, it can receive into its nature the parental instruction, which, of course, is based upon the vast panorama of the soul's experi-



ence. The personality has but one fleeting life, but the overself is enriched by the testimonies of all the persons which it has engendered and projected into objectivity. For practical purposes, the overself can be considered as a collective soul-power, and the personality as an individualized mental-focus. It is not possible for the ego to contain the collective soul, but we learn from the Babylonian rituals that it was held possible that the soul, or overself, could cause a form or extension of its own nature to be extended also into the sphere of generation to rescue the mental focus from the obscurity which enveloped it. As a ray of the sovereign sun causes the life within the seed to stir, in like manner the ray of the oversoul descends through the seven spheres to quicken the personality. Thus revived, the ego has a new instrument or dimension by which it can accomplish its own liberation.

As the human spirit is a differentiation from the spiritual substance of the overself, the human soul is likewise a part of the oversoul. The incarnation of the soul-unit does not occur at the same time as the descent of the life-atom. The Ishtar who tread upon the threshold of the land of no return was only one aspect of the great goddess whose moods and powers were beyond estimation. She was moved by the memory of an ancient love which she had known long before. She therefore ventured to approach the gates of the underworld; that is, she hazarded her own identity by becoming involved in the sphere of generation. She was permitted to enter only if she agreed to obey the laws of the region and to relinquish her celestial adornments. She remonstrated when her jewels and vestments were taken from her, but in each case was reminded that such was the law of that place.

The insignias and raiment of the goddess symbolized the splendid luminous attributes of the soul. As Ishtar descended, her rays were cut off; that is, they were obscured by the denser elements of the region through which she passed. Thus she came finally before the mistress of the underworld unclad and without any testimony to her divine estate. At the court of Sin she awaited the final abuses which were to be heaped upon her. The moon ruled the ethers, the last elements above physical matter. Having once come into this humidity of generation, the goddess was required to enter the physical body. To commemorate this occurrence, it was described that she was attacked by disease and infirmity from head to foot. The plagues that she endured were the natural destinies of the flesh—sorrow, pain, age, and corruption. These she had to endure patiently if she was to secure the mysterious water of life. There is no report that Ishtar found Tammuz in this region or that she was at any time united with him even in the experience of mortality.



In such symbolism it becomes necessary to find an appropriate definition for the strange waters of everlastingness which could revive the slain god. The Odinic rites give us a good clue, and we know that these rituals came originally from the area of Babylon. In Mimir's pool, Odin found the spring of the long remembrance. After he had taken of its waters, all wisdom was available to him except the knowledge of his own destiny. Here the waters were used to indicate the wonderful agent of transmutation. It was the sacred water of baptism, which, in turn, was a symbol of the availability of the universal spiritual energy. It was universal life locked within the atom, the power of which could release the potencies sleeping in the seed. For this reason it was represented as hidden in the deepest and darkest part of the material creation.

Ishtar, by descending into generation, made possible the birth and development of a human soul that was to become the consort and helpmeet of the ego. In one of the Egyptian rituals the mental self gives thanks to the great gods that aloneness has ended. With the union of the soul and the ego, the first operation of the Hermetic Mystery is accomplished. The creature becomes "a living soul," and drinks of the waters of universal life and is restored. In the allegory the underworld seeks to hold Ishtar because she has entered the region of no return. But the great gods decree otherwise. They have already given part of themselves to the abyss in order that man might be created. Now they are called upon for a further sacrifice. The wonderful regions of space are saddened by the loss of the goddess, so Ea, who keeps the waters above the firmament—that is, the ocean of universal life—creates a magical creature to rescue Ishtar. This creature is not a living being, but a compound of enchantments which exists only to accomplish the will of the divinities. This remarkable production of conjury is certainly the esoteric tradition or the secret doctrines of Yoga as they were known and practiced at that time. Ishtar must be rescued by a formula; that is, by a series of disciplines sustained by wisdom and perfected by knowledge. When the device sent by Ea reaches the court of Allatu, it commands the mistress of Hades to release the afflicted soul, restore its adornments, and permit it to return in peace to the sphere of light.

Many psychological principles, their actions and interactions, are intimated by this part of the story. By conjury and magic, of course, we should understand the workings of the divine wisdom. Ishtar passes back through the gates, or orbits, of the seven worlds, and her vestments and adornments are restored. She emerges into the upper earth, which is the level of soul consciousness, in all the splendor of her proper divinity. The heavens rejoice and the creatures thereof are gladdened. The inference that Tammuz was restored was probably



left unrecorded because it trespassed on the initiation rites, which could not be revealed without profaning the sacred institutions. A most interesting concept is here developed. The overself is required to experience the condition of its own extension. It is not permitted to remain aloof from the mystery of generation. Actually the descent of Ishtar records the great cycle of the oversoul through the sequence of its embodied parts. It thus reveals two cycles of evolutionary process proceeding simultaneously. One of these cycles is completed in a single incarnation, but the other requires the gamut of all lives or incarnations in a life-wave for its fulfillment.

After the extension of the oversoul shares the mystery of generation with the ego, the path of light comes into the house of hidden places. The ego experiences an inner source of strength which gradually unfolds into a faculty of apperceptive discernment. In other words, at a certain stage in its development the ego begins to participate in the experience records of all its previous incarnations. The polarization within the personality which makes this possible is veiledly described by the descent of Ishtar. At first the soul-force is merely an instinctive or intuitive recognition transcending the normal and ordinary capacities of the human mind. It is actually the personal experience of a new depth-dimension with its corresponding intensification of values. The living soul has a larger destiny and a greater insistence toward progress. It also gradually develops faculties of internal knowing and begins to bridge the interval between itself and the oversoul. Ultimately the ego comes into conscious identity with the overself, and the psychic complex is released into intuitive union with the oversoul. This liberation has also its alchemical formula. The soul gradually creates an immortal personality in the region of light. This becomes the Adept-body, and the union of the spirit and the soul is the Hermetic marriage. When this has occurred, the overself becomes the one and only self, and the long cycle of obscurity ends in a triumphant note as in Mozart's Masonic opera, *The Magic Flute*.

