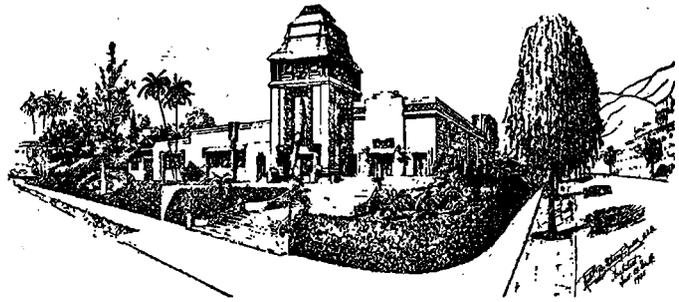


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## MONTHLY LETTER

*Devoted to Spiritual and Philosophical Problems -- by Manly P. Hall*

May 1936

### LAO-TZE THE OBSCURE SAGE

Dear Friend:

On a certain night in the year B. C. 604 a great falling star flashed through the heavens above what is now the Ho-nan Province of China... At that very hour a peasant woman, weary with working in the fields of a feudal lord, gave birth to a son under a plum tree. The mother, a widow of poor circumstances, named her new-born son Plumtree and later observing the extreme length of the lobes of his ears, added the further word Ear to his name... Little Plumtree Ear was in many other respects different from other children... He was conceived, according to the tradition, without mortal father by the influence of a great comet which was hovering over what is now Kwei-te at the hour of his conception. He was born with a full head of long white hair and his bushy eyebrows were of the same color... Like all very small babies he had a very old and wise look about him... The ever-wagging tongue of tradition solemnly affirmed that he was born on his own seventieth birthday.

In China all history is rapidly embellished with fantastic flights into the supernatural, but it is safe to say conservatively that little Plumtree Ear was indeed of humble parentage and obscure origin, otherwise his ancestry could not have evaded the searching eyes of Chinese historians... His youth is equally obscure, but judging from the poverty of the class into which he was born, we may assume

that his struggle for education was long and difficult. The auguries of his birth predestined him to high estate in the world of learning, and to this destiny he rose triumphant above all the limitations of ancestry and opportunity.

He lived alone, he studied alone, and he meditated alone. Being deprived of the educational resources of his own country he searched deeply within himself for the priceless secret of the ages. His very obscurity became the dominant precept of his life. So little is known of him as a personality that modern sceptics even attempt to prove that his very being is only a figment of Chinese imagination.

As years advanced upon the white-haired man honor and dignity came with them and he was appointed librarian of the Chou (the Third Dynasty extending from 1050 to 256 B. C.) This important appointment was the turning point in the philosopher's life. He emerged from the struggle for knowledge to find himself in the midst of the accumulated knowledge of the world. The third Ministry of the Chou was divided into two bodies of learned men. The first group was termed the Bureau of Annalists, and the second the Bureau of Astrologers. The duties of the Annalists were twofold. First, to record all the words and deeds of the Emperor and place in an imperishable form all the laws and edicts of the state. Their second duty was

to receive, arrange and record all forms of knowledge from the provinces of the empire and every other country of the civilized world. The Bureau of Astrologers devoted their lives also to two tasks. The first was to calculate all of the planetary and sidereal motions, predict eclipses and comets, and sustain and correct the calendar. Their second task was to correlate their findings with the records arranged and preserved by the Annalists, in this way checking constantly the relationship between celestial phenomena and the social and political states of man.

It is easy to understand that the frail-bodied, large-headed philosopher found in the archives of the Third Ministry the elements of his great metaphysical system. The white-haired thinker, in his simple sombre robes, moved almost like a ghost through the great corridors of the library. He was always silent, always abstracted, always like some being from another world. Nothing whatever is known of his private life. He apparently married for the names of his sons and grandsons are recorded by the Chinese historians and his descendants, like those of Confucius, shared to some measure the illustriousness of his name.

It was on the broad steps of the library of the Chou that Lao-Tze met Confucius. The Taoist philosopher was at that time near his eightieth year, Confucius many years his junior. The meeting of the mystic and the moralist, though not historically certain, is well within the sphere of probabilities. Confucius sought the fountain-head of Chinese metaphysics. He found it in the stoop-shouldered, dark robed man to whom all material life was illusion, all form and ceremony vanity, all honor ephemeral, and nothing real but the nameless, unknown Cause of all. Confucius retired from the interview incapable of grasping the abstractions of the Taoist sage. Confucius so loved mankind that he could perceive no greater virtue than the creation of a condition in which all men might prosper under good laws and wise rulership. Yet it would be wrong to deny that Confucius was influenced by the mystical attachment of the Taoist viewpoint. Dimly Confucius sensed the sublimity of the Inner Way. It influenced his later writings, but he never ceased to be a humanist.

