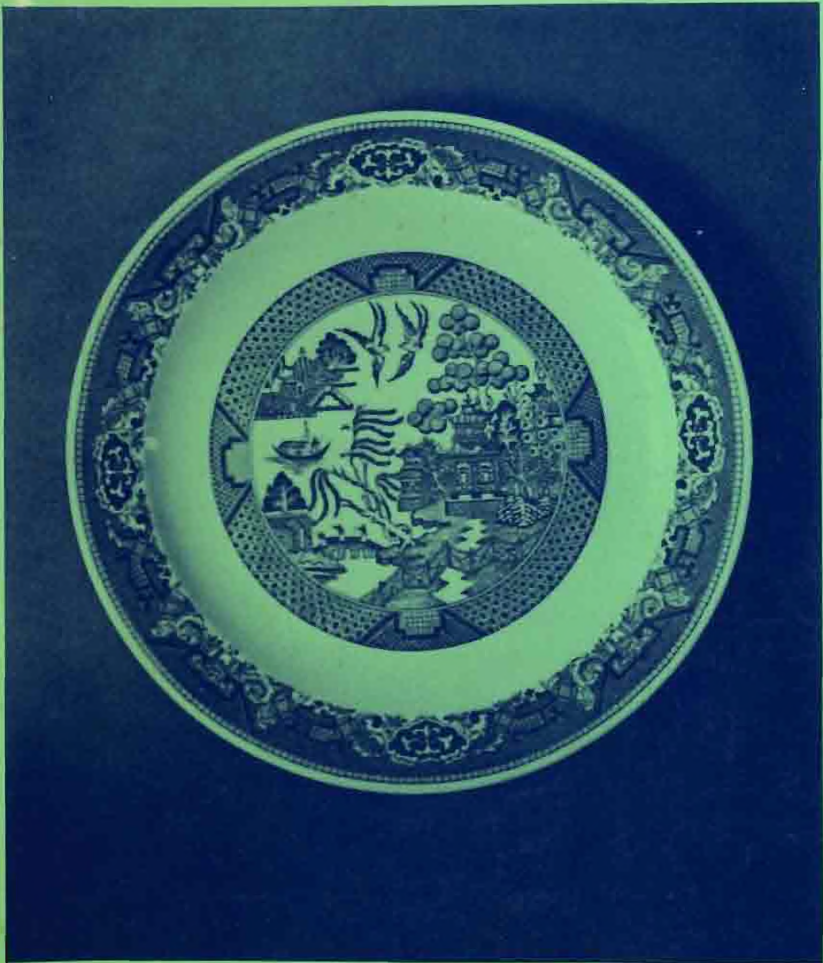


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Most of the reproductions of the early books, manuscripts, and objects of art which appear in this magazine are from originals in the collection of the Philosophical Research Society.

**About the Cover:** Copy of the blue willow plate design by Royal, Sebring, Ohio. See page 44.



FALL 1981

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## UTOPIA AND THE GOLD STANDARD

**S**ir Thomas More (1477-1535) was a statesman and humanist philosopher who became chancellor of England in 1529. For many years he was on easy terms with Henry VIII, but later was sentenced to death for refusing to recognize the king as titular head of the Church of England. More was executed on Tower Hill, was considered a martyr, and regarded as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. More is best remembered as the author of a socialistic, political book, *Utopia*—which first appeared in 1516 with the text in Latin. Apparently King Henry appreciated the sentiments which More presented so bluntly, and thirteen years later appointed More as lord chancellor.

Our present remarks about the *Utopia* are based upon an early English translation published in 1685 by a scholar who is generally credited with deep appreciation of More's ideas and the literary style of his writing. The name of the translator does not appear in the book; but his name was Gilbert Burnet, a modest and devout gentleman who concludes his preface with the words, "I have writ as carefully, and as well as I can."

There is something in More's approach to social reform reminiscent of that type of socialism which flourished in America in the nineteenth century. The *Utopia* is described as an ideal common-

# UTOPIA:

Written in Latin by

Sir *THOMAS MORE*,

CHANCELLOR

O F

*ENGLAND:*

Translated into English.



*LONDON,*

Printed for Richard Chiswell, and to be  
sold by George Powell over against  
*Lincolns-Inn-Gate in Chancery-  
Lane, 1685.*

wealth. It was a country of considerable size, measuring five hundred miles in length and slightly less in width. It supported a large population, both urban and suburban. There were fifty-two cities, each with partial political autonomy. At a remote time certain laws were enacted, and these were rigidly enforced with the general approval of the populace.

More gives considerable space and attention to utopian economics. The commonwealth had no medium of exchange, and this of itself virtually eliminated crime. Where everything was held in common, thievery was ridiculous. Everyone had what he needed for the asking, and there was nothing that could be bought that was not available without charge. Therefore wealth was meaningless. Governors could not possess more than the governed, and competition could produce no benefits. No one had more than what he required and no one less than needed. Clothing was very simple; it was modest, decent, and democratic. Styles never changed for innovations in apparel resulted in neither social nor financial advantage. Thomas More especially notes, however, that clothing must be such that men and women could be clearly and immediately distinguished.

Natural wealth was regulated judiciously. Nothing was valued that did not have immediate utility. Iron was important because it was used to create various instruments, and rock was quarried for building purposes. The precious metals were looked down upon and had no value in commerce. Gold and silver were used to manufacture children's toys, and precious stones were limited to infant wear. Gold was also a symbol of disgrace; it was used to make chains for criminals, and More's conclusive feeling on the subject is found in the statement that gold and silver were used for toilet plumbing.

There is an interesting description of an occasion on which ambassadors of foreign countries visited Utopia. Those states bordering on the Utopian Island knew the rules of this commonwealth and always wore very plain and simple garments. Representatives of great and distant countries, however, felt that it was necessary to leave an appropriate impression. Such ambassadors came with

hundreds of attendants dressed in the finest silk, including cloth of gold. They wore massive chains, earrings, and rings of precious metal; and their caps were set full of pearls and other gems. This led the citizens of Utopia to assume that these bedecked persons were not nobles but serfs, slaves, and ex-convicts. Mothers showed the foreign visitors to their children explaining the ambassadors were children who had never grown up and were therefore not worthy of any special attention.

After the foreigners had remained a few days in Utopia and they began to realize that their ornaments added nothing to their stature, they put aside their rich garments and engaged in meaningful dialogue. Many were impressed by the adventure, and when they returned home were less susceptible to meaningless ostentation and hollow flattery.

In Utopia pleasure was the principal end of living. Anything that interfered with happiness was avoided at all cost. The principal cause of unhappiness was wealth. A system dominated by personal accumulation must end in disaster. Competition was little better than civil war and endangered all forms of individual and collective integrity. A tolerated monopoly would inspire cartels and corrupted governments. The Utopians were taught from the cradle to consider accumulation a cardinal sin.

Where there is not an equitable division of natural resources and products of human effort, there is always danger of revolution. The struggle for wealth justifies ulterior motives and sanctions corruptions. Fame, based upon wealth or worldly power, or any type of political influence is as worthless as the gold standard. Happiness is sacrificed for profit and the reward is anxiety and frustration.

How did the Utopian define pleasure? It was a quiet enjoyment based upon propriety. Each individual was entitled to all such pleasures which did not interfere with the pleasures of others. Private life became much more meaningful. Unhappiness due to poverty ceased to exist. Parents had no fears for the security of their children, and there was little justification for a child seeking to escape parental authority. The institution of marriage was

strengthened where there was neither dowry nor alimony. No one married to achieve higher social status or to have a more luxurious home. This finally added up to the simple fact that individuals married for one reason only—they cared for each other.

Our author made the following further observations on the subject of pleasure. Only the foolish consider indolence to be the source of happiness, and they are guilty of the folly of idleness. Some also regard health as the most pleasant state of existence. While claiming that a sound body is the greatest blessing, they live every day by policies that corrupt the flesh. Here again wealth is the enemy of happiness. It enables the foolish to dissipate and through various excesses bring upon themselves the miseries that they most fear. The last contribution that accumulated funds can make is a costly funeral.

The pleasures of the flesh are the rewards of moderation, but even more satisfying is the contentment of the mind. The Utopians take care of their leisure realizing that true happiness involves regular programs of self-improvement. They appreciate humor, and it is evident from the text that Sir Thomas More found pleasure in witty sayings and cheerful anecdotes. The tendency to excessive gravity must always be curbed for a person or a nation can fall from the weight of its own gravity. Also, humor cheers the spirits, inspires pleasant conversation, and ventilates the faculties. It is easier to be happy when there are no worries burdening the mind or impelling to conflicting attitudes.

Religion also has a part in the successful Utopia. The people of this country were tolerant and generous in their religious attitudes. They permitted all faiths to exist within their domains, but they forbade intolerance of any kind. No citizen could discredit or depreciate the beliefs of others, and most of the corruptions that led to religious dissensions were not to be found in Utopia because no advantage of wealth or distinction was possible. There was only one restriction—religions must accept the existence of a Supreme Principle or Being at the source of life whose laws all mortals must obey. Worship was either private or public, but the mysteries of religion were experienced best in the human heart.



Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England.

It was a law in Utopia that no man could be punished for his religion. If however he used his faith to stir up rebellion or sedition by disturbing the peace, he could be punished for his own conduct alone. The educational system provided the citizens with a basic understanding of comparative religion and the dignity of all sincere human beliefs. If any sect or creed showed a tendency to criticize other beliefs, it received no popular support. It is interesting that, while More was a Roman Catholic, he did not call those of other beliefs pagans or heathens. His disparagements were reserved for those who claimed to be sincere worshippers but did not practice Christian charity and kindness.

In order that the commonwealth might be preserved, the governors of Utopia were not allowed to bestow favors upon any group or withhold favors without just reason. The governed and the governing were equal and there was no class system. They said that if a society was stratified, ambition would inspire the less fortunate to scheme for social advancement. This would be the first step toward the destruction of the commonwealth.

All groups were inspired to develop potential talents and abilities. They could advance their knowledge of arts and sciences, practice crafts and trades, or train themselves for public office.



Whatever their choice might be, they were all equal. Their reward was appreciation and a personal sense of accomplishment. They shared equally in the productions of their own labors. They all believed in the immortality of the human soul. They did not fear death, but were convinced that their simple way of life in this world would be acceptable to the Lord. They cremated their dead, but the funerals were not sad events. The implication seemed to be that the commonwealth of Utopia was a miniature of the divine commonwealth, and that the universe was a commune, and that all living things—visible and invisible—were citizens of a divine, celestial commonwealth.

Considerable space was devoted to the Utopian manner of living. Agriculture was universally understood and admired by both men and women. They also received instruction in school; and at regular intervals made short journeys to the countryside, mingling with farmers and gaining practical experience. Men followed various trades—manufacturing goods from wool or flax, and they also became skilled in masonry, carpentry, and as blacksmiths. On this Island of Utopia all wore the same sort of clothing with only such differences as were necessary to distinguish men from women and those who were married from the unmarried. Fashions never changed but were suitable to the climate. Families made their own clothes and gained distinction for the quality of their workmanship. Children usually followed the trades of their parents; but if one desired to follow a different pursuit, he could be adopted into a household where his own inclinations could be fulfilled. It was also permissible for a person of mature years to learn a new trade where his talents would be of the greatest common advantage.

While it was required that healthy persons should not be idle, they were not expected to wear themselves out with perpetual toil. Adequate opportunity was provided for family life and the enjoyment of leisure. Cultivated idleness however was penalized. Some chose to read good books, and there were public lectures every morning. Attendance was not compulsory, but a great many—both men and women of all ranks—cultivated literary interests. It was also considered quite proper to play serious games like chess, but gambling was strictly forbidden.

It might happen that a citizen would wish to travel and visit other cities in the Utopian Commonwealth. There were no inns or hotels, and travelers lived with various families along the way. While a guest in a house, each visitor was to share in the daily labor, in this way compensating for the hospitality which he received. There were no taverns or places of amusement, and even the longest journey entailed no expenditure of money. If sickness occurred all medical expenses were defrayed by the government.

It does not follow that Utopians were unaware of the financial conditions of foreign nations. They exported goods to many countries and, because they were a socialized state, Utopians had large surpluses of essential commodities. They sold their goods for money outside of their own country, but traded the money immediately for such merchandise as they did not produce in their own nation. Regardless of the situations in the outside world, the citizens of Utopia would not exploit the needs of neighboring countries but charged the most reasonable possible prices. They also bestowed one-seventh of their merchandise without charge to poor people of a country wherein they were trading.

The magistrates of Utopia, while regarded with distinction, were also to receive the approbation of their followers. All public officials worked every day at their trades or on their farms. As officials did not receive wages, there were few disputes and injustice was almost unknown. The leaders were likened to the older members of a family and received many small kindnesses in memory of sincere service to the public good. In Utopia no doors were locked. One might enter any house and be hospitably received. Rows of houses appeared to be a single building, and suggested the modern condominiums. As all products were held in common, there was no need to charge rent or put a price upon utilities. Some suggested that, because there was no reward or special inducement for industry, many would be indolent and live off the labors of others. This was not the case, however, as the people had simple religious convictions and from childhood were taught the dignity of honorable toil.

There were many elements in More's account of the Utopia which were highly progressive for the early sixteenth century, but

would hold little charm for those struggling with the problems of the 1980s. Nearly all of the early utopias belong to a time when intellectual freedom was unknown. There was no attempt to overthrow prevailing customs, but there were efforts to break through oppressive statutes and dream of a better world to come. Most of the freedoms we cherish today did not even exist when Sir Thomas More wrote his book. He rather skillfully pointed out several of the leading tyrannies of his time and offered such remedies as seemed possible of accomplishment.



An anecdote which is related of the celebrated Sir Thomas More, may also be adduced, as corroborative of the prevalence of the practice, and illustrative of the integrity and good-humour of the unfortunate chancellor:—

“A Mrs. Croaker having obtained a decree in the Court of Chancery against Lord Arundel, availed herself of the first new-year’s day after her success, to present Sir Thomas, then Lord Chancellor, with a *pair of gloves*, containing forty pounds in angels, as a *token* of her gratitude. But Sir Thomas, though he accepted the gloves, as an offering of the heart, returned the gold, mildly observing, ‘it would be against good manners to forsake a gentlewoman’s new-year’s gift, and I therefore accept your *gloves*—their *lining* you will be pleased otherwise to bestow.’”