Some will say that it is unlikely that the ancient peoples living in the valley of the Euphrates could have held such an exalted doctrine. Yet we know they must have because they imparted it to other nations and originated a system of religious symbolism which can be traced in the doctrines of more than a dozen Mystery Schools. Even Pythagoras visited the plains of Babylon to converse with the last of the Chaldeans who knew the sacred rituals. In *The Divine Pymander* of Hermes and the *Pistis Sophia* the descent of Ishtar is almost exactly repeated with the substitution of other names. We find it again in *The Mystical Divinity* of Dionysius the Areopagite. Ishtar was represented in Babylonian art with her body surrounded by a nimbus, a crown upon her head, and the lunar crescent beneath her feet. Thus she is



the Virgin of the World, the intercessor, and the Mother of Mysteries. She contributed to the concept which produced Diana of the Ephesians, the Saitic Isis, and the Virgin Mary.

The entire esoteric tradition is essentially the radiance of the world soul. This is also evident from the part played by Kwan Yin in Chinese Buddhism. It is very probable that Mahayana Buddhism had contacted with Assyrian-Babylonian culture. Proofs of this can be found in Afghanistan and western India. The life-pressure in man causes him to desire to survive, but it is the soul-pressure which impels him to grow and perfect his internal graces. The victory of soul-power must be accomplished before the social institutions of the material world can preserve themselves against the intemperances of human ambitions. When man became a living soul, beauty adorned strength and made wisdom gentle. The magnificent urge which brings with it the unconquerable resolution to attain truth through virtue is impelled by the integrities of the soul-focus. Thus Ishtar must rescue her lord from death and bring to him the waters of Mnemosyne. What are the yearnings, the dreams, and the hopes of mankind but a little remembrance? Plato said that we can never learn that which we do not already know; we cannot accept by an experience of consciousness that which is not already such an experience. The longing after goodness is a remembrance of goodness, and we seek wisdom only because a faint memory of wisdom inspires the quest. These memories and remembrances are attunements with the overself. Along the subtle channels of the psychic atmosphere comes the messages from above. These stir the sleeping senses and faculties, vitalize them with a wonderful nutrition, and nourish them with living waters. Who drinks of these waters shall not thirst again.

The machinery of man's composite function could have been known only to the seers who were able to examine the entire process with the aid of inner vision. Such parts, however, of their revelations as can be objectively observed we know to be strangely and wonderfully true. We see the effects, but do not comprehend the causes. For this reason there is a veil before the altar of the temple, and behind this veil are the great gods of causes, remote and comparatively unknown. The legend of Cupid and Psyche has a message for all psychologists, but most of these scientists have slight inclination to investigate the old fables. We realize that man differs from the brute because he dreams and hopes and aspires. We do not understand, however, why he possesses these particular faculties or how he may use them to greater advantage.

The familiar fable of Cupid and Psyche is an extract or fragment from *The Metamorphosis of Apuleius*. This initiated author certainly did not invent the concept which is revealed through the story, for it



was already outlined in the writings of Plato. Psyche, representing both the world soul and the human soul, is described as a transcendently beautiful creature. She descends from the summit of a lofty mountain into a pleasant valley below. Here she sees a magnificent palace, not built by mortals but by divine agencies. The floor of this house was made of gems, by which is implied the stars sprinkled through the firmament. The soul is thus on the plane of the oversoul in a middle distance between the spiritual universe and the world form. It is here that Psyche is married to an invisible being whose presence she can know through her ears and hands but whom she cannot see. This phantom husband is later revealed to be Love or pure desire uncontaminated by materiality.

The two sisters of Psyche tempt her to explore the form of her unknown husband. These sisters signify imagination and Nature, which inspire the rational part of the soul to contaminate pure Love. As a consequence Cupid flies away, and Psyche falls into the earth; that is, is drawn into union with body. After this tragedy Psyche wanders about the world in search of pure Love which she had previously betrayed. During her exile from the sphere of light, Psyche is obliged to obey the commands of Venus. In accomplishing the last of these requirements, Psyche is forced to descend into the dark regions of Hades. Plotinus explains the philosophy of this descent as follows: "The death of the soul is, while merged, or baptized, as it were, in the present body, to descend into matter, and to be filled with its impurity, and after departing from this body, to lie absorbed in its defilement till it returns to a superior condition, and elevates its eye from the overwhelming mire. *For to be plunged into matter is to descend into Hades, and fall asleep.*"

Plotinus only rephrased the statement by Plato in the seventh book of his *Republic*. "He who is not able, by the exercise of his reason, to define the idea of *the good* separating it from all other objects, and piercing, as in a battle, through every kind of argument: endeavoring to confute, not according to opinion, but according to essence, and proceeding through all the dialectical energies with an unshaken reason, is in the present life sunk in sleep, and conversant with the delusions of dreams; and that before he is roused to a vigilant state, *he will descend to Hades*, and be overwhelmed with a sleep perfectly profound."

Cupid finally rescued Psyche, or the soul, from her deadly lethargy. Of the conclusion of the story, Thomas Taylor writes in his introduction of the fable: "In consequence of this, having accomplished her destined toils, she [Psyche] ascends to her native heaven, becoming lawfully united with Cupid, (for while descending her union might be called illegitimate) lives the life of the mortals; and the natural

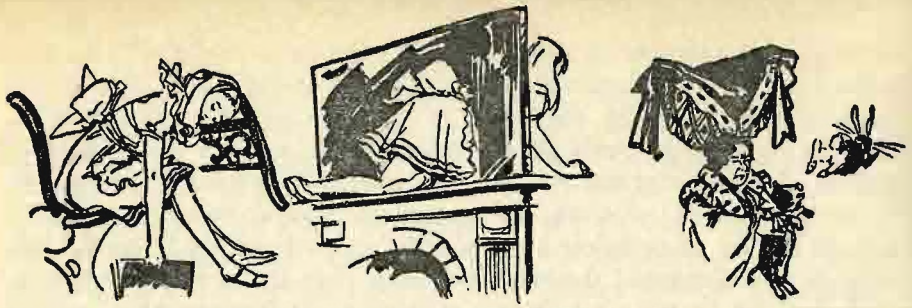


result of this union with pure desire is pleasure or delight." At this point a word of explanation is necessary. The term *pure desire* was used by the Greeks in the sense of life-desiring and truth-desiring. Because the spirit has only these desires, Cupid becomes an appropriate symbol of man's supreme spiritual nature and its eternal requirements. In the same way, pleasure did not mean mortal enjoyment, but a state of ecstasy or complete internal satisfaction resulting from the fulfillment of enlightened destiny. It is only after the soul has been contaminated by matter that its native resolutions are obscured, and it substitutes the gratification of worldly desires for its transcendent aspirations.