The name by which the Taoist master is now known throughout China and the civilized world is Lao-Tze, but it is doubtful if he carried this name while alive. The word Lao-Tze, meaning the Ancient Child, is of course derived from his appearance in infancy, but during his lifetime he probably went under his surname Li, meaning Plum, the plum tree being in China the symbol of immortality. The word Lao-Tze has gradually been enlarged by popular usage to include in its meaning Venerable Philosopher or Ancient Wise One.

It would be erroneous to accept Li or Lao-Tze as the founder of Taoism. The doctrine was actually a more or less formulated belief several hundred years before his birth. The first Taoists were almost certainly the Annalists and Astrologers of the great Chinese libraries. These men, because of their peculiar position as compilers of all useful knowledge, were familiar with the metaphysical speculations of the Hindus and Taoism is generally acknowledged to be a derivation of the ascetic philosophies of India. The principle dogma arising from the findings of the Annalists and Astrologers is evident throughout the Taoist conception. Astrology, alchemy and comparative metaphysics of a somewhat Vedantic conception underlie the more evident aspects of the Taoist doctrine.

The Chou dynasty was one of the warring periods in Chinese history. Strife and philosophy are incompatible, and Lao-Tze was most outspoken in his condemnation of the theory of war and aggression. At last growing weary with strifes of princes and the inconsistencies of society, Lao-Tze began to dream again of the peace that rests among the hills. After placing all of the responsibilities of his office in order he pleaded for the privilege of retiring forever from the sight of men. This being granted, and his own age and infirmity being great, he mounted upon the back of his favorite ox and rode slowly away towards the boundaries which lie between China and the great mountains. He arrived at last at the gate of China which leads to the Northwest. It was autumn when he reached the Hankow Pass and it was there that he met Yin Hsi the keeper of the gate.

It appears that Yin Hsi was himself a great astrologer and mystic. At night he would spend

many hours studying the motions of the stars and during one of these vigils he observed a strange body moving in the heavens, a light that rose over China and moved gradually Northwest to disappear among the distant peaks of the Himalayas. Yin Hsi turned to the ancient books and from them and his own meditation discovered that one of the greatest of living beings would shortly follow that route, passing like the light itself along the road that led through the Hankow Pass. Yin Hsi there-



Lao-tse. (Sien-fo-tsi-tsoung.)

fore built himself a hut of grass by the side of the road and, seating himself in the doorway of the hut, waited for the coming of the Great Teacher.

At last he observed approaching a great green ox and on its back a little old man, with white hair, wrapped in a great cloak. The heart of Yin Hsi beat rapidly within him. His inner eye perceived that this was the one for whom he waited. When Lao-Tze reached the hut of the gatekeeper Yin Hsi prostrated himself before the sage, beseeching him to remain a little while and instruct him in the

secrets of Tao—the Way of Life. Lao-Tze acknowledged the request, and, being assisted to dismount from the ox, remained with the gatekeeper in his hut long enough to prepare his only literary work—the Tao Teh King. The manuscript was brief, consisting in all of five thousand characters. So condensed is the style, so abstract the terminology, that its profundity and scope are beyond the comprehension of the average reader.

Having completed his writing and presented it to Yin Hsi, Lao-Tze mounted the green ox again and passing through the gate continued alone and without provisions into the wild and desolate country that lay beyond. Beyond this point in the story only fable remains. According to some accounts he went forth to die; according to others he journeyed to a mysterious valley where all the sages of the past dwelt together. Only this is known; that after his ninetieth year he disappeared from China and was never heard from again.

His memory lived on, and while his sect never equalled that of Confucius in popularity, the little old white-haired man and his green ox wander forever up and down the roads of China, revisualized in each generation by pious Taoists. Nor was he ignored by the state. In the seventh century A. D. he was canonized by the reigning T'ang Emperor, being lifted to the estate among the divine creatures of the world with the title The Great Supreme, the Emperor-God of the Dark First Cause. To this was afterwards added the further honor of being known simply and profoundly as the Ancient Master.