—From *A Familiar Analysis of the Calendar*

There are those who wear so much jewelry that it is most difficult to determine if they are of the mineral or of the animal kingdom.

—James Stone

There will never be any good government but the government which discovers the art of leaving people alone.

—Remy De Gourmont

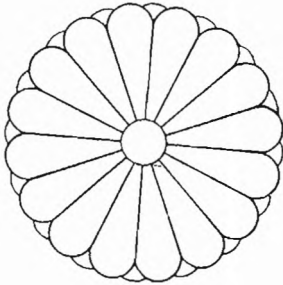
Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish—do not overdo it.

—Confucius

Concealing body,  
clothing—often peepinghole—  
reveals much of soul.

—Ryk-o

## "JAPAN"—AN EXTRAORDINARY PUBLICATION



ne. of the most remarkable examples of Western printing is a set of ten volumes described on the title page as follows: *Japan/ Described and Illustrated by the Japanese/ Written by/ Eminent Japanese Authorities and Scholars/ Edited by Captain F Brinkley of Tokyo Japan*. In the first edition there is an additional line: *With an Essay on Japanese Art by Kakuzo Okakura*. This was deleted in later printings.

The first edition (called the Mikado edition) is rare, and we are fortunate in having an extremely fine set in the research library of our society. It was limited to 250 copies and published by J. B. Millet Co., Boston, Massachusetts. There is an introduction by Arthur J. Mundy which contains considerable interesting information bearing upon the preparation of this work. We learn that Captain Frank Brinkley (1841-1912) lived in Japan for thirty years and was publisher of the *Japan Mail*. His acquaintance with many distinguished Japanese writers and their cooperation made the project possible. Mr. Mundy provides a number of unusual details. He writes, "In order that this publication may express exclusively Japanese ideas, the publishers have imported all the material needed for illustrating and binding the work. The Collo-type prints of Japanese flowers are made in Tokyo by K. Ogawa. The Xylograph prints, illustrating the lecture on Japanese art by K. Okakura, Director of the Imperial Art Academy, are printed in Tokyo by the Kokkwa Publishing Company. The photographs are all made and colored by hand in Japan, over three hundred and fifty native artists having been specially engaged for this purpose. The silk bindings with tassels and cords for the ten sections were woven to order in Kyoto by S. Iida, the present proprietor of a silk

manufactory which has been in existence for over two centuries. The silk was dyed to order, and the combination of colors used is based upon a collection of fine brocades in the palace of the present Emperor of Japan."

The work is printed in large folio, sixteen by twelve inches. The boards are beveled and the brocade bindings are of a different color for each volume. The word "Japan" is woven into the brocade. The design of two phoenixes standing on clouds and facing each other is most striking. Laid in is a large card by the publisher which reads, "CAUTION. DO NOT CUT THE LEAVES/ of this book,/ as it is bound in Japanese style." The pages of each book are held together by silk cords, elaborately knotted and tasseled. The end papers are of Japanese origin and are flecked with gold. Many of the plates are window-matted, and the first edition includes full page stencil designs. Due to its format, Brinkley's *Japan* has interest to a variety of specialists. It merits attention of those concerned with modern printing of both East and West. Historians of Japan will appreciate the value of the text which is comparatively unknown, and the essays on art by Kakuzo Okakura do not seem to have been published in any other form. His *Book of Tea* is a world classic and has been translated into several languages.

In recent years there has been an increasing demand for early examples of photography. The ten volumes of the Mikado edition contain over two hundred actual photographs taken in Japan in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Safely preserved in the pages of Brinkley's *Japan*, they are all in prime condition. All the illustrations in this article are from either the Mikado or Orient editions of Brinkley's *Japan*. The subject matter covers almost every phase of Japanese life—with emphasis upon the daily activities of the people. The illustrations are of various sizes, some full page, and others measuring approximately three by five inches. The coloring is very well done as might be expected of Japanese painters. The Kokkwa Publishing Company needs no introduction to lovers of Oriental art. The prints they made to illustrate the commentaries of K. Okakura are superlative, and it is regrettable that they were omitted in later editions of the set. Inci-



The Sea Goddess Benten, or Benzaiten, is one of the Seven Divinities of Good Fortune. She is often represented riding on a serpent or dragon. Benten's shrines are usually situated on islands. Benten is derived from the Hindu deity, Saraswati, lady of the vina and patroness of wisdom and protectress of the heroes of ancient times.

dentially, the ten volumes have a continuous pagination, although the work itself has a number of subdivisions with ornamental headpieces and initials scattered through the text.

We also have in our library a copy of the Orient edition, a less elaborate edition, limited to 500 copies. A trade edition of Brinkley's *Japan* is also in our library. Mr. Mundy's introduction is altered to note that the photographs are now reproduced by half-tone engravings and are not colored. There are, however, some original photographs included. Nearly all pictures have been changed and the captions altered accordingly. Although the text is the same, the printings are not identical; and the wise collector will want both printings. Many of the pictures in both editions perpetuate details of Japanese culture which no longer exist. The great earthquake of 1923 and the bombings of Japan during World War II destroyed or mutilated many important monuments, and a rapid Westernization of the country which began in the 1960s has terminated many charming aspects of Japanese life. A description of the chapters follows.

Chapter 1—"The Empire; Its Size, Buildings, Cities and Scenery." (By the editor.)

In this section Mr. Brinkley describes the topography of the Japanese Islands, various racial and cultural groups, the vital statistics, the political divisions, climate, hot springs, earthquakes, parks, and transportation systems. It gives the reader the background information necessary for general orientation of the country and its people.

Chapter 2—"The Early Japanese and Their History."

There is a summary of Japanese prehistory as recorded in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon-gi*. The genesis of the Shinto divinities is explained and the descent of the Japanese imperial family from Ama-terasu no Oho-kami, deity of the sun. There is a fascinating digression into folklore and the early rise of the indigenous people and their customs.

Chapter 3—"The Story of the Forty-seven Ronins."

This is one of Japan's most famous historical incidents. When the leader of a Japanese clan is assassinated, his military retainers



Village wrecked by earthquake. On the twenty-eight day of October, 1891, Japan was convulsed by a great earthquake which was severely felt over an area equal to England. Japan has been subject to severe seismic disturbances since the beginning of its history.





The graves of the Forty-Seven Ronins. The tombstone of the leader (Oishi Kuranosuke) is in the rear corner. Evergreen sprigs are kept in the bamboo receptacles the entire year by the people, not by any organization.

are left without a master and are called Ronins. The incident described under the heading of the "Forty-seven Ronins" tells how this group of faithful knights gave their lives to avenge the murder of their lord.

Chapter 4—"Establishment of the Tokugawa Dynasty, and Japan's Relations with the Orient in the Early Ages of the Christian Era."

This section sketches Japanese history leading up to the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate early in the seventeenth century. There are many accounts of internecine strife, conspiracies of state, and the vicissitudes that overshadowed the imperial family. A number of fascinating incidents are recorded which reveal the psychological aspects of Japanese character.

Chapter 5—"Japan's Debt to Continental Neighbors in Early Eras."

Chinese and Korean contributions to the advancement of religion, philosophy, and government are neatly summarized. There is considerable emphasis upon the adaptation of Chinese culture to

the Japanese lifeway. The reader can better understand the rapid advancement in architecture and iconography and the important contributions of Buddhism.

Chapter 6—"Mediaeval Japan."

It becomes evident that many parallels existed between Japanese and European mediaevalism. These were the times when knight-hood was in flower. Celebrated priests arose, the world's first romantic novel was written, the formalities of living were emphasized, there was friction between church and state, and the great moral Code of Bushido (death before dishonor) was firmly established. This was a time of great music, classical drama, and the glorification of mysticism.

Chapter 7—"Yoshitsune, Genghis and the Mongol Invasion."

In this period legendry molded the shape of history. Yoshitsune is the greatest of the Japanese folk heroes. His death was contrived by his elder brother, Minamoto no Yoritomo. Yoshitsune had a faithful attendant, the giant warrior Benkei, who had many traits in common with *Robin Hood's* Little John. Some believe that



Samurai in armor. He is represented holding in his right hand a glaive, an oriental form of halberd.

Yoshitsune escaped to the continent to become a general in the Mongolian army—possibly becoming Genghis Khan himself. During this period also the Mongols made two efforts to conquer Japan, but their fleets suffered the same fate as the Spanish Armada.

Chapter 8—"Creeds and Castes."

The social structure of Japan is here considered, and the rights and responsibilities of the people are clearly defined. The code was severe and sometimes cruel, but it was the first line of defense of an insular people overshadowed by the nations of continental Asia. The caste system is reminiscent of that of India, but more flexible. In the social order farmers were on a higher level than merchants, for it was a greater honor to grow the rice than to eat it.

Chapter 9—"Religion and Rites."

Four faiths influenced the destiny of the Japanese people prior to their contact with the West. The indigenous religion was Shintoism, a kind of mystic spiritism which gave special veneration for the dead. From China came Confucianism and Taoism; and from India through China, Buddhism. Many sects of Buddhism arose—some austere and highly ritualistic; others simple, compassionate, and with special emphasis upon morality and ethics. Each group had its own traditions and venerated the founder of its particular sect.

Chapter 10—"Superstitions and Divination."

This is a most intriguing section heavily influenced by Chinese practices. The *I Ching*, or *Classic of Changes*, found a considerable following. Astrology and geomancy were widely practiced and the virtues of charms and spells were accepted without question. The trend was similar to that in Western civilization. Religious healing was taken for granted and efforts were made to introduce black magic and sorcery, but these were short-lived because of powerful government opposition.

Chapter 11—"Festivals."

For hundreds of years the Japanese people have delighted in celebrations which, according to Brinkley, were distributed throughout the year according to the lunar calendar or some natural phenomena. Many communities had their own local festi-



Buddhist priests. A casual observer visiting the Buddhist temples in Japan may be impressed with the points of resemblance between the Buddhistic and the Roman Catholic ceremonials. The flowers on the altar, the candles, the incense, the images, the processions, the shaven heads and the gorgeous robes of the priests—all seem strangely familiar.

vals which were usually elaborate and picturesque. Many temples had their sacred holidays which their subscribers attended with great enthusiasm. The Gion Festival in Kyoto was especially picturesque and is described in detail.

Chapter 12—"Observations and Pastimes."

In this chapter Brinkley describes competitive sports, most of which have military overtones. These included fencing, archery, and horse racing. Also, the native theater was always popular—classical dramas were patronized by the elite, and the Kabuki Theater which was less refined amused the populace at large. Sumo wrestling interested nearly everyone, and Go held regular tournaments—it was similar to chess and was regarded as highly cultural. There were long trips, often by entire families, to gaze rapturously on cherry blossoms in the spring and maple leaves in the fall. Music was appreciated and the Japanese dance was highly stylized and required years of study. Proficiency in flower arranging and the tea ceremony was mandatory to the life of a cultured person.



A Kabuki actor in role. The Japanese stage was little understood by foreigners during Brinkley's lifetime, but has deeply intrigued patrons of modern theater.

Chapter 13—"Japan's Commercial and Political Intercourse with Foreign Countries."

In this section the efforts of European powers to establish trading centers in Japan is discussed in some detail. The Catholic countries sent missionaries with their merchants, and in some cases this led to tragic results. The Dutch were more successful, but Britain and France did not do well. The opening of Japan by Commodore Perry led almost immediately to the Westernizing of every phase of Japanese life. To meet this challenge the shogunate was abolished and the Emperor Meiji was restored to full rulership of the country which thereafter was governed largely by parliamentary procedure.

Chapter 14—"The Attitude of Japan Toward Foreign Residents. Japanese Finance."

After the failure of the Satsuma Rebellion and the restoration of the monarchy, foreign visitors and residents were generally well treated. The Japanese government imported German, French, and English authorities to train their military and naval forces, reorganize their financial system, and strengthen their industrial structure. The educational facilities were Westernized and many non-Japanese became teachers in the public school system. A postal system was installed and in due time Japan became a full member of the Universal Postal Union. The modernization was almost unbelievably rapid and was possible only because the Japanese people themselves were well disciplined.

Chapter 15—"Modern Japan in Brief."

In this section Brinkley describes briefly the modernization of Japan under the reign of the Emperor Meiji. In less than fifty years Japan was transformed from a feudatory country to a major world power. The blending of old and new ways was accomplished without damaging the traditional virtues and convictions of the people.



Fenollosa has pointed out the parallels between Chinese and Japanese culture, and it seems appropriate to point out the simi-



Japanese schoolgirls in the days of Brinkley. They are taking a walk in the Ueno Park, Tokyo.

larities between European and Japanese history. In some respects Japan was a microcosm of the entire human family. The first step above primitive rites and ceremonies was the integration of the theology. This descended through centuries by oral transmission and the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-gi* correspond with the Babylonian, early Egyptian, and Semitic codes of morality. The Messianic dispensation preached by the Mahayana School of Buddhism reached China in the early years of the first century A.D. It was a teaching based upon compassion, unselfishness, and due regard for all living creatures. The exact time at which this reached Japan is under some controversy, but was probably in the third or fourth century A.D. The effect and duration of Buddhism among the Japanese people was essentially the same as that accompanying the Christianizing of Europe. In both areas, religion became superior to all temporal powers and the proudest monarchs paid homage to the clergy. At that time, Buddhism had no pope, but a number of powerful priests arose who established enduring sects and schools.