Many authors, who, like Plato, Plotinus, and Apuleius, were initiates of the Mystery system, could be quoted to show the secret meaning of the descent into Hades. It is quite possible that the fable of Cupid and Psyche was directly inspired by the myth of Tammuz and Ishtar. In any event, the underlying philosophy is the same. If the average mortal could be convinced that human appetites and instincts were merely the inverted shadows of divine purposes, there would be a reasonable and understandable justification for self-improvement. It is because we have accepted the dream that we have come to a way of life that Plato vividly described as a "staggering of the soul." The philosopher explained that instead of moving directly toward the goal of human purpose the psyche, intoxicated by the noxious vapors of earthiness, wanders about as though inebriated. It cannot control even its own parts and members, but acts as though befuddled and confused. For this reason the works of unenlightened men are uncertain and contradictory. It is only through the union of the psyche with pure desire, which is actually the love of truth, that the soul regains its sanity or becomes a healthy organism. The reward for self-improvement is first contentment, then internal peace, and finally an enthusiasm in truth.

Ishtar, moaning over the body of Tammuz, is weeping for the life which was destroyed through ignorance and passion, and must be revived through wisdom and pure love. It is this inner dedication of the soul which restores the spiritual estate, making available, as one present and visible, those intangible spiritual faculties and powers, propensities and attributes by which the human spirit may be known and embraced. Each right-minded person can advance the mystical chemistry of his own regeneration through learning to understand and then applying that which is understood to the conduct of his character. Thus he returns to the land of light from which he came, and abides forever with the immortals and is one of them.





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## Curiouser & Curiouser

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*A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND*

### The Bogomiles

This ancient religious community originated in Bulgaria prior to the 10th century, but so heretical were its teachings that few documents have survived. The founder of the sect was probably a priest named Bogomil, who had come under the influence of the Manichaean philosophy about A. D. 950. It is likely, however, that some elements of the doctrine were survivals from earlier beliefs. Through the kindness of a friend, we are able to present a brief summary of the sect translated from the Bulgarian.

The Bogomiles rejected everything which related to the material world, including their own bodies which they considered to be the creations of an evil power and an ever-present source of sin. They performed extreme austerities to punish the flesh and overcome worldliness. Their food was of the plainest kind, chiefly vegetables, but they were permitted to eat fish. They rejected meat and wine entirely. The members dressed simply and wore long black caps, like monks, and when passing strangers hid their faces. They recognized the necessity for labor, but worked only to support their barest necessities believing that accumulation of wealth

or property was inspired by the evil power. They disliked to engage in any activity which contributed to the satisfaction of bodily instincts. They favored the attitude of living directly from the abundance of Nature.

The Bogomiles were opposed to marriage, because they believed that it gratified the urges of the flesh. They considered that children born into the world came under the influence of the evil agent when their bodies were formed. They did not forbid marriage, however, but favored a solitary existence. They cultivated a humble and peaceful attitude, and were known as a pale, silent people. They talked but little, never laughed loudly, were not curious or suspicious, and guarded themselves constantly against pride. In substance, they devoted their time to fighting the instincts of the flesh in a devout effort to free their souls.

They devoted most of their time to reading their religious books, the Holy Scripture, and in the act of prayer. They acknowledged only the New Testament, and prayed many times daily. They had no churches or temples, and the Lord's Prayer was their favorite re-



ligious exercise. The Bogomiles rejected church sermons and sacraments, favoring only their own type of spiritual baptism which was bestowed upon new members. They were opposed to icons, idols, sacred pictures, and even the symbol of the cross, as these were outward indications and not the substance of the doctrine. The Bogomiles rejected the Church hierarchy and despised the laws of the state, because these catered to the priesthood and the aristocracy. They refused to engage in war, would not take oath, and did not recognize any sentence or punishment imposed by vested authority. They condemned the rich, ridiculed the nobles, and considered sober citizens little better than slaves. They had their own communities and their own hierarchy patterned after the example of the original apostles. At the head of their organization was a chief or master and twelve apostle-preachers. For each district in which they flourished they elected a bishop.

The Bogomiles believed in one heavenly God, Father of all, and creator of the whole world. However, the creator and ruler of the material universe and of man is Satanel, the eldest son of the great God-father. This son, because of pride, and accompanied by other lesser spirits separated himself from God and was cast from heaven. He was then replaced by the younger son of God-father, who was the Word, Jesus Christ. After all this had occurred, Satanael, who had dominion over the visible creation, brought forth the earth and created the first man. He could not ensoul this man, however, and so an arbitration took place. The heavenly God bestowed

the living soul, and Satanael agreed to dominate only the bodies of the first man and his descendants. The souls were to be given to God in order that he might replenish the heavenly hosts, which had been diminished by the departure of the fallen angels.

Satanael did not keep his promise. Out of envy toward God and tempted by the beauty of the first woman, Eva, he took on the appearance of a snake, united with her, and produced the evil Kain and his sister Kalomena. Then Adam united with Eva, and Abel was born. Kain killed his brother, and from that time on the children of Satanael persecuted and destroyed the spiritual children of God. The destruction was not very great, however, because there were very few who resisted the evils of Satanael. Finally, the heavenly Father took pity upon his people and sent his second son to fight Satanael and to save humanity. The Bogomiles then follow the account of the birth, life, and passion of Christ. The son of the Virgin bound Satanael and made it possible for the generations of humanity to enter the heavenly kingdom. To earn this right, however, they must restore themselves from all of the material evils caused by Satanael and be found worthy to be accepted into the world of God. After he had finished his mission, Christ returned to heaven and sat again with his Father. This philosophy sustained the Bogomiles through long and numerous persecutions. Their interpretation and the devotion with which they pursued the code which they had fashioned causes this sect to be included among the most curious of human beliefs.

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### SAVED BY A SPIDER'S WEB

There is a legend in Islam that when Mohammed fled from Mecca to escape assassins he hid in a cave. While he was there, a spider spun its web over the entrance. The enemies of the Prophet seeing the web did not explore the cave, assuming that no one could have hidden there without disturbing the fragile threads.