## THE DOCTRINE OF TAOISM

The Tao Teh King is the foundation of the Taoist doctrine. The word Tao means loosely translated, the Way, the Path, the Means, and even more the Principle, the Truth or the Reality underlying all things. "Teh" means virtue, enlightenment, action performed in conformity with Principle. Thus Tao Teh King means the Book of the Way of Virtue, or again the Book which reveals the code of spiritual conduct towards the Principle.

In spite of the unusual life of Lao-Tze and his extreme devotion to metaphysical speculations, his beliefs would probably not have survived had they

been left without commentary and clarification. While Lao-Tze revealed the Principle, it remained for two great Chinese scholars, Lieh-tzu and Chuang-tzu, to elaborate and perfect the tradition and arrange its principles for world assimilation. It has been said of these men that they represent the highest standard of mystical scholarship in China. Lieh-tzu and Chuang-tzu lived about B. C. 400, and most of the Taoist texts which descend to this time have come through them rather than directly from Lao-Tze himself. Like their master, these fathers of Taoism lived obscure and simple lives so that little is known of the circumstances under which they promulgated Taoist dogma. Lieh-tzu seems to have lived in extreme poverty and Chuang-tzu, though he lived somewhat better, chose voluntary obscurity that his time might be free for meditation upon the mystery of the Principle. Therefore, when discussing Taoism, we cannot in every case divide between the master and these two ardent disciples. The three together are Taoism as far as its literary background is concerned. The pre-Taoist Annalists and Astrologers of Chou left no literary fragments relating to the doctrine.

The Taoist doctrine must be considered from both its theoretical and practical aspects. The theory of Taoism is summed up in the understanding of the nature of Tao or the Principle. The practical aspect is the simple or obscure method of living, and to both of these fundamentals were gradually added a complex structure of supernatural factors which, if not actually unknown to Lao-Tze himself, certainly find no emphasis in the Tao Teh King.

Tao, the Principle, must first be understood in all of its philosophical inferences. The Principle is the Absolute factor in existence. The Principle is termed Essence and it is described as self-existent, eternal, complete and infinite. It is the common quality from which all forms are externalized and into which they must ultimately return. The Principle neither grows nor diminishes for all forms into which it flows are extensions of itself, and there is never any actual separation to take place within it. The Principle is everywhere, and in one of the Taoist discourses the disciple refers to obscure places where the Principle may not be, but in each place the master assures him that the Principle is

omnipresent, everywhere, always. The Principle is not only the ultimate extension of form into formlessness, it is also the ultimate extension of thought to an abstract, mindless origin. Intelligence, consciousness and force all retire into the Principle and become universalized through this retirement. The Principle is the only unqualified and unmodified factor in the universe. In the presence of the Principle the need for a world Sovereign or personal god ceases for the Taoist. The Principle possesses also the attribute of absolute Law in the sense that its very existence is the root of the plan and purpose for all existing creatures.

Lao-Tze acknowledges that it is impossible to understand the origin of the Principle, in fact he regards it as without origin, being absolutely eternal. "I do not know," said Lao-Tze, "from whom the Principle proceeded. It appears to have been before the Sovereign (God). It abounds and produces without replenishing itself. Incessantly overflowing, it does not empty itself. All beings have come forth from this Abyss, in which there is nothing."

The Principle could not be termed exactly as germinal but it does possess the quality, in fact the infinite capacity, of producing forms, structures, types and kinds out of itself so that all things appear to proceed from nothing, to be sustained by nothing, and finally to fall back again or retire into nothing. But to Lao-Tze this seeming Nothing was in itself an all-inclusive root agency from which we get a paradox—all is nothing, nothing is all.

Lao-Tze cannot explain why or how the Principle externalizes itself to become creation. Retiring into his own nature he is capable of accepting this fact as a transcendent truth. He further acknowledges that the Principle contains, identical with itself, certain intrinsic natures or conditions. The first of these is termed Te which is denominated the virtue of the Principle. We might say that a fact emanates a certain influence by the very virtue of it being a fact. This emanation is Te, and Te the virtue or energy in the Principle acts upon two other intrinsic modes which are called Yin and Yang. These last are referred to as the imminent properties of the Principle. Yin and Yang represent concentration and expansion. They are the father-mother attributes of deity, or of absolute

energy, to be found in nearly all systems of metaphysical theology. *Te*, working upon Yin and Yang, causes the modes or properties to be externalized, whereupon Yang becomes heaven and Yin earth. By heaven and earth are not to be understood the invisible firmament or the terrestrial globe but rather diffusion and solidarity, or extension and limitation. These are the opposing factors through the mingling of which forms and organized entities are manifested. Yang, the principle of expansion, is in a sense identical with Tao itself. Yin, the principle of concentration or crystallization, being the apparent but unreal element in the phenomenon of creation.