In the course of time Japanese Buddhism divided into an elaborate system of rituals, prayers, magical processes, and ecclesiastical hierarchies on the one hand and a strictly Protestant Buddhism on the other hand. The Protestant School also divided into a number of denominations, each of which descended from sanctified founders. The emphasis upon symbolic elements in faith—to a measure at least—restricted idolatry, and placed a heavy emphasis upon self-discipline and merit earned by the protection of the weak and by modesty in personal living. It is known that Western religion derived much inspiration and a greater part of its philosophical and scientific wisdom from pre-Christian sources. The West had its Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle; the Orient was enriched by the learning of Confucianism, Taoism, and Hinduism.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Westernization resulted in a separation between the church and state but both survived. With the restoration of the monarchy Christianity gained considerable importance, but is still a minority faith. Under Meiji and Taisho a number of metaphysical movements began to develop, and as in the West the most prominent of these were under the leadership of women. Numerous small sects appeared in both the Orient and the Occident at practically the same time. The political history of the two areas reveals the inevitable trend in human attitudes. The early Japanese believed firmly in the divine right of kings, but monarchy passed through numerous vicissitudes. In both Eastern and Western politics conflicts were almost continuous.

At the time the Italian states were drenched in the blood of civil war, powerful Japanese families were furthering their personal ambitions at the expense of the public good. During the Kamakura Period which corresponds almost exactly with Europe's Age of Chivalry, Japan had its knights in full armor protecting the castles located along what is now called the Japanese Rhine. The Japanese knights were sworn to complete fidelity to their lords and stood ever-ready to die in mortal combat to further the military purposes of their liege. Mighty dictators arose and made themselves more powerful than church or state.



These patterns find their Western counterparts in the Holy Roman Empire which drifted into medievalism in which the church protected the state, but both united to advance their temporal ambitions. The deification of the Japanese emperor was not too different from the belief that kings were anointed representatives of deity and ruled by the will of heaven. Here the Japanese made a slight modification from the Western pattern by establishing a system which was later to spread throughout Europe that the divinely born emperor reigned but never ruled. This was a fortunate concept because it frustrated the ambitions of potential dictators. They did very much as they pleased, but always paid ceremonial homage to the mikado. Thus division took place within the structure, but the grand system was never divided. Modern Japan is a constitutional monarchy with all classes represented in the Diet or Parliament. This is similar to the British Commonwealth and other surviving monarchies in the Western world.

Cultural developments are much alike in both hemispheres. Religion became the primary inspiration to the painter, the sculptor, and the carver. The classical period produced some of the greatest works of art which have enriched the heritage of mankind. As most of this was the product of piety, very few early examples of Japanese art are signed. At the same time Europe was producing its great religious art, Japan was creating its national treasures. Watercolor was the great medium of the East and oil painting that of the West. The Japanese produced their Michelangelos, Raphaels, and Rembrandts. If madonnas dominated in Europe, the Mother of Mercy Kannon was a favorite subject in Japan. During the Tokugawa Period covering the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, secular art increased in prominence. This produced works startlingly reminiscent of the French innovators who labored industriously in Paris. The new medium was the wood-block print and this popular form of artistry developed a huge and enthusiastic following. It made no pretense to greatness but had a strong influence both artistically and politically on the masses. In due time both East and West took on cubism, impressionism, and surrealism. These avant-garde painters and woodcut



The Vairochana Buddha from an eleventh century painting. The commentary by Okakura Kakuzo notes that the deity is represented with the calm expression of the Buddha-mother (Butsu-mo). The icon belongs to the esoteric sects.

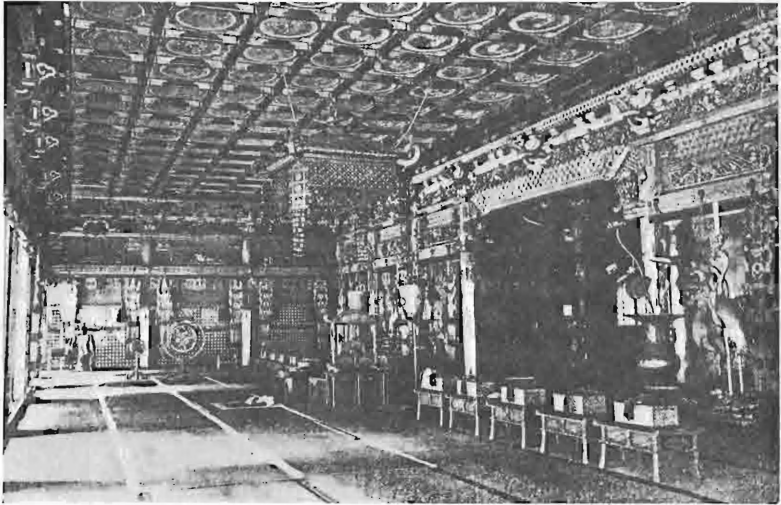
artists were regarded as near of kin by their Western contemporaries. This is largely where the matter stands today. Religious art is increasingly scarce, and productions inspired by the foibles of the masses are now regarded as productions of sheer genius.

Japanese architecture was impelled by the similar pressures on both sides of the world. During the classical period temples predominated, with palaces and luxurious villas coming in a creditable second place. During medieval times castles were a necessary means of self-protection, and these are practically the only major buildings in the construction of which the Japanese used stone. They always favored wood and this choice was partly influenced by the frequency of earthquakes.

The Japanese cathedral is a modest structure when compared with the great churches of Italy, France, and Germany. These massive sanctuaries have survived for ages, but in Japan important edifices also endured through a process of periodic rebuilding. The reconstructions are accepted as equal in every respect to the



The Nagoya Castle built in 1610 as the residence of the son of the Shogun Ieyasu. Note the massive stone foundation.



Interior of a large temple at Nikko. This picture is representative of many of the important Japanese sanctuaries. These have changed very little since the days of Captain Brinkley.

originals. A number of modern Japanese architects seem to have been influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright. For a number of years the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, designed by Wright, was a unique departure from Oriental taste. It was based upon the Mayan architecture of Central America. I stayed there shortly after it was built, and made a return visit the year it was torn down.

Education in Japan was also strongly traditional. If you wanted good schooling, it was best to enter the priesthood and enjoy abundant spare time for literary pursuits. A kind of cloister school similar to those established by Charlemagne for the education of his court arose in some of the more progressive feudal states. Until after the opening of the country, learning descended largely in families through a kind of apprenticeship. The early Tokugawa shoguns suggested to their retainers that they should educate their people, and in some districts this was popular. After the opening of Japan to the West, foreign teachers were accepted with marked enthusiasm. Lafcadio Hearn who taught in Japan for a number of years describes what almost any country would consider the

perfect schoolchild. He never missed a lesson and, if he was not in his proper seat, he was dead or dying. When called upon to recite a lesson, he would bow deeply to the teacher and always gave the correct answer. To display any type of ignorance was not only a disgrace to himself but a sin against the empire.

When I was in Japan in the 1960s the schoolchildren were still wonderfully behaved, spotlessly clean, and perfectly disciplined. The boys wore the German style Heidelberg uniforms. Each had a wrist watch which was a status symbol, a visored cap with a gilt button on each side, and carried a fountain pen in the upper pocket of his tunic. The girls wore navy blue jumpers with white blouses, and you could always see the iron marks on the blouses. Like German students, they carried their schoolbooks in a kind of knapsack. Their hair was neatly arranged, and they were paragons of propriety. Both the boys and girls were consumed with the problem of education. The learning came first, and no sacrifice was too great. I noticed an article on the curriculum of the school system. For the lower grades the essentials were ethics, reading, writing, and arithmetic. In other words, education was based upon a solid foundation of integrity. In the high school curriculum ethics was also the first requirement, and this was also true on the university level.

Japanese school children spend quite a lot of time on their feet. They travel about the country visiting all the places of national interest. Under the leadership of a teacher with a small banner, the children march along, sometimes by the hundred. They are not required to keep in step, but to follow in a dignified manner. One day they may pay homage to the Shrine of the Emperor Meiji, the next day a famous park or scenic point will be the destination. A few weeks later they may visit the museum, a celebrated temple, or one of the incredible department stores; but to balance off their touring they go through automobile assembly plants, factories where computers are made, or shipyards. All the different interests—religious, cultural, and economic—receive equal attention.

Japanese home life has changed but little due to the congested community existence. In many small towns there is a tall chimney

which indicates the public bath. Individual houses may not have such luxuries. This is not regarded as a deprivation, however, as the bathhouse is the vital center of local gossip. There is very little privacy in the home of the average Japanese family. At night the living room becomes the bedroom. Mats are spread on the floor, and when it comes time for breakfast the living room is also the dining room. It is believed that this is largely responsible for the closeness of Japanese families.

Experts have pointed out that Japan is a children's paradise. They are catered to and humored in every imaginable way, and yet there is no evidence that they are spoiled. They are dignified little people carefully following in the courtesies of their parents. One day in a large Japanese restaurant I heard a baby cry. There was a moment of silence and all the customers looked at each other and then looked in amazement at the child. Immediately there was relaxation, many smiles, and glances of felicitation—it was all right—the child was not Japanese.



A Japanese family group. Older children often carried younger brothers and sisters on their backs.

Next to the young, the aged are favored. The Japanese calculate life by a sexagenary cycle (sixty years). When a person is sixty years old, he is born again. There is a special celebration and, according to old customs, he is given a red hat. The wearer of such a head-piece can then do no wrong for the rest of his life. He is respected and revered, and all his small peculiarities are graciously tolerated. Of course, this distinction is honorary; and behind his back, life goes on as usual.

There are still more advanced honors for those who reach seventy or eighty. As the result of this psychology, many Japanese like to grow old. This feeling survives to the present day. The more intensive the industrialization of Japan, the greater the number of successful business men look forward to quiet days in their gardens and tea houses.

Though he lived long in Japan, Captain Brinkley does not seem to have been converted to the subtleties of Zen or the ceremonialism of the higher Buddhism. He was a good historian however,



Playing Go. Two elderly Japanese gentlemen enjoying their elder years.

and his standard reference text on the country was *A History of the Japanese People* published by the Encyclopaedia Britannica, New York and London, dedicated by gracious permission to His Majesty Meiji Tenno, the late Emperor of Japan. This work, however, lacks the appeal of the hand colored photographs which add distinctive charm to the earlier publication.



Better one good deed than three days' fasting.

—Japanese Proverb

I am myself, hell, purgatory, paradise.

—Persian Saying

Happiness and Trouble stand at everyone's gate. Yours is the choice which you will invite in.

—Chinese Proverb

If sun thou cannot be, then be the humble planet.

—Tibetan Precept

You can convince an ignorant man easily; you can convince a wise man more easily. But a man who knows a little and thinks himself to be perfect, not even *Brahma* can convince.

—Hindu Wisdom

All colors are the same to a blind man.

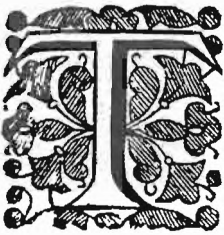
—Japanese Proverb

**Proverbs.** Proverbs are short sententious sayings, generally embodying some frugal or prudent maxim. They have been variously defined by men of all ages. Thus Aristotle says they are 'remnants which on account of their shortness and correctness have been saved out of the wreck and ruins of ancient philosophy.' Agricola describes them as 'short sentences, into which, as in rules, the ancients have compressed life.' Cervantes, with his usual terseness, describes them as 'short sentences drawn from long experience.' Howell says their characteristic qualities are 'sense, salt, and shortness.' Lord Bacon calls them 'the genius, wit, and spirit of a nation'; and Earl Russell called them 'the wisdom of many and the wit of one.'

—Eliezer Edwards, *Words, Facts, and Phrases*



## THE STOICS, THE CYNICS, AND THE SKEPTICS



he terms *stoical*, *cynical*, and *skeptical* are still in common usage, but their meanings in terms of classical philosophy are seldom considered. The sect of the Stoics was founded by Zeno of Citium (340-265 B.C.). He studied under Crates the Cynic, and it was from his teachings that the Stoics had their origin. Among the most famous of the later Stoics were Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. While stoicism was essentially pantheistic, its beliefs included many theological elements. The Stoics did not believe that Deity existed apart from his creations. Acknowledging a Divine Principle, they assumed that it was embodied in its manifestations and was to be defined as the sum of its natural productions. Spirit is diffused throughout its creations like seeds from which all living things have their origin. In simple terms, the world was the body of God.

Because life is indwelling, growth is always a revelation of the universal purpose. The wise person lives in harmony with the laws operating throughout nature. There can be no rebellion against the vicissitudes of living. A stoic therefore is one who accepts the inevitability of natural law. He cultivates humility, avoids all excesses, and is reluctant to give definitions to things beyond his comprehension. The human soul was regarded as an invisible body distributed throughout physical forms and subject to dissolution with them. Although the Stoics acknowledged that wisdom and a virtuous life could extend the duration of human existence, they could not bestow immortality. The soul perished with the body; but had eight parts which manifested through the five senses, the generative power, the vocal power, and an eighth or hegemonic part which was the leader of the compound. This involvement of the ogdoad was probably derived from Plato who declared the soul to be a symmetrical octahedron.



Zeno, a scholar of Crates, was the founder of the Stoic sect. From Stanley's *History of Philosophy*.

The most famous of the Stoics was Diogenes of Sinopis (412?-323 B.C.) who is chiefly remembered for his personal eccentricities. He annoyed the Athenians for a number of years and had a bitter disregard for ostentation, developing his own unique kind of socialism. He declared that the gods were wise and had a special fondness for human beings who cultivated wisdom. In substance, the wise are the friends of God and friends share their goods in common. Those who are friends of the gods are predestined and foreordained to inherit the earth. It is good to cater to the deities but not to the worldly, regardless of their estates. Diogenes believed that pride comes before a fall, and he liked to contribute to this fall in any way possible. One day Plato wore a new cloak while out walking with his disciples. Diogenes crept up behind him and, coming to a muddy spot in the road, jumped up and down on the tail of Plato's cloak, exclaiming: "Thus I step on Plato's pride." Looking benignly at Diogenes, Plato replied, "Yes, Diogenes, and how proud you are that you have done it."

Today we think a person to be stoical if he is self-disciplined and unmoved by the problems of his environment. He cannot be lured away by temptations of the flesh and is without inordinate ambitions. Diogenes, though a Stoic, was not as materialistic as some other members of the group. He liked to believe that the deities set the best example and mortals should emulate them as far as flesh allows. He reasoned that the gods are self-sufficient and need nothing. Human beings are not self-sufficient and need everything. For years he carried a cup to hold his drinking water but, suddenly realizing that his cup was a sordid luxury, he cast it away and drank from the hollow of his hand. He considered this a definite improvement of character.