# The Flying Dutchman

Richard Wagner derived the librettos of several of his operas from mythology, folklore, and legendry. Among those stories which he adapted to his music-dramas is the legend of the "Flying Dutchman." As usual, the great composer took numerous liberties with the popular account, but in principle he preserved the symbolism of the story. As is usually the case with fragments of old folklore, the legend of the "Flying Dutchman" recurs in several scattered localities, and there is some question as to the source of the original. In the more common version, Captain Vanderdecken, a Hollander, was attempting to sail his ship around the Cape of Good Hope. He encountered heavy seas and violent storms and, although a seasoned mariner, was unable to round the Cape. At last, in the midst of the furious gale, he swore an oath that he would accomplish his purpose even if he had to keep sailing forever.

In those good old days the devil was especially mindful of profanity. He heard the oath, and condemned the miserable captain to sail the seas until the Judgment Day. Century after century, in fair weather and in foul, Captain Vanderdecken continued to struggle against the wind and waves, but was never able to pass the Cape. As time went on, his ship was reduced to a ruined hulk, the sails were tattered, and the vessel became a phantom. Even in recent years sailors occasionally insist that in some heavy weather, in a forlorn place, they have seen the "Flying Dutchman." In all probability, the legend has been perpetuated by mirages or the derelicts of abandoned ships. But men who go down to the sea have a profound admiration for the ocean and its wonders. Perhaps they are a superstitious lot, or perhaps their eyes, accustomed to the vast expanses of sky and water, have seen beyond the horizon. At least, they have shared in an experience which those who cling safely to the land can never know or understand.

In the original legend, Captain Vanderdecken was forbidden to make port or to find any rest until the end of the world. Such a finish to the story could not be acceptable to a devout people who believed in divine intercession. The devil was not all-powerful, and he could not claim completely a human soul. He must give his victim a sporting chance to redeem himself or to be redeemed. In Wagner's version, which follows other popular interpretations, that which the Hollander brought upon himself by pride and hate could only be atoned for by humility and love. *Der Fliegende Hollander* was permitted every seven years to find a temporary haven where he could go forth upon the land for a limited time in search of a woman whose unselfish love



could redeem him. The perfect proof of her devotion was that she would love the Hollander so completely that she was willing to die for him. It was against this background that the opera opens. The "Flying Dutchman" ship, with blood-red sails and black mast, approached the coast of Norway and cast anchor in a small bay. The Hollander himself was a strange and impressive person. His face was handsome, but indescribably sad, and he was weary with the burden of centuries. Once again he sought love, and in Senta, the daughter of a Norwegian ship captain, he recognized by mysterious signs his destined liberator.

The Dutchman had a ship that seemed to belong to the distant past, but in those days this was not remarkable, for most vessels had been long in service and the designs changed but little. The vessel was laden with rich store, and it is most important to note that the Dutchman was wealthy and ready to exchange all his earthly possessions for the peace of his soul. Daland, the Norwegian captain, was most favorably impressed by the courtly Dutchman, and readily gave his consent when the Hollander asked permission to woo his only daughter. When they arrived at Daland's home, there upon the wall was a portrait of the Flying Dutchman. Senta had always been fascinated by the sad, handsome face, and even as a child had developed a romantic attachment for the tragic captain. When Daland and the Dutchman entered the room, Senta immediately recognized the stranger. Therefore, she was not surprised or dismayed when her father asked her to receive Vanderdecken as a guest and a future husband.

Senta had lived so long with the tragic legend of the Flying Dutchman in her heart and mind that she was eager to sacrifice herself for his liberation. She vowed her eternal devotion and heroically resolved to share his lot and to be faithful to him until death. In the Wagnerian version, Erik is introduced as a young hunter in love with Senta. In a desperate attempt to prevent her from departing with the Dutchman, he pleaded with her to renounce her fatal determination. Vanderdecken came in during this scene, and, misinterpreting the circumstances, assumed that Senta had forsaken him. He immediately rushed to his ship and called upon his phantom crew to spread the sails and return again to the sea. Senta, attempting to follow him, was restrained by those about her. Too late to board the ship, she climbed a high cliff which overhung the sea and there, calling to the Flying Dutchman and protesting her faithfulness, she cast herself into the waters and perished. At that very moment, the Flying Dutchman's ship with all its crew sank into the sea. There was a terrible agitation of the waters, and in the midst of a whirlpool the souls of Senta and the Flying Dutchman floated upward. Clapsed in a deathless embrace, the two



characters of the opera ascended into the glow of the sunset, and the *Hollander* was released from his curse.

Most old legends originated in the ancient system of dramatizing moral truths. Like the *Miracle Plays* and the religious *Mysteries* of antiquity, the characters involved are embodiments of universal principles operating on the plane of human activity. In this instance, the Dutchman was cursed for his audacity. He opposed his own will to the will of the universe, as this was represented by the sea. It has always been customary to use the ocean figuratively as a symbol of the inferior or mundane diffusion. In the fable of the *Pearl of Great Price*, the human, seeking the treasure of immortality, dives into the sea to secure the gem hidden in the oyster. The Greeks regarded the physical world as a sphere of humidity or density into which souls descended at birth. Oriental nations have made use of the element of water in two ways. They refer to the sea of cosmic space, by which they mean the vast expanse of consciousness itself. They also make references to the sea of illusion, wherein the mind is obscured or confused and the apperceptive faculties of the soul appear to be drowned or completely submerged.

The ocean is a convenient figure by which to convey the quality of the unknown. Even today its depths have not been completely explored, and we know that there are creatures lurking in the deeper parts of the ocean which have eluded both recognition and classification. Like man himself, the surface of whom we may contemplate but whose profundities defy examination, the sea is a mystery even to those who have lived their lives in close contact with its moods. The Dutchman pitted his will against the sea and resolved to dominate Nature by the resolution of his own purpose. Frustrated repeatedly by the immensity of his adversary, the captain declared open war upon the elements, and bound himself with an oath. It requires only a slight knowledge of the method used in assembling a legend to discover the meaning intended. In most such stories, the leading character embodies the qualities of collective mankind. The Dutchman is, therefore, man himself, determined to impose his will upon Nature.

Everywhere we can see evidences and demonstrations of the human determination. In each of us is an active agent we call self-will. Man is so constructed that he operates from a center of pressure which requires for its satisfaction the supremacy of self over circumstance. We refuse to bow to inevitables, because we feel a source of strength within us which demands complete expression and satisfaction. The old religious writings state clearly that it was pride that brought about the Fall of the archangel Lucifer and his legions. The emotional reflex of pride is merely an expression of the conviction of self-sufficiency. The conflict between the will of man and the laws of Nature



has been dramatized through countless legends. To understand the human instinct, we must examine the psychology of behavior.