To Lao-Tze the extremities Yin and Yang form an illusional manifestation in which all values are distorted and essential truths remain unperceived. Unity, Tao, or the Principle, is the suspension of the opposites—the fact, the possession of which dissolves the illusion and releases consciousness from its bondage to the tyranny of good and evil.

Lao-Tze realized that when man resolved to destroy evil he must also destroy good, for both of these are extremes counter-balancing each other, and to remove either destroys both. Therefore Lao-Tze substituted the Principle for both good and evil teaching that Tao, as the Cause of extremes, remained firm, unconditioned and unlimited by the forces which flowed from it. Taking the extreme viewpoint that all phenomenal things arose from the chemistry of Yin and Yang, that is from struggle or striving or compounding, Lao-Tze rejected not only the world but the works of worldiness by which it is sustained and perpetuated. The moral inferences are inevitable. Man has two souls or super-substantial entities within him. The first is the body-soul, the anima or animating principle of form. This soul governs growth, health, bodily functions and such impulses and purposes as contribute to the bodily security. The other soul, super-substantial, is built up through life. One tradition says that this superior part is an inward condensation of a certain part of the breath; that when man inhales air into the lungs and exhales it again a certain small part remains each time and this small part condenses into the vehicle for the ethereal soul. It is this higher soul that survives the disintegration

of the body at death. But all souls are ultimately absorbed into Tao. There is no final individual immortality. Taoism accepts the doctrine of Reincarnation as a means of explaining the cyclic course of the soul in its return to Tao or the Principle.

In essence Tao is extremely simple and, if it can be denuded of its superficialities, resembles very closely the philosophical speculations of Buddha. Taoism in practice becomes a philosophy of right use, of economy or resource, moderation of emotion, and all other reasonable courses of action which contribute to physical security and mental balance.

The practical aspects of Taoism arise naturally from the theoretical inferences. The person is to live as nearly as possible in harmony with and like the Principle. Like the Principle he must be universal, like the Principle he must be impartial, like the Principle he must flow rhythmically through the phenomena of life. Like the Principle he must give without being less, he must gain without being more, and like the Principle he must achieve to his final liberation by becoming void of all qualities. As Lao-Tze says, "In imitation of the Principle, the sage allows beings to grow without impeding them, to live without monopolizing them, to act without exploiting them."

To live perfectly in harmony with the transcendent splendor of the Principle is to increase inwardly in understanding until the personality is completely liberated from all attachments and uncertainties. In Taoism longevity is regarded as a virtue, not merely because of length of years but because when accomplished philosophically it indicates supremacy over the self-destructive factors at work in the conflict of life. Conservation must always be practiced. Waste is blasphemy. Excessive labor, emotional stress, over-study, worries, cares, responsibilities, ambitions—all these wear out the life and are contrary to the dictates of Tao. For the sage effort must be without effort. The consciousness must flow from deed to deed and from thought to thought without confusion, complex, or dissension. Contact with humanity is wearing, the distress one sees is depressing, and until the sage is perfectly capable of perceiving the integrity behind all things he should avoid all congested places that deplete and weary him. He should remain obscure, receiving

only those worthy of his consideration. He should never seek office or position because worldly promotion brings only illusionary honor and losses, forces which destroy the health and security.

Taoism is a belief limited to a certain class of mankind of natural mystical inclinations. Even to preach it is included among the wasted efforts. A man ready to understand the Principle becomes aware of it within himself. This awareness he cannot transfer to another, nor will discussion and argument bring as much good to the listener as it brings harm to the speaker. According to Taoism in its original form, there is no possibility of conversion in the ordinary sense of the word. You may talk to men forever but they remain what they are—it is the one who talks who wears out. This being a fundamental verity, demonstrable in every walk of life, it is the duty of the sage to perfect the Law in himself. He will then be understood by those of similar mind and they are the only ones whose understanding is important. It is upon this point that Lao-Tze is supposed to have had his singular debate with Confucius. To Lao-Tze there was no family, no honor, no dignity and no achievement. To him ceremony was a waste of words, prayer a waste of time, tradition a waste of thought, history a waste of writing. To Taoism there is neither past, present nor future, and in the illusional intervals that seem to be these things, nothing happens that is really important. Men die, other men are born; nations rise, other nations fall; philosophies rise and philosophies fall. Everything comes and goes but none of this concerns the sage. His only real problem is his relationship with himself. The Taoist illustrates the principle of indifference in this way; a number of faggots grouped together make a fire; the flame having consumed one piece of wood passes on to another and the ashes that it leaves behind are of no importance, for only the flame itself that lives upon them all is real.