The Stoics had a tendency to live alone and refrain from relationships that would lead to excess of any kind. Perhaps St. Simeon Stylites could be considered a Christian stoic. For many years he lived on the top of a column in the Libyan desert fed by disciples from a bucket which he lowered to them. If the Stoics could not escape pain or persecution, they bore their burdens without any show of suffering. They had a different definition of



Diogenes, the eclectic claimed by many schools. From Stanley's *History of Philosophy*.

wisdom than that which prevails today. They admired especially the natural philosophy of simple people who accepted without question the edicts of Providence. The real Stoic is neither frustrated nor introverted. He faces facts without rebellion or remorse. He labors for his daily bread with no expectation of approval or special reward. He sorrows over the pain of others but seeks no sympathy for his own infirmities. Whenever an agreement arises he departs on the grounds that truth needs no defense and error cannot be defended.

Stoicism mingled its streams with those of Neoplatonism. There was a kind of mystic sympathy between the two groups. Marcus Aurelius was forced to reconcile his duties to the Roman Empire with the inner requirements of his own nature. He wore the robes of state on his body but in his soul he was a Stoic. This ability to protect his inner life from the pollution of his public career is clearly revealed in his little book *Meditations*. The surface of the ocean is disturbed by tempests but its depths are forever unmoved.

The Cynics preferred to avoid the complications of other contemporary sects and cultivated moral virtues. To keep the simple rules of human relationships constituted the highest good. It required no extensive learning to improve human character and those who lived well could face the future, whatever it might be, with a good hope. Their cynicism was directed against philosophical conflicts and did not imply a critical attitude toward life in general. Like Epictetus they liked to think of opinionism as a falling sickness of the reason.

It was inevitable that the Cynics should also be Skeptics. The most prominent exponent of skepticism was Pyrrho of Elis (365-275 B.C.). According to Sextus Empiricus, those who seek truth must find, or deny they have found or can find, the nature of reality, or persevere in the inquiry. Those who suppose they have found truth are called Dogmatists. Those who think it incomprehensible are called Academics; those who still seek are the Skeptics. Since the Skeptics believed that absolute knowledge was unattainable, they declared the end of their discipline to be "in opinionatives, indisturbance; in impulsives, moderation; and in disquietives, suspension."



Pyrrho, an Elian, founder of the sect of the Sceptics. From Stanley's *History of Philosophy*.

In the case of Diogenes these three groups all claimed him as their own. He was in principle, stoical; in his thinking, skeptical; and in his conduct, cynical. Although these ancient institutions have long faded away, their concepts linger on. The motto of George Bernard Shaw was "I irritate" and, in some respects at least, he was a modern Diogenes. Alexander the Great held Diogenes in high esteem. He approached the celebrated tub and asked the crotchety old philosopher if there was some way in which he could do him a favor. The reply was typical, "I am cold and you are standing between me and the sun. Please move to one side." Alexander who especially admired the teachings of Aristotle was skeptical in his thinking and enjoyed discoursing with leaders of the numerous schools who assembled in the Athenian forum.

In the modern world, religionists believe that they know the truth. Those of philosophical inclinations believe that it can be discovered, whereas materialists assume that they can live well without contemplating the mysteries of existence. Each thoughtful person must explore the depth of his own nature to discover, if possible, his basic motivations. If he believes that he is doing the best he can and is content with this assumption, he may be considered a Stoic. He must be patient under stress, cultivate inner calmness, and assume that difficulties are inevitable. He will demand little of others and be pleasantly surprised if things go well. He avoids emergencies whenever possible and expects very little from the world in which he lives.

If he is a natural skeptic, an individual recognizes the inadequacies of society and suspects that improvement is possible. He has reasonable doubts concerning Providence and concludes that the human being is an imperfect creature of which too much cannot be expected. In other words, most mortals are doing the best they can; but it is not good enough. There is something of the reformer in the nature of the skeptic. He believes that he could make constructive suggestions and recommend useful reforms, but his skepticism warns him that his contributions will not be generally accepted. One elderly skeptic told me that he believed that each of us does the best he can—for what he is. The unanswered question is



Antisthenes, a disciple of Socrates, who is said to have founded the school of Cynics. From Stanley's *History of Philosophy*.



how long will it take before humanity can become sufficient to its own needs?

A cynic has a tendency to become disagreeable. He suspects the worst and gains a degree of personal satisfaction when his suspicions are justified. Beneath the surface of honesty the cynic discovers innumerable ulterior motivations. He fears his fellow man and as a consequence is himself disaster prone. He may not believe in a personal devil, but is afraid of the evil lurking in the hearts and minds of his associates. He seldom has a healthy sense of humor and likes to indulge in sarcasm. Quick to condemn and slow to condone, he often destroys his own career.

It may be a little difficult to understand the confusion of beliefs promulgated in Greece during the Age of Pericles which began in the fifth century B.C. This was an important period in the flowering of Grecian culture. It was the golden age of art and music, and at that time and in the following century there were important improvements in the sciences—especially mathematics and astronomy. It was the democratic spirit prevailing at that time that tolerated the conflicting systems of philosophy. If the citizen refrained from treason and paid his taxes, he could think much as he pleased. Intellectual differences did not interfere with personal friendships and those of divergent beliefs maintained an easy fraternalism. This was partly due to the influence of the state religion and the authority of the Mystery Schools. While differences arose within the structure of learning, the overall pattern of education was not divided. The gods on high Olympus were tolerant and seldom interfered in the affairs of their progeny. When Aesop, the slave, was asked the principal occupation of the deities, he replied, “The labor of the gods is to cast down the great and raise up the humble.” In this way heaven managed the affairs of earth.

In terms of modern psychology, stoicism is associated with patience; skepticism, with doubt; and cynicism, with antagonism. Patience is a basic virtue very likely to be misunderstood. When a young businessman announced that he had no intention of becoming involved in contemporary problems, an acquaintance ob-

viously concerned remarked, "If you are not worried, perhaps you do not understand the problems." It is assumed that when others worry it is our moral duty to be equally concerned. The stoic must support his attitude with a strong personal philosophy of life. This is usually found in some type of religious conviction. The belief in the omnipotence of a Divine Power is the first line of defense against despair. To close the mind to facts is futile, but to open the heart to the love of God solves most difficulties.

The skeptic can be victimized by his own doubts. Like doubting St. Thomas he must put his finger in the wound of Christ. Before he can believe in the resurrection, he demands proofs which are not always available. If he doubts himself he can never strengthen his own character. If he doubts others he gains little support from society, and if he doubts heaven his heart is sorely troubled. Man at this stage of his evolution cannot know the answers to all his questions but, if he is of sound character, he has the courage to believe that the unknown is benevolent. In courts of law a man on trial is assumed to be innocent until guilt is proven beyond reasonable doubt. When estimating the Divine Plan of things, it is only proper to assume that the creating powers are good unless there is actual proof to the contrary; and such proof has never been found. The transmutation of mortal doubts into spiritual convictions is the supreme alchemy.

Antagonisms plague the cynical mind with countless disillusionments. Our adversaries are often creations of our own thinking. Enemies become so important we have no time or energy left to protect friendships. There is no doubt that a person can suffer from the cruelty of those around him. He can be spitefully used, his generosity can be exploited, his trust may be betrayed, and his career ruined by the evil actions of others.

Usually a general cynicism is based upon particular events. Antagonisms against races, religions, classes of persons, and individuals turn the mind against society by poor logic. The victim comes to believe that every dog is like the one that bit him. There is a tendency to overlook failings of our own or the possibility that prejudice has caused us to judge unfairly. The cure for cynicism is

found in the words of Jesus who told his followers to forgive their enemies and do good to those who have despitely used them. Cynicism becomes a habit which inclines us to condemn the unknown without due consideration for the possibility that our own judgment is at fault. The Scriptures warn us not to judge, lest we bring down upon ourselves the judgment of others.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a number of controversialists arose in Europe. Whenever a prominent thinker wrote a book, some scribbler wrote an appropriate objection. There was some ulterior motive in this procedure because an unknown author gained a degree of notoriety by assailing the reputation of a distinguished name. This practice has lingered on in a class of literature dedicated to defamation of character. Stoics and skeptics are sometimes admirable, but the cynic has little to recommend him. He usually comes perilously close to charges of libel.

Those who wish to think properly must allow the mind to perform its functions in a normal and healthy manner. The human being is basically well-dispositioned. He prefers to be cheerful, helpful, and charitable. It requires years of wrong thinking to develop a powerful prejudice. Experience proves the fallacy of wrong attitudes and they destroy the basic values which help to unite discordant factions. They destroy homes, wreck lives, and weaken nations. Very few will deny that antagonisms are dangerous, but they allow them to continue unchecked until death dissolves all compounds.

In passing, we should note that the Greeks had many other sects, groups, and cults dedicated to the glorification of some attitudes and the condemning of others. The Epicureans, for example, have given us the word *epicure* meaning one who enjoys the pleasures of the banquet table. In sober truth, when Epicurus entertained, the meal consisted of dry bread and sour milk. The Aristotelians believed in joining mental and physical exercise. They preferred discussing the great abstractions of life while jogging on a cinder track.

The Cyrenaic sect founded by Aristippus of Cyrene (435-356? B.C.) brought the glad tidings that the principal purpose of life was

pleasure, and Aristippus was one of very few who lived in perfect harmony with his convictions. He might have quite a following in modern times, but there were certain elements that complicated the situation. To enjoy perfect pleasure requires wealth and accumulation of this requires labor and effort, both of which are unpleasant. Gluttony is enjoyable for a time, but the ailments resulting from it are not enjoyable. Fame and high office gratify the ego, but may end in tragedy. Even Aristippus was forced to admit that it was necessary to give critical attention to the meaning of pleasure. He discovered what Buddha had taught somewhat earlier—that those who had much are in constant worry over the danger of loss and those who have little pine away because they do not have more.

The philosophy of Aristippus has been called hedonism, a promising belief that has seldom kept its promise. Grand old Socrates, the perfect embodiment of stoicism, skepticism, and cynicism reconciled these conflicting doctrines within his own rather amiable disposition. What he actually taught is somewhat uncertain for he is preserved principally in the writings of Plato. Socrates was a sculptor by profession. When a statue he cut was placed in the forum and was given favorable notice, someone asked him how he had conceived so beautiful an image. Socrates replied that it was easy. All he had to do was cut away those parts of the marble which were irrelevant and the statue remained.

There is something of the qualities of the Greek sages in all of us, but few have lived comfortably with these endowments. All depends upon the proper use of our intellectual resources. The first step is to attain the Socratic norm: "In all things not too much." The violent alternations which arise in our dispositions deplete our resources and contribute to our miseries. Any type of violence damages judgment and leaves us victims of our own intemperances. It is not always easy to accept that we are the victims of our own thinking.

Perhaps the contemplative way of life was easier before the rise of industrialism, but the ancients also had their calamities. From the wars of Alexander to those of Julius Caesar, there was little

peace in the world. Socrates was in the army and had such a reputation for military prowess that the advancing enemy separated and left him alone on the battlefield.

If crimes were relatively few, sins were many; but in spite of these natural and artificial hazards the Greeks bestowed upon the world some of the noblest thinkers of all time. They respected wisdom and as a result it spread and flourished. They admired beauty and patronized the arts. They defended their country from enemies who might assail them from the outside and from the intemperances which would have corrupted them from within.

The religion of the Greeks was happy; their drama, mostly tragic. They believed in sports and gave us the Olympic Games. Their mathematicians squared the circle and trisected the right angle, and their architects were among the master builders of all time. Their poets were carried triumphantly at the heads of vast processions when they were crowned with the laurel wreaths. They admired constructive differences of opinion and, when problems were too numerous, they consulted the oracle of Delphi and allowed the gods to recommend the proper solution. They gave the world the medical clinics of Hippocrates of Cos and the immortal plays of Sophocles. In the midst of all these accomplishments they gave us the Stoics, the Cynics, and the Skeptics, who guarded with appropriate censorship the virtues of the state.




De Quincy in his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* feels that the word *intoxication* has been seriously overworked. He writes: "Some people have maintained, in our hearing, that they have been drunk upon green tea; and a medical student in London, for whose knowledge in his profession I have reason to feel a great respect, assured me, the other day, that a patient is recovering from an illness and got drunk on beefsteak."

Whenever I have nothing particular to say, I find myself plunging into cosmic philosophy.

—Don Marquis

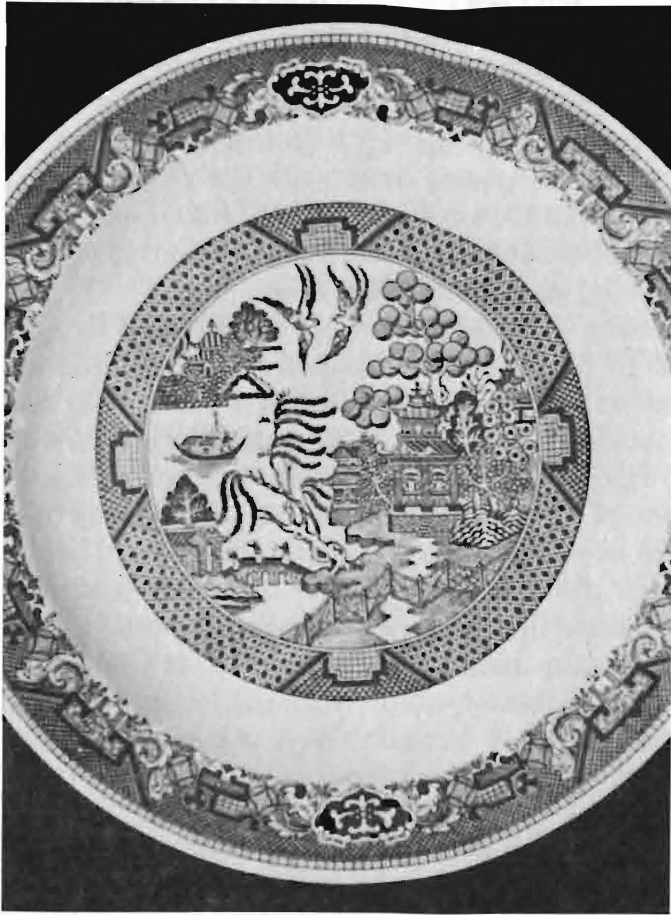
## THE STORY OF THE WILLOW PLATE

 My first contact with the willow plate came early in life. When those of moderate means went to restaurants, they nearly always ordered the "blue plate lunch" which featured the specialty of the day. The dishes were usually blue and white, but occasionally the dominant color was a light rose. No one paid much attention to the design but assumed from its ornamentation that it originated in China.