Because human consciousness is unable to experience collective consciousness, each person is aware only of himself as experienced fact. We may respect others and admire them; we may cherish them and serve their needs, but we do all these things from the center of our own selfhood. It is extremely difficult for us to impersonalize occurrences of any kind. We accept all happenings in terms of the personal self. Incidents so remote that they cannot be interpreted in their relationship to ourselves leave no enduring impression. Perhaps a simple example will clarify the point. In connection with my lecturing, I frequently have someone approach me at the close of a talk and insist that I had spent the entire evening directly addressing him. Actually, I had no knowledge that he was even present and no way of knowing how I could have pointed my remarks in his direction.

There is a considerable group of human beings to whom every occurrence in the social, economic, and political life of the community is a personal affront. While they may realize that this attitude is unsound, their instincts impel them to such a conclusion. For each of us there is a twofold existence. The first part is ourselves, and the second part is everything that is not ourselves. Unless we have enriched our inner lives with a deep and beautiful conviction, we live in a state of perpetual defense against the encroachment of the collective. The very mechanism which causes us to exist in such a pattern also bestows the innate conviction that we can accomplish an ultimate victory over the menacing weight of environment. The resolution to dominate others as necessary to the satisfaction of the self has resulted in most of the tyranny which has afflicted the human race. In its crude form, an attitude of this kind is not easily defended, but it can become so highly rationalized that we are able to overlook its primary defect. It may seem wise not to state the basic pattern, but to build upon it a series of policies which cater to inclinations even though they cannot bear detailed analysis.

What we now call the grand motion of man-made civilization is largely dominated by the conviction of the omnipotence of self-will. Humanity has come to regard itself as a peculiar creation, distinct from all other orders of life and predestined and foreordained to attain mastery over the universe. Few, indeed, can resist such a flattering prospect. We want to believe it, even if at times there are causes for legitimate doubt. Motivated by such a grandiose concept, we feel fully justified in pillaging Nature and wasting or perverting its resources. Recognizing no authority greater than our own, we build empires, and are finally buried beneath their ruins. We take comfort in scientific progress, because it strengthens our cherished conviction



that we are on the road to universal mastery. Each new discovery by which we gain some further sense of power appears to be advancing our essential purpose. We look at the monuments we have erected, and develop an unhealthy admiration for our own conceits.

Like the Dutchman at the helm of his little ship, we feel ourselves to be strong enough to challenge the mystery of space. We are the masters of our destinies and the captains of our souls, and we are so busy enjoying this thought that we overlook our innumerable limitations. Let us assume, for a moment, that rounding the Cape of Good Hope is, indeed, the fulfillment of the mortal dream. This accomplishment may imply man's ultimate security. Assuming that our ambitions are, to some degree, reasonable—and this is a large assumption—we feel that it is not less than our natural right to have that which we desire. We may even be able to prove to the satisfaction of others that our goal is meritorious. Under such conditions, we also like to believe that the end justifies the means, and that we will be forgiven for our misdeeds if our motivations are sufficiently lofty.

Time and time again humanity, in quest of peace and happiness, has tried to round the Cape. Scarcely a rogue in history but has supported his cause by appropriate platitudes. After thousands of years of searching for the Promised Land, we are still the victims of our own methods. With a completely erroneous concept of human purpose and world destiny, we battle inevitables with more courage than intelligence. With head bloody but unbowed, the Dutchman then swore his oath. He would continue to head into the gale until the Judgment Day. Another seaman might have asked the help of God for his understaking, but the Dutchman was not so inclined. The devil, "part of that power which still works for good while ever scheming ill," accepted the challenge. His infernal majesty actually played only a helpful part. If the Dutchman wished to sail for eternity, then he should have his wish. Such stubbornness was entitled to all the assistance that could possibly be rendered. This is always Nature's way. When we are inclined to exaggerate our own abilities, life does not deliver a sermon. The gods do not descend with rare advice or swift punishment. The wisdom of the universe instructs through experience. What we will to do, we continue to do. Our own action reveals to ourselves the magnitude of its folly. It is quite possible that the Dutchman was not immediately aware of the disaster which he had brought upon himself. He was much more concerned with accomplishing his purpose. It was only after a long time that he began to realize what it meant to oppose the inevitable. Self-will permits us to make the same mistake repeatedly, but it is never able to change the shape of truth. Regardless of how devoted we may be to a false conviction, we cannot win.





## Library Notes

By A. J. HOWIE

*History, Condition, and Prospects of the  
Indian Tribes of the United States. —  
Henry R. Schoolcraft. Philadelphia, 1853*

### PART II

"Are their (the Indian Tribes') traits, opinion, and idiosyncracies, indigenous or American: or are they peculiar to the Indian mind as developed on this continent; and not derivative from other lands? If so, in what do their original conceptions of art or science, religion or opinion, consist?

"Not in the adoration, or worship of the Sun, certainly!

"That idolatrous practice had its origin in Persia, Mesopotamia, and Chaldea; whence it spread east and west, nearly the world over. The worship of the Sun and Moon is mentioned by Job, and was the prevalent idolatry of the land of Uz. It is also seen that this form of idolatry was charged among the sins of the Jews, in the days of Ezekiel, as having been introduced secretly in the temple worship at Jerusalem.

"Oblations and public thanksgivings were decreed at Rome to the Sun, which was installed among the multiform gods of that empire.

"Fire was deemed by the followers of Zoroaster as a symbol of the Deity. That philosopher admitted no other visible object of worship. It was alone the supreme emblem of divine intelligence.

"Nothing is more notorious than the former prevalence of this worship among the Peruvian and Mexican tribes; where, however, it was mixed with the practice of human sacrifices, and the grossest

rites. The Aztecs made offerings to the Sun upon the highest teocalli, and sang hymns to it. Sacred fire was supplied alone by the priesthood, and it was the foundation of their power.

"North of the Gulf of Mexico, the doctrine prevailed with more of its original oriental simplicity, and free from the horrid rites which had marked it in the valley of Anahuac and among the spurs of the Andes.

"The tribes of the present area of the United States would admit of no temples, but made their sacred fires in the recesses of the forest. They sang hymns to the Sun as the symbol of the Great Spirit. Such is their present practice in the forests (1850). They were guilty, it is true, at all periods of their history, of shocking cruelties to prisoners taken in war, but they never offered them as sacrifices to the Deity.