Lao-Tze recommended to live distantly from men that the illusions that arise from intimate intercourse with illusions might be avoided. He does not, however, demand such departure. He says: "To become a Taoist sage it is not necessary to leave the world. Peace and purity can be obtained in the world." In Taoism purity does not mean the prac-

tice of accepted social virtues necessarily. It rather means purity of relationship with the inward realization. It means simplicity, detachment, a renunciation not accompanied by a sense of loss.

The doctrines of Tao include an important understanding of the word or thought of lowliness. If a man lifts himself to a high place, everything flows away from him. If he makes of himself a low place, everything flows into him. Therefore the doctrine recommends that the consciousness of the Taoist should be like the sea which fills the lowest places of the earth, inscrutable and unknown, into which all the rivers of the earth pour their waters—but the sea is never full. If a Taoist is placed over other men his power should never be felt. He should rule with gentleness. As Lao-Tze says, "It is not by oppressing man but by serving man that we conquer man."

The sage should perform all virtuous actions. At the same time it is hypocrisy not to realize that by so doing he helps himself most. A man who does right in hope of heaven is not an honest man but a self-seeking man, and whenever one humbles himself in the hope of gaining some great ultimate reward, that is selfishness and might just as well be acknowledged as such. The true sage is incapable of egotism because it is a destructive emotion leading to vainglorious thought and action, and consequently leads away from Tao. Lao-Tze views ambition as one of the greatest of the cardinal sins. Of him it may be truly said that he taught "the path of glory leads but to the grave." Men but wear themselves out trying to please others. Nothing pleases others and nothing pleases themselves. The doing of the necessary is virtue; the doing of the unnecessary is vice.

In the Taoist doctrines there are two forms of goodness—collective and individual. Collective goodness partakes of Tao, for the Principle sustains all things impartially. Individual good partakes of ignorance for individuality itself is an illusion. It would be incorrect to say that Lao-Tze taught men to be cruel and indifferent to each other, but he certainly did advise that we not sustain the errors of others through sympathy or condonance. As it is always unpopular to tell the truth and few desire to know the facts about their own lives and

thoughts, Lao-Tze again recommended that the true sage remain in so obscure a position that his advice would not likely be sought. Let those who desire knowledge go to those who claim to possess it. Taoism is not founded upon knowledge, it is founded upon the distinct realization that the empty cup is the most useful one. For this reason, Lao-Tze condemned Confucius for studying, intimating that wisdom comes from within and foolishness out of books. This may be an extreme viewpoint, for Lao-Tze was nearly eighty years old and extremely set at the time of the debate. The principle involved warns the individual against intellectualism as a substitute for inner experience. We have the proof today in the fact that the thoroughly schooled man may not be an educated man and again an educated man may not be a wise man.

Lao-Tze was born in one of the most conventional, law-ridden, tradition-bound countries of the world. Birth, life and death were circumscribed by ceremonials. Every element of the social system was venerated without understanding and worshipped without inner vision. It is not surprising then that the master reasoned thus concerning laws: "Men invent laws because they cannot longer perceive the Law. They invent virtues when the Sovereign Virtue is obscure. Ceremony and tradition take the place of man's incapacity to sense the original inner equity and frankness of relationship." He also adds that the invention of politics was the beginning of all abuses. To Lao-Tze the idea of men governing each other was ridiculous in a state of social consciousness where no man was capable of governing himself. He laid the foundations of the social psychology in which enlightenment would finally make government an evident absurdity. Under Tao all men live the Law and until men live the one Law, there can be nothing but lawlessness among men. Great laws come from the Principle, small laws come from governments and princes. Even if a prince be perfectly just, even if he be wiser than all other mortals, still he cannot make laws that are real or permanent. Laws do not come from man but Tao, the Principle, as Law comes through men who have discovered it and have identified their inner lives with its purposes. Thus Lao-Tze attacks the very foundations of the state. He shows

the ridiculousness of the pomp and ceremony with which men fool each other and too often themselves. Why should men make laws when the universe has established immutable decrees which nothing can withstand? If men must follow laws, they must follow the laws of nature for these laws represent the Principle flowing through the forms which make up the world.