J. S. M. Ward in his fascinating book *The Hung Society* notes that, while the willow plate probably originated in South China in the second half of the eighteenth century, no original example has ever been found in China although it has been sought for with great diligence. Those who appreciated the decorations on this plate inquired as to its meaning, and their Chinese friends perpetuated a popular fiction which was usually accepted without question. It is now manufactured in both Europe and America as a charming example of Chinese artistry, and found special favor with the Minton Company which produced it in vast quantities. It has since been manufactured in modern China, especially in the area around Canton.

Secret societies of one kind or another have existed in China for over two thousand years. They arose whenever times became especially troublous and political conspiracies threatened the security of private citizens. Although religious persecution was not prevalent in grand Cathay, there were several occasions in which the Buddhist clergy was secularized, the nunneries closed, and the temples burned. To meet these emergencies, the faith was celebrated in private and believers were sworn to secrecy.

Such a situation arose when the Ming Dynasty was overthrown and the Manchurian Ching rulers made themselves masters of China. In this emergency the secret societies became deeply involved in politics and vowed to restore the power of the Ming. This



Copy of the blue willow plate design by Royal, Sebring, Ohio. The symbolical elements are clearly shown as set forth in the rituals of the Hung Society.

brought upon them the violent disapproval of the government which attempted to destroy subversive organizations. It was in the midst of this social turmoil that the willow plate appeared. It may have been regarded as a symbol of a resistance movement and every willow plate that could be found by officials or their spies was promptly destroyed. Mr. Ward who was a prominent Mason builds a strong case to prove that the willow plate was the trestle-board of the Hung Association.

Charles William Heckethorn in his book *The Secret Societies of All Ages and Countries* notes that the earliest record we have of a secret Chinese league goes back to the Han Dynasty (A.D. 185). When this was persecuted they broke up into small groups, each with a different name. Most of these fraternities were short-lived, but were never completely destroyed. The remnants of the older organizations united to form the great Hung League. Like many Western secret societies they combined religious and philosophical teachings with political objectives.

Membership in the Hung Society transformed its initiates into champions of distressed causes and protectors of the weak and exploited masses. Those seeking admission were "born again" and, having voluntarily renounced all personal ambitions, assumed the spiritual, moral, and physical obligations imposed upon them by their leaders. Constantly subject to persecution, they believed that they would be rewarded in the afterlife for the suffering they endured in the physical world. Under its various names the Hung Society ritualized three basic degrees which opened the way to further and deeper instruction. The Hung League contributed strongly to the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911. It is recorded that Dr. Sun Yat-sen who was a convert to Christianity resigned from the Hung Society when he became the first president of China.

Those who wished to become members of this secret fraternity were required to pass through severe rituals of initiation and bound themselves with vows and obligations. Several works are available dealing with the degrees of the Hung Society, their symbols, passwords, and means of recognition. The rites of the Hung Society were largely based upon Buddhism, but Taoist and Confucianist precepts were included. The journey through the degrees of the fraternity was likened to the condition of the soul in the afterlife. This required the inclusion of cosmological elements and the formulation of a kind of celestial geography.

The universe of the Hung Society was startlingly similar to that prevalent throughout the world in ancient times. In most of the Mystery Schools of Europe, Africa, and the Near East, the dramas



were staged in the afterlife. The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* traces the condition of the soul as it passes through various realms and finally enters the Hall of the Twin Truths presided over by Osiris, Lord of the Quick and the Dead. Virgil causes Aeneas to traverse the Kingdom of Pluto protected by the golden bough and guided by a sybil. Dante's *Inferno* sets forth in detail the perilous journey of the soul with Virgil guiding the way. The theme is also present in early Christian mysticism according to which Jesus descends into the realms of the dead to redeem lost souls.

In the most primitive concepts, the earth was considered to be a flat plate, bordered by cliffs which held back the tides of ocean. In the center arose the mountain of the mortal region. In the Nordic teachings this was Midgard, a middle garden divided into continents and regions. In the center of Midgard was the lofty mountain of the gods—the Meru of India, the Asgard of the Norse and the Goths, and the Olympus of the Greeks. The realms of death were beneath the surface of the plate. The willow plate suggests this design. The elaborate border enclosed the world, the white field is ocean which surrounds the abode of mortals.

There is another dimension of this arrangement which is qualitative rather than quantitative as described by Dante. The lowest of all regions is hell where those languish whose deeds have been so terrible that there is no hope of redemption. Less terrifying is purgatory where repentant sinners are cleansed and will ultimately be saved. The next region is the physical earth itself where each living thing makes its journey from the cradle to the grave. Above this is paradise—that mysterious garden of the west where beauty and peace reign supreme and sorrows are unknown. Still higher is the ultimate heaven reserved for those who have been united forever with God.

In Buddhism the Western Paradise is presided over by the Amida Buddha and his daughter Kuan Yin. The Taoists conceive this blessed realm to be an island beyond the sea, and they have created lovely paintings of this fortunate land. Great mountains reach to the clouds while mists gather in the valleys below. Birds sing and flowers bloom forever. The cranes of long life wander

about without fear and the turtle of great age swims along the edge of the seashore. The wise of all nations and all time commune together and no conflict of opinions disturbs the climate which is forever salubrious. The Confucianists have largely borrowed their metaphysical geography from the Taoists but assume that the perfect sage is a proper citizen in the Isles of the Blessed.

There is much to suggest that the willow plate pictures forth the journey of the soul to the realms of the blessed. When compared with similar representations most of the essential elements can be identified. The scene unfolds from right to left and from below upward much as in Bunyon's *Pilgrim's Progress*. The handsome palace shaded with peach trees is the abode of the worldly wise man. It symbolizes the pleasures of mortal life, the luxuries of wealth, and the rewards of fame. Here dwell those who are proud in their own conceits and are envied by those as foolish as themselves.

The wall that surrounds the palace is like the Great Wall of China which holds its owner prisoner but is no defense against an enemy from outside. From this palace a zigzag path leads to another wall which has no door so that escape is impossible. In the center of the plate is a willow tree bending over a bridge. In Chinese symbolism the willow has many meanings. Like the acacia of the Near East, it is a symbol of regeneration and resurrection. In Japanese Buddhism it is an attribute of the Koyasu Kannon who eases the pains of childbirth. In the last painting of Kano Hogai, the deity sprinkles the water of life with a willow branch. This painting which is in the imperial collection has been copied many times. The weeping willow is also the symbol of humility and purification and was frequently planted in early European and American cemeteries. Like the golden bough carried by Aeneas, the willow protects the soul in its journey through the realms of the dead.

The bridge of three arches is associated directly with the Hung Society. There are three small figures on the bridge. Ward thinks that they represent three Buddhas, each with a familiar attribute. It should be noted, however, that there is a variant of the Vinegar

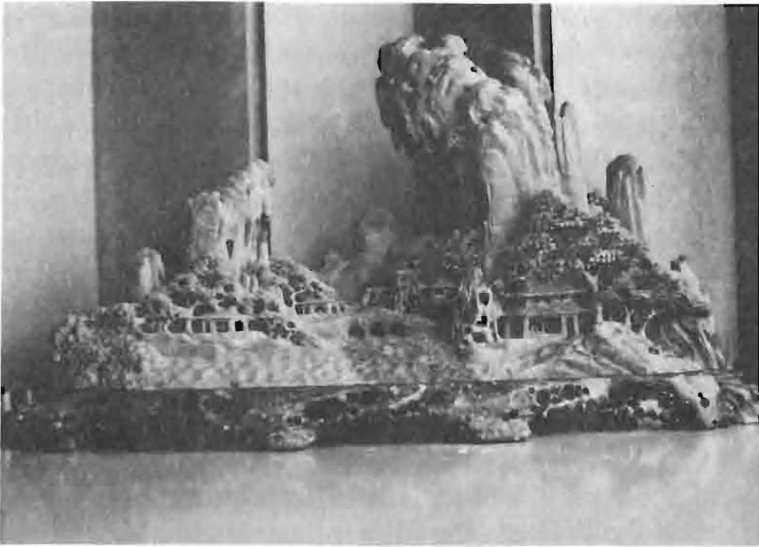
Tasters theme in which the three sages are shown on a bridge rather than gathered about the vinegar crock. The figures are standing but not walking, and Buddha, Lao-tzu, and Confucius could be intended. The bridge leads to a small temple where tablets honor the heroes of the world. Above this, at the left, is the Hung ship which is often referred to as the Ship of the Doctrine. Kuan Yin steers this vessel to the "other shore."

It is interesting that in Christian symbolical architecture the nave (from a Latin word meaning "ship") of a church is the vessel which carries the faithful across the sea of worldly suffering. In many religions mortal life is divided from Beulah Land by a river or an ocean. An old hymn tells us that there is one more river to cross and we are also told that we will be gathered with our loved ones on the other shore.

Behind the boat is another island on which stands a temple. It appears that the Western Paradise is intended in a simplified form. The supreme heaven which is the abode of the eternal Tao is not pictured, but may be suggested by the two spirit birds in the sky which bring to mind the eternal union of yang and yin. The same noble thought is implied by the union of the purified soul with Christ in the Book of Revelation, thus becoming the Bride of the Lamb.

There are two explanations of the plate design. It may be that the Hung Society simply appropriated the Taoist tradition of man's journey through time to eternity or they created a version of their own—giving it a special political significance.

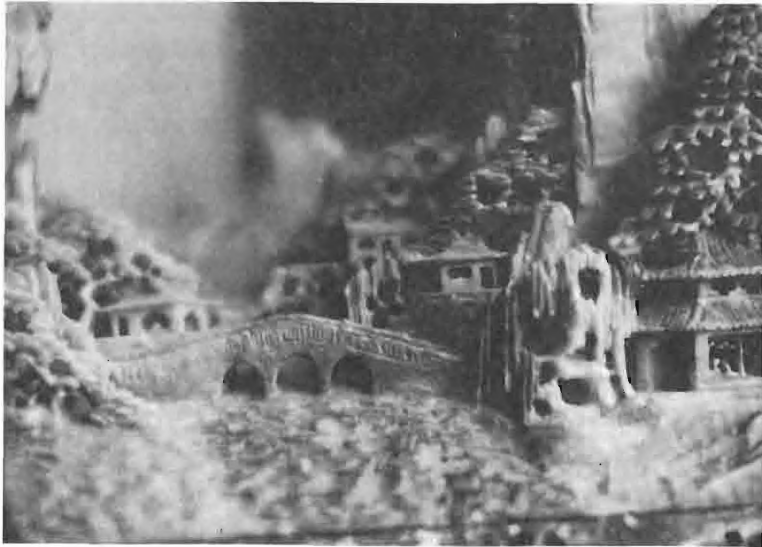
The Taoist concept of the world is clearly set forth in an interesting soapstone carving which I found some years ago. Many elements of the symbolism are virtually identical with that of the willow plate. In the right foreground is a palace, at a window of which are two small human figures. The palace is shaded by great trees and slightly to the left of it is a willow tree. In the center foreground is the Hung bridge with three arches, but it lacks the human figures. The bridge spans an expanse of water which flows into the foreground. The bridge is connected with a smaller house as in the case of the plate. Dimly visible behind the left end of the



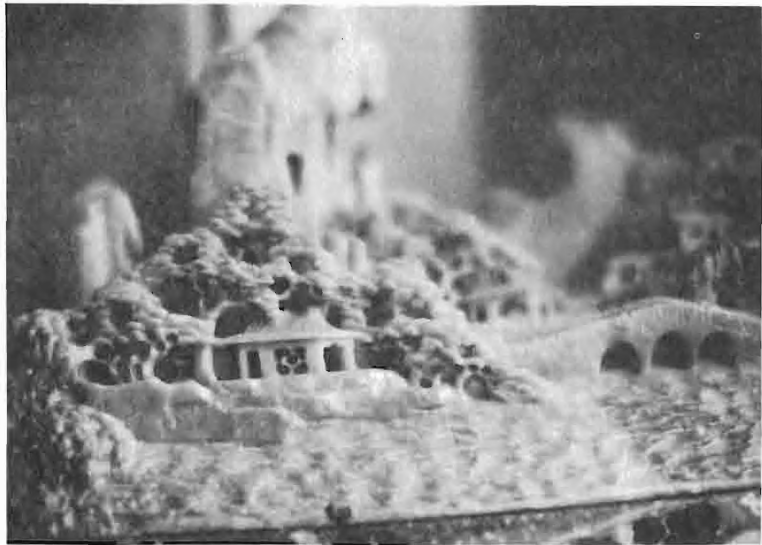
Soapstone carving of the Taoist paradise, elements of which appear on the willow plate.



In the right foreground is the palace with tiny human figures; to the left stands the weeping willow tree.



The central part of the design featuring the Hung bridge with three arches. Behind the bridge at left is visible part of the Hung boat with a small figure at a moon window.



At the left of the design is a small chapel among the trees where the spirits of the Hung heroes are venerated.

bridge is the Hung boat with a small figure at a moon window. At the left rise the beautiful mountains of the Western Paradise, but towering over them at the right are the mysterious peaks of heaven. On the lower slopes is a rustic retreat. This lovely carving represents the natural world, both visible and invisible, as seen by the mystics in their raptures.

In the Hung Society candidates must forswear worldliness and dedicate themselves to the way of heaven. They must cross the bridge with three arches (three degrees of initiation) and come to the blessed land where wisdom and love reign supreme. The curious arrangement of the mountains reminds us of Hokusai's print of the *Great Wave*. The motion suggests the blending of the yin and yang principles, implying the concept of Tao in which all opposites are reconciled.