"They never use common fire for uncommon purposes. Sacred fire is extracted on ceremonial occasions by percussion; most commonly with the flint. Opwaguns, or pipes, with the incense of tobacco, are thus lighted whenever their affairs or the business in hand is national, or relates to their secret societies. This object, so lighted, is first offered by genuflections to the four cardinal points, and the zenith. It is then handed by the master of ceremonies to the chiefs and public functionaries present, who are



each expected to draw a few whiffs ceremonially.

"In this primitive practice of having no temples for their worship, extracting their sacred fire for ceremonial occasions by percussion, and keeping their worship up to its simple standard of a sort of transcendentalism, as taught by the oriental nations, to whom we have referred, the Indian tribes of the United States indicate their claims to a greater antiquity than those of the southern part of the continent. They appear to have been pushed from their first positions by tribes of grosser rites and manners.

"The disciples of Zoroaster", says Herodotus, 'reject the use of temples, of altars, and of statues; and smile at the folly of those nations who imagine that the gods are sprung from, or bear any affinity with the human nature. The tops of the highest mountains are the places chosen for their sacrifices. Hymns and prayers are the principal worship. The Supreme God, who fills the wide arch of heaven, is the object to which they are addressed.'

"Take another of their dogmas, and try whether it has the character of an original or derivative belief. We allude to the two principles of Good and Evil, for which the Iroquois have the names of Inigorio, the Good mind, and Inigohahetgea, or the Evil mind. This is one of the earliest oriental beliefs. It was one of the leading dogmas of Zoroaster. Goodness, according to this philosopher, is absorbed in light; Evil is buried in darkness. Ormusd is the principle of benevolence, true wisdom, and happiness to men. Ahriman is the author of malevolence and discord. By his malice he has long pierced the egg of Ormusd; in other words, has violated the harmony of the works of creation.

"The North American tribes of our latitudes appear to have felt that the existence of evil in the world was incompatible with that universal benevolence and goodness which they ascribe to the Merciful Great Spirit. Iroquois theology meets this question: they account for it by supposing, at the creation, the

birth of two antagonistical Powers of miraculous energy, but subordinate to the Great Spirit, one of whom is perpetually employed to restore the discords and mal-adaptations, in the visible creation of the other."

"It has been found that the Indians of the United States believe in the duality of the soul. This ancient doctrine is plainly announced as existing among the Algonquins, in connection with, and as a reason for, the deposit of food with the dead, and of leaving an opening in the grave covering, which is a very general custom.

"They also believe in the general doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls.....The notions of the northern tribes on this subject are shown incidentally in the oral tales. The soul of man is seen, in these curious legends, to be thought immortal and undying, the vital spark passing from one object to another. This object of the new life in general is not man, but some species of animated creation; or even, it may be, for a time, an inanimate object. The circumstances which determine this change, do not appear. Nor can it be affirmed, that the doctrine is parallel, in all respects, to the Pythagorean theory. It would seem that the superior will of the individual, as a spiritually possessed person, himself determined the form of his future life."

"The doctrine of *Manitoes*, or what may be denominated Manitology, has the strongest ground for originality of conception. All tribes have some equivalent to this. We use the Algonquin word, because that is best known. The word Manito, when not used with a prefix or accent, does not mean the Deity, or Great Spirit. It is confined to a spiritual, or mysterious power. The doctrine that a man may possess such a power, is well established in the belief of all the tribes. All their priests and prophets assert the possession of it, but the possession is not believed, by even the blindest zealot or impostor, to be supreme, or equal to that of the Great Merciful Spirit, or diurgic deity.



A man may fast to obtain this power. The initial fast at the age of puberty, which every Indian undergoes, is for light to be individually advertised and become aware of this personal Manito. When revealed in dreams, his purpose is accomplished, and he adopts that revelation, which is generally some bird or animal, as his personal or guardian Manito. He trusts in it in war and peace; and there is no exigency in life, in or from which he believes it cannot help or extricate him. The misfortune is, for his peace and welfare of mind, that these Manitoes are not of equal and harmonious power. One is constantly supposed to be 'stronger' or to have greater spiritual powers than another. Hence, the Indian is never sure that his neighbor is not under the guardianship of a Manito stronger than his own.

"This is not half the worst of the doctrine. There are malignant, as well as benevolent Manitoes. Here the TWO PRINCIPLES of Good and Evil, which we have discussed as of oriental origin, develop themselves. The evil Manito is constantly exercising his power to counteract or overreach the good. And thus the Indian, who believes in a passive Great Spirit, or *Gezha Manito*, with no other attributes but goodness and ubiquity, is left in a perpetual and horrible state of fear. His Great Spirit is believed to rule the earth and the sky, and to be the WA-ZHA-WAUD, or maker of the world; but he leaves these two antagonistical classes of Manitoes to war with each other, and to counteract each other's designs, to fill the world with turmoils, and, in fact, to govern the moral destinies of mankind.

"There is no attempt by the hunter, priesthood, juggler, or pow-wows, which can be gathered from their oral traditions, to impute to the Great Merciful Spirit the attributes of justice, or to make man accountable to Him, here or hereafter, for aberrations from virtue, good will, truth, or any form of moral right. With benevolence and pity as prime attributes, the great Transcendental Spirit of the Indian does not take

upon himself a righteous administration of the world's affairs, but, on the contrary, leaves it to be filled, and its affairs, in reality, governed by demons and fiends in human form. Here is the Indian theology. Every one will see how subtle it is; how well calculated to lead the uninformed hunter mind captive, and make it ever fearful; and how striking a coincidence its leading dogma of the two opposing principles of Good and Evil affords, with the oriental doctrines to which we have referred."

The Indians of the corn-yielding latitudes mention three species of mounds—the tribal mound of augury or oracles, and of high annual oblations; the mound of sepulture, and the village mound of ordinary sacrifice. These were very different in their object and structure, but were sometimes mixed in application, as caprice or necessity might dictate, or the fortunes of war, which gave the conquering tribe the power, might determine. They all arose, and were founded on one fundamental principle and characteristic of the race—their religion in which the worship of the sun and moon and various planets stood as types of divinity, and was, more or less, an element of union; and this system of worship appears to have marked all the primordial or first emigrated tribes.