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## THE DISCIPLINES OF TAOISM

Lao-Tze practised and advocated two forms of metaphysical self-control: the control of breath and the control of action. The archives of the Third Ministry probably supplied the technique of breath control which had long been practised in India. Respiration was brought more and more completely under the control of will, with the result that it caused an ecstatic state to arise in the body chemistry. The simple breath control was later elaborated into a complex system of exercises borrowed from the Buddhist and Yogi schools. By the control of respiration and by directing the inhaled breath throughout the body by a peculiar mental discipline, the nature is not only purified but rendered placid and relaxed. The complete bodily silence resulting from the breath technique released the superior consciousness for its consummation with Tao.

There is only one direct reference in the actual words of Lao-Tze to ecstasy, but it indicates definitely the use of the Hindu exercises and formulas. Lao-Tze recognized the mystical experience and taught the at-one-ment with Cause by forcing the cessation of conflict among the elements of external personality.

The control of action was a distinct feature of the Taoist cult. One does everything by doing nothing, one goes everywhere by staying still. All outward action interferes with the transcendent personality, the universal Self which experiences all things inwardly. The Principle, if philosophically understood, would result in a brilliant internal experience, but as most men are incapable of perceiving metaphysical subtleties, the Taoist doctrines would have a very detrimental effect upon the unlearned in mystical matters.

Lao-Tze denied religious organizations, discour-

aged and disparaged priestcrafts, ignored rituals and formulas, and had nothing good to say for that enthusiasm to convert, present in most religious systems. For this reason the outer growth of his doctrine was paralyzed from the very first. Those who possessed it remained silent, and obeying the precepts of their master did nothing as social forces towards enlightenment. Lao-Tze left no pattern for the furtherance of his beliefs, and the doctrine came finally to be entirely dependent for its continuity upon the beliefs and capacities of those who affirmed it.

Tao was the goal and many were the means that men devised in their efforts to achieve the Principle. The doctrine of inaction, taken with all the force of its literal inference, resulted in the Taoism of today, a complex of divergent factors.

Lao-Tze's teaching of inaction was founded upon the spiritual truth that inner experience is the one reality of life and men whose minds are focussed upon outward experience divide themselves from Truth by the very emphasis which they place upon the theory of outward accomplishment. Lao-Tze's inaction was really detachment, man releasing himself from the auto-hypnosis of the things he does, to emphasize the profound truth of what he is.

Taoism of today is not the doctrine as given by Lao-Tze. The modern cult has been heavily influenced by Buddhism and the indigenous spirit-worship of the Chinese. It now has priests and temples and shrines and altars, and a triad of divinities centering around the deified personality of Lao-Tze himself. The simple, austere doctrine of the Obscure Sage has become a fantastic body of beliefs in which genii of every order impose their influence upon the fate of mortals.

#### QUOTATIONS

A few extracts from the Tao-Teh-King give us a general insight into the mind of the Sage himself and the abstruse quality of his original teachings:

"He who would gain a knowledge of the nature and attributes of the nameless, undefinable God (Tao) must first set himself free from all earthly desires."

"The highest excellence is like that of water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things, and in its occupying, without striving to the

contrary, the low place which all men dislike."

"When the work is done, and one's name is becoming distinguished, to withdraw into obscurity is the way of heaven."

"When one gives undivided attention to the vital breath, and brings it to the utmost degree of pliancy, he can become as a tender babe. When he has cleansed away the most mysterious sights of his imagination, he can become without a flaw."

"The state of vacancy should be brought to the utmost degree, and that of stillness guarded with unwearying vigour."

"He (the sage) is free from self-display, and therefore he shines; from self-assertion, and therefore he is distinguished; from self-boasting, and therefore his merit is acknowledged; from self-complacency, and therefore he acquires superiority. It is because he is thus free from striving that therefore no one in the world is able to strive with him."

"Man takes his law from the earth; the earth takes its law from heaven; heaven takes its law from the Tao."

"He who knows other men is discerning; he who knows himself is intelligent. He who overcomes others is strong; he who overcomes himself is mighty."

"There is no guilt greater than to sanction ambition; no calamity greater than to be discontented with one's lot."

"The perception of what is small is the secret of clear-sightedness."

"Governing a great state is like cooking small fish." (Small fish are easily overcooked.)

"But I have three precious things which I prize and hold vast. The first is gentleness; the second is economy; and the third is shrinking from taking precedence of others."

"It is the Way of Heaven to diminish superabundance, and to supplement deficiency. It is not so with the way of man. He takes away from those who have nothing to add to his own superabundance."

Yours sincerely, Manly P. Hall.

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