As usual in these scenic compositions, the triad of heaven, earth, and man is clearly indicated. The great mountains signify heaven; the foreground suggests the earth; and the buildings in the middle distance bear witness to the industry of man. In Taoism man is superior to earth but must always submit to the authority of heaven. If he lives for his principles or dies for his causes, he is assured that he will find peace and rest in the land of the willows.



By reflection a man can make himself an island which no floods can overwhelm.

Buddhist Saying

If you stand straight, do not fear the crooked shadow.

—Chinese Proverb

Silence is a true friend who never betrays.

—Confucius



## *Curiouser & Curiouser*

*A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND*

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### THE AILING U.S. POSTAL SYSTEM

It appears evident that those controlling the United States Postal System are not well acquainted with postal history. As a stamp collector I would like to make a few recommendations on this delicate subject. It now costs eighteen cents to mail a letter, and we are assured that by the end of the year the rate will be raised to twenty cents to cover a further deficit. It is already cheaper to communicate by telephone in local areas. If the postal budget is ever balanced, there will probably be immediate agitation for wage increases and we will be back in the red again. It might be timely to give a little in-depth thought to this fascinating subject. A very drastic measure is possible but will probably be met without enthusiasm.

In 1753 Benjamin Franklin actually organized the postal system of the United States, and in 1775 he was appointed the first postmaster general. In 1829 the then postmaster general became a member of the cabinet. Almost immediately the expansion of the system established the precedent for an annual deficit which has continued ever since. No stamps were available during this period, but in 1847 the United States followed the examples of Great Britain and Brazil. The two stamps issued by the United States at that time consisted of a five cent value with a portrait of Benjamin



Franklin, and a ten cent denomination with an excellent likeness of George Washington.

There were several causes contributing to the unbalance of the postal budget. The country expanded westward and for many years settlements were few and far between. Nearly all of the larger countries suffered from the same dilemma. The Chinese, for example, had a courier system as early as 1100 B.C.; and Confucius has left records of its efficiency. The couriers conveyed official dispatches and documents regulating the administration of the provinces. Private citizens could not avail themselves of this system of distribution. It was much the same with the Romans, the Greeks, and the older countries of western Europe. With the rise of merchandising, wealthy businessmen clamored for inclusion in the courier system, and in due time the private citizen who was literate and wished to communicate with friends and relatives was given access to the mails. The postal system was forced to expand and had difficulty keeping up with its responsibilities. In some instances, religious and educational material was carried free or at a markedly reduced rate, and newspapers quickly took advantage of this privilege.

It became still more complicated when the mails were expected to transfer packages of various sizes and shapes under the heading of Parcel Post. In rural areas livestock was forwarded by obliging postmasters. By degrees the burden grew until today the United



States Postal System carries as much mail as all the other nations of the earth put together. While individual mail is still heavy, it is not the private letter to the private citizen that is clogging up the system. Of course, greeting cards—a comparatively modern innovation—constitute a seasonal deluge but, with the increasing cost of both cards and postage, there will probably be some reduction in this area.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, an Italian family under the patronage of the Hapsburg emperors organized a private postal system which spread throughout the greater part of Europe and employed more than twenty thousand couriers. In those days there were no postage stamps and very few envelopes. The notes were written on sheets of blank paper folded to approximately letter size and closed by the personal seal of the writer. These letters received appropriate postal markings which sometimes included a gallows tree with a noose pendant to remind the couriers to be honest, true, and faithful and deliver the mail with due haste regardless of war or weather. The cities of the German Hanseatic League had their own postal system, and the couriers of the Republic of Venice distributed mail to the fifty-two communities under the sovereignty of the Venetian state. In Asia mail was delivered by elephant, camel, donkey, or runner. Most European couriers carried mail on horseback, or letters were forwarded along the coach line. The same system prevailed in the United States during the earlier years of the nineteenth century.

Prior to the issue of the first official U.S. Postage stamps, a number of private postal systems flourished in this country, which brings us to a suggestion which might have some practical value.

The United States Postal Department could retain proprietorship over interstate mail but leave local postal problems to states or municipalities who would take care of their own internal distribution of mail. Again, there is considerable precedent. Take the situation in Germany for example. Bavaria had its own postal system as late as 1920; so did Wurttemberg. A number of cities issued their own stamps including Bergedorf, Bremen, Brunswick, Hamburg, and Lubeck. These faded out after the formation of the German Empire.

Another thought deals with the problem of "junk mail." If a person orders a pair of shoes or a baked ham from a mail-order house, his name goes on the list of potential customers. These lists are bought, sold, and traded; and the hapless householder is deluged with advertisements. As the mail-order business has increased greatly in recent years, it becomes obvious that whenever we buy a postage stamp we are subsidizing a private business or, more correctly, a large number thereof. According to available figures a three-percent return on mailed advertising is considered satisfactory. This means that ninety-seven out of every hundred of these advertisements ends in the waste basket. Our dispositions are adversely affected, and our forests are being devastated to provide paper—most of which is wasted. It could be practical that mail-order houses should pay a special fee determined by their volume of business for the right to use the mails for profitmaking enterprises.

I had a specially interesting day last week. A neat little bundle of mail was deposited in our home mailbox that did not include one personal letter. A real estate agency wanted to sell our home; another was soliciting for an encyclopedia; and two were religiously oriented. One wanted us to contribute to the first line of defense against the end of the world and the other knew we would be happy to support a multimillion-dollar church building project. There were small etceteras which are hardly worth mentioning. Efforts to balance the Post Office Department budget could give this matter some special attention. It might be a pleasant thought to reduce the postage rate for private letters and raise the price of junk mailings. We do not wish to disparage any constructive charitable endeavor, but the junk mail situation is out of control.

Many countries issue special stamps that are called semipostals. At regular or irregular intervals a surcharge is imposed on a postage rate. If the normal first class rate is ten cents, the semipostal stamp carries the denomination of ten cents plus two cents. Such stamps are short term issues and the supply seldom lasts more than a few days. They are highly appreciated by collectors. I went to a Tokyo post office the day a semipostal was issued. Customers were queued up for a block. The dealers had bought out most of

the issue and by the time I reached the window the supply was exhausted.

Semipostal stamps can be very helpful in time of a national or local disaster. Very few people will resent donating two cents or a reasonable multiple thereof to help the victims of a major catastrophe. On the days set aside for this type of semipostal issue no other stamps of the same denomination can be purchased at the post office. Those who do not wish to buy them can hold their mail for two or three days. This plan could be of immediate financial help to the government because of the sale to stamp stores and private collectors.

For a time the United States issued Special Delivery stamps. When these were affixed to an envelope, the letter was handled with all speed. The first of these stamps was issued in 1885 and the fee was ten cents but, by 1971 when the last of these special stamps was issued, the rate had risen to forty-five cents. The escalation in the last ten years has been phenomenal. In 1911 the Post Office Department issued its only registration stamp and the fee was set at ten cents. The fee has since floated upward as of the present moment to three dollars and thirty cents.

To meet its increasing postal needs, an array of time and labor saving devices have been installed by the post office which seem to save everything except time and labor. Every effort at economy has led to further inflation. If local communities could handle their own postage problems, less expensive machinery would be adequate and supervision would be less difficult. If cities and states handled their own postage systems, there would be considerably less political involvement and various localities would directly benefit from such a program. Private parcel delivery systems are able to compete favorably with parcel post rates and provide more efficient service.



You can be a Senator or a Congressman today, but tomorrow you are liable to be paying for your own stamps.

—Will Rogers

*In  
Reply*



## A Department of Questions and Answers

*Question:* Why does the brotherhood of humanity remain “the impossible dream”?

*Answer:* Down through the course of time many dedicated persons have sought to advance the human state. They have been rewarded for the most part with ridicule, persecution, or martyrdom. They believed that the human being would react constructively to glad tidings of great joy, but this was seldom the case. Disappointments often led to resentment and disillusionment. We must all face, even in personal matters, the experience of ingratitude. It might be well to philosophize on this subject and seek comfort through deeper understanding.

The Romans learned that it was a tragic mistake to underestimate an adversary. In order to serve a good cause successfully, we must measure its chances for success and estimate our own resources. Idealists generally live in a world of their own. Thinking only of things as they ought to be, they lose sight of or ignore things as they are. Reforms of any kind must be implemented in a practical way. Those who live cloistered lives can seldom cope successfully with the problems of an unregenerate world. Actual experience, well considered, markedly increases the probability of success. It has been my experience that most spiritually oriented persons are poorly adjusted socially. They have few friends, are easily bruised if their efforts are not recognized, and retire in solitude to lick their wounds. They feel themselves unappreciated, misunderstood, and victims of social conspiracies.

Those wishing to be helpful must adjust themselves to an uncongenial atmosphere. Before attempting a cure, it is necessary to examine the patient. In early medical history, disease was treated according to set rules and formulas. The result was that most of the patients died. Before we attempt to impose our opinions upon others, we must have a correct diagnosis of their needs and capacities. When an individual is sick, we know that something is wrong. We may believe that we have a remedy, but we must hold this in suspension until we are sure that we understand the ailment. Improper medication, snap judgement, or too much self-confidence can work havoc with the sick.

The clinics of Hippocrates of Cos changed the course of medical practice. This great Greek physician prescribed no remedies without long and careful observation. He estimated the value of symptoms and kept a careful record of the progress of an ailment. He was careful to note that certain illnesses ran their courses and then subsided without medication. Experience enabled him to determine symptoms of terminal diseases in which the physician could only reduce distress. He realized what many modern physicians have learned—namely, that God is the great physician and doctors only his servants.

Whether we are concerned with religion, philosophy, science, industry, or statesmanship, we must first make a correct diagnosis of the situation at hand. This may require careful reading and study and direct contact with informed persons in the various fields. We must familiarize ourselves with the immediate changes that are taking place on every level of human society. We must consider the progressives and the reactionaries and especially be mindful of genuine progress whenever and wherever it appears. We must give honor where honor is due and support in every way possible the sincere efforts of other persons. It is a serious mistake for one idealist to criticize or condemn another idealist. The least we can do is to wish him Godspeed.

Criticism reacts most severely on the critic himself. The object of most reformation is humanity in general or a human being in particular. Those spiritually or mystically oriented take it for

granted that most persons wish to be happy. Thoughtful observers are inclined to be dubious on this point. In most cases individuals want to do what they wish to do regardless of consequences. For one man or woman who wishes to change his or her own life style, there are a thousand who wish to change the lives of their relatives, friends, and associates. Most of us have harmful habits but hope to survive them. The less an individual knows, the more prejudices he is likely to be nursing. His own beliefs are far more important to him than facts, and he resents outside interference.

To influence the lives of other people, the first thing necessary is to estimate personal resources. Is it possible to cope with a person well established in his own convictions and ever-ready to defend them? If a sensitive area is attacked, a well intentioned effort can end in a quarrel. A good example is the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy. With Shakespeareans in the majority, the Baconian—regardless of his facts—is at a serious disadvantage. It has been said that to question the authenticity of the Bible may cause a mild storm, but to doubt that Shakespeare wrote his plays will raise a tornado. Most easy believers are militantly loyal to their own beliefs.

Many outstanding reformers have strong religious convictions. Founders of sects take it for granted that they are predestined and foreordained to correct the errors which disfigure other sects. This gives each denomination valid grounds to rally members to its own cause.

A reformer, regardless of his enthusiasm, will do well to first attempt the conversion of his own family. Muhammad's first convert was his wife; Buddha converted his wife, his aunt, and his son; and according to tradition, Jesus converted his mother and an intimate circle of disciples. Sympathetic friends are better prospects than strangers and the neighborhood is much easier to reach than the world. This often helps to reveal the weaknesses in our own beliefs before they are exposed to wider criticism.

Remember that the population of the earth is about 4.5 billion souls. They are divided into races scattered throughout habitable regions. They follow nine major religions and hundreds of smaller

cults. Their life patterns, long established, are highly diversified. About all they share in common is "they are born, they suffer, and they die." There are variations even on these basic themes. Some can neither read nor write; others have such complicated languages that communication between them is virtually impossible. Only divine and natural law can resolve the differences which divide one tribe from another.

Those seeking to serve humanity should give careful consideration to their own temperaments. They must ask themselves very honestly if their dispositions can support their endeavors. Those nervous, high strung, irritable, or combative must correct these faults if they expect their ideas to exercise a constructive influence. Dedication must be supported by discretion and self-discipline. In Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, we find a statement which all idealists should remember. "To thine own self be true, / And it must follow, as the night the day, / Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Anyone who hopes to correct a common ill must not only advance his solution but also give a clear statement of the exact procedures necessary to implement the reformations which he regards as necessary. He may clearly and correctly point out the flaws in present policies, but good intentions must be supported by a carefully formulated methodology. Nearly always we have to elicit help to accomplish our purposes, and the natural tendency is to appeal to those least likely to be interested. Attempts to inspire a materialist to become an idealist will have a small chance of success. The president of a television network is not likely to listen to your complaints about programming. A religionist who is narrow-minded will not appreciate an effort to expand his consciousness. A huge problem will not be solved by a small program. It is useless to bombard public personalities whose actions are contrary to the public good. A head-on collision with the establishment can end in tragic disappointment.

Every day we hear reports of efforts to improve the human state. Those dedicated to such endeavors are the best prospects to aid in bringing about constructive changes. This aspect of the

situation can be summarized in a single thought—"Get your mind off of your enemies and fix it firmly on your friends." It is easy to overlook the constructive things that are happening because the mind becomes fixed upon the delinquencies of leaders.

Teachings must be aimed at the various strata into which humanity is divided. It is obvious that enlightened and dedicated individuals are in the minority. Actually, while this smaller group may attract our attention, it is not in this direction that the greater labor must be directed. There are still millions of illiterates, and still others to whom even the simplest ideas are almost incomprehensible. Yet many of these unlettered and unschooled have high moral standards and live as honorably as circumstances permit. Very few mortals are concerned with the great abstractions which underlie the patterns of daily living. The idealist usually tries to raise others to his level of insights. He may believe that one must learn everything to know anything, but in daily relationships this concept will not prove practical. The more simple a truth can be stated, the more likely it is to be accepted. The simple words of Christ, "Love ye one another," are within the comprehension of the majority of human beings. They can be translated into many languages and dialects and taught in all the sanctuaries of mankind. Any person who has not experienced the meaning of these simple words is scarcely suited to higher learning.