"The American Indian takes a great pride in his pipe. There is nothing too precious for him to make it from. His best efforts in ancient sculpture were devoted to it. And there is nothing in his manners and customs more emphatically characteristic, than his habits of smoking.

"Smoking the leaves of the *nicotiana* was an ancient custom with the Indian tribes. Tobacco, which is improperly supposed to be an Asiatic plant, appears first to have been brought to England from the North American coasts by the ships of Sir Walter Raleigh, about 1588; Powhatan and his sylvan court smoked it. It was considered a sacred gift. They affect, in their oral tales, to have received it like the *zea-maize*, by the angelic



messenger from the Great Spirit. They offered the fumes of it to him, by burning it in their pipes. This ceremony always preceded solemn occasions. They then partook of the same oblation; and it is well known that they spend a large part of their leisure hours in the pastime of smoking."

"Charms for preventing or curing disease, or for protection against necromancy, were the common resort of the Indians; and they are still worn among the remote and less enlightened tribes. These charms were of various kinds; they were generally from the animal or mineral kingdom, such as bone, horn, claws, shell, steatite, or other stone.

"The Indian philosophy of medicine greatly favored this system of charms. A large part of the materia medica was subject to be applied through the instrumentality of amulets. They believed that the possession of certain articles about the person would render the body invulnerable; or that their power to prevail over an enemy was thus secured. A charmed weapon could not be turned aside. The possession of certain articles in the secret arcanum of the *gush-ke-pi-ta-gun*, or medicine sac, armed the individual with a new power; and this power was ever the greatest when the possession of the articles was secret. Hence secrecy in the use of their necromantic medicines was strictly enjoined. There was a class of charms that might be thrown at a person, and the very gestulation, in these cases, was believed to be enough to secure efficacy. The mere thrusting of a Meda's sac towards an individual was deemed to be efficacious. A beam of light was often sufficient, in the Indian's eyes, to be charged with the fatal influence. Where the doctrine of necromancy is believed, it is impossible to limit it, and the Medas, who has learned their arts from regular professionals in the secret chamber of the mystical lodge, formed a class of persons of whom the common people were in perpetual fear. The term *medaeka*, which is applied to this class of things, relates to any article worn openly, or concealed

about the person, to which the doctrine of medical magic might be applied.

"The variety of articles actually worn to ward off evil influences was very great. Some form of a sea-shell, manufactured or unmanufactured, was regarded as a common protective, or amulet, by most of the tribes. This passion for shells from the sea was peculiar. The sea appears to have been invested with mystical powers. It was regarded as one of the most magnificent displays of the power of the Great Spirit or Deity, and products rolled up from its depths, colored and glittering, as the nacre of oceanic shells, were regarded as bearing some of the great mysterious power.

"Articles which had served the purpose of amulets in life were deposited in the tomb—for the Indian futurity is not a place of rest; and the hunter's soul, in its uneasy wanderings, still had occasion for the protecting power of the charm. Hence, in opening ancient graves and tumuli, it is found that the amulets to which the deceased was attached in life were deposited with the body."

"The ancient Indians made a great merit of fasting. They fasted sometimes six or seven days, till both their bodies and mind became free and light; which prepared them to dream. The object of the ancient seers was to dream of the sun; as it was believed that such a dream would enable them to see everything on the earth. And by fasting long and thinking much on the subject, they generally succeeded. Fasts and dreams were first attempted at an early age. What a young man sees and experiences during these dreams and fasts, is adopted by him as truth, and it becomes a principle to regulate his future life. He relies for success on these revelations. If he has been much favored in his fasts, and the people believe that he has the art of looking into futurity, the path is open to the highest honors.

"The prophet begins to try his power in secret, with only one assistant, whose testimony is necessary should he succeed. As he goes on, he puts down the figures



of his dreams or revelations, by symbols, on bark or other material, till a whole winter is sometimes passed in pursuing the subject, and he thus has a record of his principal revelations. If what he predicts is verified, the assistant mentions it, and the record is then appealed to as proof of his prophetic power and skill. Time increases his fame. His *ke-kee-wins*, or records, are finally shown to the old people, who meet together and consult upon them, for the whole nation believes in these revelations. They, in the end, give their approval, and declare that he is gifted as a prophet—is inspired with wisdom, and is fit to lead the opinions of the nation.”

### IROQUOIS COSMOGONY.

Neo, the Great Spirit of Life, dwells in the upper regions of space, the origin of all creative power. Atahocan is the master of heaven. Tarenawagon, who is thought to be the same as Michabou, Chiabo, Manabozho, and the Great Hare, is called the keeper of the Heavens. Agreskoe is the god of war. Atahentsic is the woman of heaven. The beginning of the creation, or of man, is connected with her history. One of the six of the original number of created men of heaven, was enamoured of her immediately after seeing her. Atahocan, having discovered this amour, cast her headlong to the earth. She was received below on the back of the great turtle lying on the waters, and was there delivered of twins. One of them was Inigorio, or the Good Mind; the other Antinigorio, or the Bad Mind. The good and the evil principles were thus introduced into the world. Both were equally active, but the latter perpetually employed himself in counteracting the acts of the former.

The tortoise expanded more and more, and finally became the earth. Atahentsic afterwards has a daughter, who bore two sons, Yos-ke-ka and Tho-it-sa-ron. Yos-ke-ka in the end killed his brother, and afterwards, Athentsic, his grandmother resigned the government of the world to him.

The Iroquois affirm that Atahentsic is the same as the moon, and Yos-ke-ka, the same as the sun.

At a certain time, a great Manito on earth, and took a wife of men. She had four sons at a birth, and died in ushering them into the world. The first was Manabozho, who is the friend of the human race. The second Chibiabos, who has care of the dead, and presides over the country of souls. The third Wabasso, who, as soon as he saw light, fled to the North, where he was changed into a white rabbit, and under that form is considered as a great spirit. The fourth was Chokanipok, or the man of flint, or the fire-stone.

The first thing Manabozho did, when he grew up, was to go to war against Chokanipok, who he accused of his mother's death. The contests between them were frightful and long continued, and whenever they had a combat the face of nature still shows signs of it. Fragments were cut from his flesh, which were transformed into stones, and he finally destroyed Chokanipok by tearing out his entrails, which were changed into vines. All the flint-stones are produced in this way, and they supplied men with the principle of fire.

Manabozho was the author of arts and improvements. He taught men how to make axes, lances, and arrow-points, and all implements of bone and stone, and how to make snares, traps, nets to take animals, birds, and fishes. He and his brother Chibiabos lived retired, and were very intimate, planning things for the good of men, and were of superior and surpassing powers of mind and body.

The Manitos who live in the air, the earth, and the water became jealous of their power, and conspired against them. Manabozho had warned his brother against their machinations, and cautioned him not to separate himself from his side; but one day Chibiabos ventured alone on one of the Great Lakes. It was winter, and the whole surface was covered with ice. As soon as he had reached the center, the malicious Manitos broke



the ice, and plunged him to the bottom where they hid his body.

Manabozho wailed along the shores. He waged a war against all the Manitos, and precipitated numbers of them to the deepest abyss. He called on the dead body of his brother. He put the whole country in dread by his lamentations. He then besmeared his face with black, and sat down six years to lament, uttering the name Chibiabos. The Manitos consulted what to do to appease his melancholy and his wrath. The oldest and wisest of them, who had had no hand in the death of Chibiabos, offered to undertake the task of reconciliation. They built a sacred lodge close to that of Manabozho, and prepared a sumptuous feast. They procured the most delicious tobacco, and filled a pipe. They then assembled in order, one behind the other, and each carrying under his arm a sack formed of the skin of some favorite animal, as a beaver, an otter, or a lynx, and filled with precious and curious medicines, culled from all plants. These they exhibited, and invited him to the feast with pleasing words and ceremonies. He immediately raised his head, uncovered it, and washed off his mourning colors and besmearments, and then followed them. When they had reached the lodge, they offered him a cup of liquor prepared from the choicest medicines, as, at once, a propitiation, and an initiative rite. He drank it at a single draught. He found his melancholy departed, and felt the most inspiring effects. They then commenced their dances and songs, united with various ceremonies. Some shook their bags at him as a token of skill. Some exhibited the skins of birds filled with smaller birds, which, by some art, would hop out of the throat of the bag. Others showed curious tricks with their drums. All danced, all sang, all acted with the utmost gravity, and earnestness of gestures; but with exactness of time, motion, and voice. Manabozho was cured. He ate, danced, sang, and smoked the sacred pipe. In this manner the mysteries of the Grand Medicine Dance

were introduced.

The before recreant Manitoes now all united their powers to bring Chibiabos to life. They did so, but it was forbidden him to enter the lodge. They gave him, through a chink, a burning coal, and told him to go and preside over the country of souls, and reign over the land of the dead. They bid him with the coal to kindle a fire for his aunts and uncles, a term by which is meant all men who should die thereafter, and make them happy, and let it be an everlasting fire.

Manabozho went to the Great Spirit after these things. He then descended to the earth, and confirmed the mysteries of the medicine-dance, and supplied all whom he initiated with medicines for the cure of all disease. It is to him that we owe the growth of all the medical roots, and antidotes to every disease and poison. He commits the growth of these to Misukumigakwa, or the mother of the earth to whom he makes offerings.

Manabozho traverses the whole earth. He is the friend of man. He killed the ancient monsters whose bones we now see under the earth; and declared the streams and forests of many obstructions which the Bod Spirit had put there, to fit them for our residence. He has placed four good Spirits at the four cardinal points, to which we point our ceremonies. The Spirit at the north gives snow and ice, to enable men to pursue game and fish. The spirit of the south gives melons, maize, and tobacco. The spirit of the west gives rain, and the spirit of the east, light; and he commands the sun to make his daily walks around the earth. Thunder is the voice of these spirits, to whom we offer the smoke of tobacco.

Manabozho, it is believed, yet lives on an immense flake of ice in the Arctic Ocean. The Indian fears that the white race will some day discover his retreat, and drive him off. Then the end of the world is at hand, for as soon as he puts his foot on the earth again, it will take fire, and every living creature will perish in the flames.



## To Friends and Students of the P. R. S.

For over thirty years my life has been devoted to researching, writing, and lecturing on those basic and essential ideas and ideals which constitute the world's heritage of learning. It has always seemed to me that the real purposes of knowledge were to strengthen character, enrich living, and solve problems. As never before, such basic thinking is necessary.

My most cherished project has long been the establishment of a school of idealistic philosophy, by which the inherited wisdom of the ages could be made available in an orderly and sequential pattern. Only by such an integration can the sincere student advance his knowledge and unfold his understanding naturally and efficiently.

Perhaps it is optimistic to hope that we can create in the modern world a system of instruction comparable to the great philosophical schools of Greece and India, uniting the wisdom of the past and the practical knowledge of today. It has always been my secret conviction, however, that such a program of instruction is desperately needed and would be supported if available.

My plan outlines four years of work, arranged in units of one year each. The instruction will ascend in natural order from the great foundations of inspired teachings, through comparative religion, philosophy, and psychology to personal integration upon a higher level of human consciousness.

All progress in Nature begins with a first step. With us, this initial impulse takes the form of a course, *The Basic Ideas of Man*. This is not a series of lectures, but an outline of study, in some respects similar to those offered by colleges and universities except for the treatment of the material which will be more advanced than anything now obtainable.

It seems wise to begin our school with a correspondence course. This brings the material into the home of the student wherever he may reside, and allows him to do the work as his time permits. Our course will be given under direct supervision, and the cost of the instruction provides for the time necessary to examine and estimate the work of each student. The lessons will be sent monthly, and at the end of the course those completing the work satisfactorily will receive an appropriate certificate of accomplishment.

The curriculum for the first year's work, divided into quarters, is as follows:



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Paul, the Apostle of Christ  
THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL LAW  
Buddha, the Light of Asia

#### SECOND QUARTER

CHARACTER AS THE HIGHEST GOOD  
Aristotle, Definer of the Ethical Man  
THE EFFORTLESS ACTION OF TAO  
Lao-Tse, Mystic of the Simple Way  
A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED  
Maimonides, the Moderator of Learning

#### THIRD QUARTER

THE CONCEPT OF THE SUPERIOR MAN  
Confucius, Leader of Social Progress  
ARGUMENTS FOR THE ETERNITY OF SOUL  
Plato, Defender of Immortality  
ON THE NATURE OF THE TEACHER  
Aquinas, the Great Scholastic

#### FOURTH QUARTER

THE MYSTICISM OF DIVINE UNION  
Jalal-Ud-Din, Lover of God  
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