In spite of every effort to share wisdom with others, we are all inclined to formulate doctrines that please ourselves and put them in words which we regard as most adequate. This is not the best approach. We have already converted ourselves, and now our problem is to enlighten the stranger. This often means that we must communicate with him on the level of his own ability to understand. Unless we can reach the hearts and minds of other persons, we are apt to become frustrated. If we want to tell others something we believe they should know, we must temper the wind to the shorn lamb. This brings into focus another difficulty.

The presentation of a first basic idea worthy of dissemination should be mentally organized as completely as possible. It may become apparent that the same truths can be presented in a variety



of forms likely to impress members of different groups and organizations whose cooperation would be helpful. Certain questions can be asked to make sure that they can be answered concisely and clearly. For example: What is the primary end you are seeking to achieve? You can follow this by clarifying your basic premise. You could say that a sovereign power governs all things and is the source of natural law which all human beings must obey in order to survive. If a reader or listener is sympathetic to this statement, you can go into greater detail. Conversely, if this premise is rejected, further discussion is usually a waste of time.

There are two ways of approaching universal mysteries. One is Platonic and the other is Aristotelian. Plato first defined the Divine Principle and then descended step by step until he arrived at the contemplation of mankind. In other words, he descended from generalities to particulars. Aristotle began with particulars and, having laid this foundation, he placed his feet on the lowest rung of the ladder which he ascended by well defined steps to the contemplation of Infinite Being.

Unless concise answers can be given to exact questions, one is at a disadvantage in dealing with trained minds. The assumption that the questioner is trying to be offensive is not productive of better understanding. It is best to be prepared to deal with skeptics and to maintain a pleasant atmosphere at all costs.

The intellectual should be approached on some common ground, such as the pattern of his daily living. Is he happily married, proud of his children, under special stress or tension, or worried about his health? He may himself open the way for more serious discussion, and may even actually ask for advice if he feels that you are qualified to have a useful opinion. Once confidence is established, serious subjects can be discussed with mutual profit. A person who needs guidance should be led but not pushed.

If the message is to be prepared in written form, follow the same general outline. The early remarks should not be controversial and should stimulate interest rather than antagonism. Many men keep their religion in their wives' names and, on the level of friendship, it is often valuable to first approach the lady of the house for she might be most likely to read the written message.

To mingle successfully with many types of people requires a broadening and deepening of one's temperament. The urgencies of spiritual need must completely overshadow the relationship. While we hope that others are listening, we must also learn to be good listeners ourselves. We are not expected to understand everything or share everyone's interests, but it is helpful to have a diversified point of view. If spiritual considerations loom too large, all other things are often rejected as trivial. The very one-pointedness which is often considered proof of dedication can lead to frustration and defeat. The best remedies against provincialism are a wide acquaintance with people in many walks of life, extensive travel from which valuable experiences can be gathered, and hobbies or avocational interests—especially in the fields of art, poetry, and music. That which refines and matures the human soul brings with it a release of kindness, patience, and understanding.

Most serious persons regard humor as beneath their dignity. Life is a serious business but, if taken too seriously, there is a danger of becoming neurotic. The Greeks were right—"The gods on high Olympus laughed." Unfortunately most modern religions feel that misery and suffering are *prima facie* evidence of spirituality. It is usually hard to prove our divinity, but it is possible for most of us to prove our humanity. There is nothing sacrilegious in sharing the laughter of children or reacting to a whimsical incident. Many of the greatest truths of life shine through humorous situations. One rather thoughtful person went so far as to say, "Laughter is the language of the soul." Certainly the soul is the seat of a joy beyond the boundaries of this world. The heavenly realms are filled with song and rejoicing, and it is wise to practice these emotions on this side of the grave.

The more earnest and devout we are, the more carefully we must discipline our own dreams. It is quite right and proper to look forward to a world where we can all live together in peace and contentment and share a common knowledge of the Divine Plan. Nearly everyone can make a small contribution to the improvement of humanity but, if we are religiously and philosophically oriented, we are reminded of the old family physician who nearly

always said, "I can treat the ailment, but only God can heal the disease." In all our hopes and plans, we must never forget that it is not man but God that doeth the works. We can offer ourselves to the service of others, but only the Divine Spirit knows what is necessary and how it can best be accomplished. We can all share in a sense of responsibility, but destiny is forever in the keeping of a Divine Love that cannot fail. We are pens in the hand of a ready writer, and we offer our pens gladly but we cannot censor the writing.

Everyone must measure his own capacities and serve according to the talents that he possesses. The more devout and sincere we are, the graver the danger becomes that we shall dream the impossible dream. If we are simply incapable of fulfilling our heart's desire, we should accept a task within our means. With God all things are possible, but with man there are limitations which cannot be escaped or evaded. Spiritual ambitions, though well intended, must be overcome within ourselves if we are resolved to be servants in the house of our Lord. Christ said: "Only God is good," and we may accept these words as meaning that the good in us is God. No one is indispensable, but each in his own way can become a living stone in the house of the Lord. Patience, humility, and perfect faith in the Divine Plan are all remedies against the ills of disillusionment, despondency, and despair.

Only Deity can dream the impossible dream and make it come true. All the great spiritual leaders of mankind have made their contributions and returned to the Father who sent them. These contributions continue to serve mankind; generation after generation their inspirations have led the way to happiness and security. Good deeds are like seeds planted in the earth. They seem to be small, but within each is the power of increase. I saw a table some time ago setting forth in considerable detail what would happen in a family which had an only child. The parents were dedicated to helping this child to mature into an adult human being with strong religious convictions and well established integrity. The descendants of this child were marked by the attributes of this one daughter. Before the influence died out, the moral fabric of more

than a thousand descendants was constructively conditioned to some degree. This is one way in which a seed planted becomes an enduring factor in heredity.

Although no one can do all that he would like to accomplish, no dedicated life is wasted. The trouble is that we would like to do something spectacular. We would like to be the one to change the course of history or lead all the children of earth to the promised land. This very mortal impulse is easily hurt and bruised, leaving us feeling that we are victims of a cruel world. Actually, if the job is too big for us, we awake broken-hearted from the impossible dream. Of course it is possible, as in the story of Peter Ibbetson, to dream true. In fact, all the beautiful visions of the virtuous are true, but we can only build an enduring foundation under a dream by living every day the best we know with malice to none and charity to all.



#### TWELVE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. The value of time.
2. The success of perseverance.
3. The pleasure of working.
4. The dignity of simplicity.
5. The worth of character.
6. The power of kindness.
7. The influence of example.
8. The obligation of duty.
9. The wisdom of economy.
10. The virtue of patience.
11. The improvement of talent.
12. The joy of originating.

—Marshall Field

Be what you wish others to become.

—Amiel's Journal

Hope is the day-star of might!

—Margaret Fuller



## Happenings at Headquarters



# John F. Kennedy University

Whereas it has been the custom of universities over the ages to honor those who have distinguished themselves in Letters, Science, Art or Government, the Regents of John F. Kennedy University take pleasure in celebrating singular achievement, and, by virtue of the authority vested in them by the State of California, confer upon

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the degree of *Doctor of Literature* *honoris causa*  
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*Harold W. Ballou* *Albert M. Zittel*  
Chairman, Board of Regents      President

Manly P. Hall's summer lectures included the following: *Fate and the Philosophy of Destiny*; *Crossing the Bridge to the Blessed Land*; *Armageddon, The War that Ends in Peace*; *Hysteria, Its Cause and Consequence*; *The Golden Chain of Homer that Binds Heaven and Earth*; and *Dante's La Vita Nuova (New Life)*.

Dr. John W. Ervin's lectures included: *New Insights into Spiritual Healing*; *The Conquest of Superstition and Fear*; *The Cure of the "Incurable" Disease*; *Spiritual Healing Here and Abroad*; and

*The Master Work of Manly P. Hall on The Secret Teachings of All Ages.*

Dr. Stephan A. Hoeller presented two lecture series—*New Light from the Ancient East* and *Waking and Sleeping Dreams*—in fourteen evenings.

Roger Weir conducted the series on *Great Spiritual Classics of the Orient—2500 B.C. to 300 A.D.* in thirteen individual lectures.

The society's *Lyceum Programs* hosted by Pearl Thomas presented Cynthia Sesso on calligraphy, Andrew Da Passano on unity in nature, Byron Bird on guides for the earthly pilgrimage, Frank Stanovich who gave two astrological lectures, Patricia Tinker on numerology and Judith Richardson on psychology and the creative artist. Chinese history was covered by the hostess who also described the library exhibit on the *Arts and Artifacts of China*.



Recent gift to the society. A nineteenth century handsome Chinese carved rosewood desk with intricate galleried back, numerous decorated compartments and concealed intricately carved drawers. Pattern of the elaborate top follows temple motif of English market. Overall height is 63". Also early nineteenth century, chair pictured with desk has Chinese straight back, is of rosewood with heavily carved skirt and fan back in deep relief.



The Downey Study Group which celebrated its fifteenth anniversary this year is currently studying Manly Hall's 1944 lecture series on the secret Mystery Schools; they find the series very reassuring during these times of world turmoil. Members from left to right in the front row are: Elda Shippey, Nadine Harriss, Grace Smith\*, Thetis Perkins, and Florence Robertson; in the back row are: Douglas Dunbar\*, Judson Harriss, Meredith Ann Olson\*, Gilbert Olson\* (Study Group leader), Catherann Schrader\*, and Don Pratt\*. Names with asterisks designate those who are still active of the original ten members.

Included in the PRS Library exhibit were examples of printing, stone rubbing, embroidery, and folk arts. Featured were a Ming Dynasty rubbing of the Orchid Pavilion scroll and a life of Confucius.

Saturday lecturers during the summer quarter included Judy Rich on balancing life's energy; Signe Taff who gave three astrological talks; Dr. Irving S. Bengelsdorf who presented a slide-illustrated program on China which was sponsored by Friends of the PRS Library; James Braly, M.D., on nutrition, emotions, and behavior; Gerow Reece and Charles Valle on Oriental creative forms; Roger Weir on esoteric Amerindian mysteries; Terence J. Lewis on experimental focusing; Maritha Pottenger on astrology; and Dr. James Ingebretsen and Dr. Stephan Hoeller who conducted an autumnal equinox festival.



An industrious citizen, who lives not over a thousand miles from town, arose a few mornings ago, while the festive lark was still snoring, and, with a tin bucket under his arm, went to the barn to milk the family cow. It was dark and rainy, and in fumbling about for old Brindle he got into the wrong pew with the off-mule of his wagon team. He can't remember now which side of the roof he went out at, but his recollection of alighting on the picket fence is very vivid. He expects the bucket down in a few days.

—Samuel S. Cox

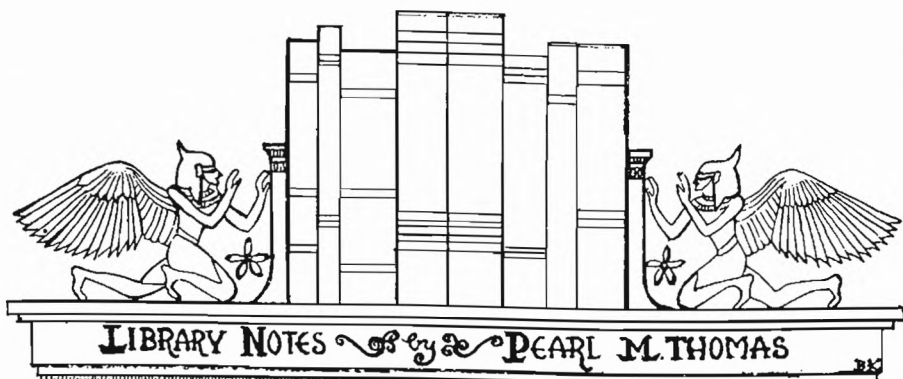
Marriages by advertisement are not uncommon, but the following, published by a French journal, has the air of novelty: "Matrimony—A collector of postage-stamps, possessing 12,544 specimens, desires to contract a marriage with a young lady, also a collector, who has the blue Mauritius penny stamp of 1847. No others need apply."

—*Modern Eloquence*, 1900

**Stoic.** This comes from a Greek word signifying a *porch*, in allusion to the *portico* where Zeno, the founder of the *Stoics*, and his successors taught their disciples the peculiar tenets of the Stoical philosophy.

—Eliezer Edwards, *Words, Facts, and Phrases*





## OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE FROM CHINA

It is most unfortunate that the West has almost a total lack of knowledge of the history of the Orient. Western culture has taught its young people either in the classroom or through the various Western religions the heritage we have received from Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. Little has been said about our cultural background from the "flowery kingdom" of China. And yet most of the cultural advantages we have achieved stemmed first from China.

The Egyptians invented papyrus, made by crossing layer upon layer of the leaves of the papyrus plant. But papyrus was never a very satisfactory medium for the preservation of ideas because it was too brittle and extremes of temperature play havoc with it. Much later vellum became popular in the West but, while it is probably the most beautiful of writing surfaces, its price has always remained prohibitive and few books would have been written if other writing materials had not been invented.

In the year 105 A.D. a Chinese attached to the imperial court conceived the idea of making paper out of rags. The idea caught on quickly in all Oriental areas, and soon (comparatively speaking) found its way to the Arabic world where in 751 A.D. paper was manufactured at Samarkand. Traveling westward, the art of

papermaking reached Syria, Egypt, and Morocco; and entered Spain where there are records of its manufacture in the year 1150 A.D. When the great *Chronicle* was published in Nuremberg in 1493, there was a large paper manufacturing plant just outside the city walls which had been producing paper for over one hundred years.

It was in China that ink was first employed. The Egyptians had a sort of ink which they used, but it is Chinese ink which has come down to us in the forms we know today. What we call india ink is really Chinese and was first employed about 400 A.D. This was made from soot, or lampblack, mixed with water; and was so impervious to dampness that early examples found after hundreds of years of being buried in river beds are still easily readable. Although red ink made from sulphite of mercury was the first discovered, once black ink was known, the red ink became the personal property of royalty and was used for edicts and other forms of official documents.

The requisite for the production of books in quantity is printing. The Chinese again took a significant lead. We must take into consideration that processes moved slowly in those days when travel was exceedingly perilous, and ideas took considerable time to get from place to place. One of the earliest forms of printing used by the Chinese was stone rubbing. Thin sheets of moistened paper were attached to a stone tablet or monument which contained significant literature of the time. By first pressing the paper against the inscription on the stone tablet and then inking the outer surface of the paper, exact copies could be reproduced in black and white—the white areas being the indented parts where the ink had not penetrated.

The Chinese early started using seals to identify themselves, and these in time took on more significance. The Chinese word for seal is still the same as the word for print. Gradually the development of block printing came into being. This made use of a single block of wood carved out for each page. Nine of the major Chinese classics were printed between 932 and 953 A.D. Block printing enjoyed a period of about seventy-five years of favor in Europe at the time of Savonarola (1452-98) who had his sermons published in this man-

ner. This was more than five hundred years after the first Oriental usage.

We have had the tendency to give Gutenberg the credit for inventing printing, but it is most unlikely that he learned his secrets from the Chinese who were the first to make use of movable type which Gutenberg later worked with so admirably. The Chinese language which has no alphabet and is made up of some forty thousand separate ideograms was too complicated for the use of movable type to gain popularity. The process moved into Korea where the enterprising people there hit upon the idea of metal for the type instead of wood or clay as used in the past. From there the printing process moved to Japan and then back to China. By this time Gutenberg and others in Europe were displaying remarkable advances in the production of artistic books made with movable type. Those first printed books of Europe showed such skill and refinement that they could easily be suspected of being handwritten by famous calligraphers. Printing is one great art that started at the top and has proceeded downward. Books of the caliber of the Gutenberg Bibles were beautiful to behold and have stood the test of time while modern books with their synthetic materials will not endure.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, China and Rome, the two most powerful areas of the world, carried on an extensive exchange of commodities. A caravan route, extending over six thousand miles and beginning in Peking, crossed Chinese Turkestan, Persia, and Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean Sea where ships carried cargo to Rome and other destinations to serve those wishing the fabulous wares of far-off Cathay. Marco Polo used this perilous route which became well-known as the Silk Road (opened 140 A.D.), for it was silk that was China's first gift to the West. It appears that beautiful silks were produced as early as the second century B.C., and indications seem to imply that silk was known in prehistoric times. One of the first names the Western world gave to China was *Seres* which literally means silk.

An early concept about silk was that it grew on trees; but whatever its source, it became a welcome commodity and was highly

revered by the aristocrats of the ancient world. It has been said that part of the downfall of Rome (476 A.D.) was due to the great demand for this gossamer fabric which wealthy Roman women considered essential for their raiment. The story is told of several traveling monks who were journeying from China into Constantinople about the middle of the sixth century A.D. and found silk already in use there. The people however were unaware of its source. The monks tried to explain the process of developing silk from the cocoons of the silk worm. As the Chinese had zealously guarded the method of producing silk, these monks were asked by the Byzantine emperor to return to China and to smuggle out some of these silk worm eggs. After several years, they returned from China with enough worms secreted in bamboo canes which they carried with them. This became the nucleus of the silk industry in Persia.

The early patterns for silk in China represented clouds, waves, symbolical animals and birds, and were highly stylized. Many of these designs are still used today in the modern silks of Chinese origin.

Late in the thirteenth century, the daring young Marco Polo set out from Venice with his father and uncle for points unknown to find a trade route to the riches of the Orient. They had no real comprehension of the vast empire they would encounter; but when they located Cathay, or China, which was then under the rulership of Kublai Khan, it was so lucrative in precious gems, porcelains, and textiles that they extended their visit to better than twenty years. They had intended to be gone only a year or two. What Marco Polo admired the most were the large cities, the vast bridges (his descriptions of these could well be exaggerated), money made of paper that was honored everywhere, and the luxuries of the court. Near-contemporaries mentioned other things that seem to have passed the notice of Marco Polo—things like the Great Wall of China, the binding of women's feet, printing, ink, or tea. All of these were at that time very much in evidence.

When Marco Polo returned to Venice in 1295 his relatives found it difficult to believe that he was still alive. After some convincing,

the family clan gathered to celebrate the return of the long lost travelers. At the dinner, young Polo appeared first in crimson satin garments made in the Mongol fashion. During the course of the meal, he left the room momentarily only to return exquisitely gowned in long red damask robes. After the meal had been served, the robes were cut up and distributed among the servants and some of the guests. The servants were all dismissed for the night and the travelers made another change of garments—this time into Venetian attire, and brought into the living quarters the ragged, dirty clothes they had been wearing when they first arrived. These they promptly tore open revealing exquisite diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, pearls, textiles, and even porcelains. There was more than enough wealth contained therein to very adequately take care of all their financial needs for years to come.

With the aid of a ghostwriter, Marco Polo wrote a travel book which related the splendors of the Orient, but it was such a glowing account that few were willing to accept it as truth. When Marco Polo was seventy and dying, his friends earnestly besought him to recant for the sake of his soul so that his lies would not disturb his afterlife. This he refused to do because there was so much more of wonder in China that he could have told them, but they were not prepared to believe. There were many, however, through the long years who accepted his statements. It is said that the book had a great influence on Christopher Columbus a couple of hundred years later after printing had been discovered.

It is believed too that Polo brought the first porcelain that Europeans had seen, giving kings and alchemists the desire to imitate this beautiful ware. In the year 1709 a true porcelain was first produced in Europe, but this was fourteen hundred years later than the first porcelains of China. When we think of porcelain we invariably call it *china*, seldom realizing that it represents the country of its origin. In the Orient, many items were made of porcelain (a combination of a white clay called kaolin and petuntse, a mineral somewhat like kaolin but with a glassy characteristic): bowls, plates, cups, vases, figurines. The art of making porcelain has reached greater heights in China than anywhere else in the world.

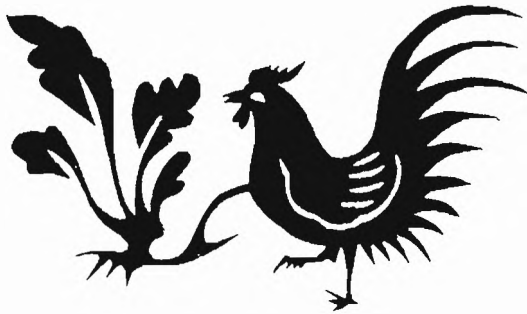
In this area of expertise, there can be no doubt that the land known as China was well in advance of Europe.

It seems strange that Marco Polo should have failed to mention tea because it was well-known in China at the time of his visit. However in its earliest form, it was used more for medicinal purposes than as a beverage for daily consumption. The first mention of tea as a beverage was in a post-Han dynasty (about 270 A.D.) when the elite indulged in this nonalcoholic drink. It was several centuries before it became a popular drink because many were suspicious of the strange beverage. When interest in tea became popular, it spread to Tibet, Korea, and Japan. China was the one source for tea until the middle of the nineteenth century when enterprising Europeans started planting it in India and Ceylon. By the seventeenth century, tea had gradually become perhaps the most desired commodity from China. Witness the important role it played in American history at the famous Boston Tea Party.

Art is yet another aspect of the treasures the world has received from China. Much of Chinese art is highly symbolical, and to be understood it is necessary to comprehend the underlying principles. Sesshu, considered by most Japanese to be one of their greatest art geniuses, received the greater part of his artistic insight while residing in China, so consequently his painting took on strong Chinese characteristics.

The Chinese have for centuries expressed their love of the artistic in their weaving and embroidery. *K'o-ssu* weaving, done by the tapestry method, is strictly Chinese in origin and began in the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907). However, there are indications that some of the Chinese "stuffs" found by Sir Aurel Stein (in 1914) in Chinese Turkestan could be dated from the first century B.C.

Beautiful examples of Chinese embroidery that are in the PRS collection (and have recently been on exhibition) never fail to draw fascinating attention, particularly from women who are familiar with the embroidery of the West which is quite uncomplicated in comparison to the intricate stitches used in the Chinese imperial robes of state. Many of these robes would take as much as a year of continuous work before they were completed.



Chinese cut-outs occupied much of the time of simple farm women who engaged in this art form during the long winters when field work was out of the question. With the simplest kinds of tools—scissors and knives primarily, they could create from stencils absolutely beautiful designs which were sold in the large cities. Different provinces produced different types of designs. We often see these reproduced on greeting cards, and again we have an excellent collection of cut-outs at PRS.

“Mandarin Squares,” about twelve inches square, were worn on the front and back of garments to indicate the rank of the individual. Many of them were woven in the k’o-ssu manner with very elaborate designs showing dragons—those with five claws were reserved only for the imperial house. Other significant designs included phoenixes, four-footed animals, and tortoises. We have in the PRS Library a definitive handbook called *Decorative Motives of Oriental Art* (London: 1927) by Katherine Ball, which through pictures and text describes most fully the significance of the creatures used in Oriental art.

Incidentally the unicorn, or *ch’i-lin*, which today has suddenly taken on considerable interest (largely because there seem to be some in existence) is fully described in the Katherine Ball book. She claims that its appearance in the world is a happy omen. There was a story told that the mother of Confucius encountered a *ch’i-lin* in the forest before the birth of her child and that in its mouth was a jade tablet which told her that her son would one day be a great leader of men. She tied a ribbon around the unicorn’s horn before it returned into the depths of the forest. Then many



The *ch'i-lin*, or unicorn. From a painting by Kakunen.

years later, hunters slew a strange creature and brought it to Confucius who, on seeing a tattered ribbon still on the lone horn, realized that the time for his decease had come. The significance of the unicorn has always been that it foretells the advent of a great person who will become a benefactor of mankind.

Space does not allow for more than a casual mention of other areas where the Chinese have made significant contributions. In the field of medicine, acupuncture has been practiced in China for over three thousand years. The mariner's compass, which was probably invented by the Chinese, is believed to have been the forerunner of wireless telegraphy. Alchemy and astronomy were major interests of the early Chinese. Annual almanacs were used extensively. Gunpowder, probably started in China, had its reason for being simply as a noisemaking device for festivals. Coal was known there since the fourth century A.D., and zinc was used in the production of coins since the eleventh century.

In the early gardens of China were found many plants, flowers, and trees which are very common in the West today. Oranges and lemons were cultivated in southern China in early days as well as the peach and the apricot. Among flowers we have from there are azaleas, camellias, chrysanthemums, China asters, and peonies. When it comes to the animal world, we should not overlook the



lovable panda bears who seem to prefer their native land over all others.

It could be that China's greatest claim to fame is in the realm of her philosophies; for the influence of her great thinkers has permeated the pages of history, literature, and moral thought for many centuries.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) still holds a place of preeminence in spite of the People's Republic of China which has tried to impress on the population that his philosophy was just so much "Confucian mud." It would seem however that this attitude is fast losing face. Confucius attempted to build up government on the personal integrity of the "superior man." If the family is good, then the state will be good. Much is owed to the sound philosophy of this great man whose editing and writing of the classics embodied the foundation for Chinese moral, social, and political life.

Lao-tzu, a contemporary of Confucius, developed a philosophy for the Chinese which was quite dissimilar to that expounded by Confucius. This was called Taoism, or the Way, and today finds much favor in Western civilizations.

Buddha, the third great teacher (6th century B.C.) could not claim China as his place of birth, but it was only when his philosophy moved to China that it gained prestige. The vehicle which came to be recognized as Mahayana Buddhism in China constituted a philosophy that was beautiful, uplifting, and encouraging. The ideal of the Western Paradise as expressed in Mahayana Buddhism was the form which eventually found its way to Japan.

We have in the PRS Library several representations of the three great teachers showing them as "Vinegar Tasters," and each in his own way reveals his basic philosophy in his reaction to the taste of the vinegar: Buddha said it was bitter (and early Buddhism was deeply involved with the idea that suffering was part of life); Confucius, ever consistent, said it was sour; and loveable Lao-tzu declared it to be sweet!

These three philosophies could be, and usually were, involved with the general populace; and generally speaking were more or

less compatible with one another. The Oriental love of symbolism relates Confucius to the unicorn, or ch'i-lin, and in the plant world to the bamboo. Lao-tzu was associated with the dragon and the plum tree (his real name was Li which means plum), and Buddha was assigned to the phoenix and the pine tree.

Mencius, born one hundred and fifty years after Confucius, was perhaps his greatest exponent; and like his predecessor he worked long and arduously to encourage rulers to abide by a basic philosophy which would grant peace and prosperity to the country. Like Confucius, he made little headway in his own time.

The Chinese are a proud people—proud of their culture, of their vast heritage, and of their continuity through the ages. They have one of the largest countries in the world with a population which is expected to reach over one billion in the early 1980s.

These few notes are not intended to belittle other great civilizations. There is a right time and a right place for everything. Early inventions took long to accomplish—ideas moved slowly and it would seem that they arose independently in various parts of the world. Egypt had a form of ink and so did China, but they were unrelated to one another. Printing developed in Europe with apparently no awareness of the art as practiced hundreds of years before in the Orient.

In these days of rapid transportation, of television and radio, of books and magazines, we must be aware of the needs of others as well as of our own. We must come to know down deep in our hearts and minds that we are one humanity seeking a common understanding.



Nature has given to men one tongue, but two ears, that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak.

—Roman Saying

If you do not realize the state of the ant under your foot, know that it resembles your own condition under the foot of an elephant.

—Persian Saying



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Those interested in contacting the leaders of the PRS Local Study Groups in various communities are invited to contact our Headquarters for information concerning such groups nearest to them. If you would like to organize a study group in your vicinity, the Society will be happy to provide you with an outline of procedure and other useful suggestions.

**PRS Headquarters Discussion Group:**

**MRS. IRENE BIRD—3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027**

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