

Rays from the Rose Cross



"A Sane Mind, A Soft Heart, A Sound Body"

November/December 1998—\$5.00

**PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL
MAGIC, WHITE AND BLACK
A PROPHETIC VISION
I HEARD THE CALL OF A SERAPH**

A CHRISTIAN ESOTERIC MAGAZINE





Above: *Benediction*, Harwood-Matthews, Courtesy of the Temple Guild. Front cover: *Poinsettias among white flowers*, Vintage, Seattle Support Group
Back cover: *The Nativity*, Limbourg Brothers, *The Très Riches Heures* of Jean, Duke of Berry, 1409-1415, Musée Condé, Chantilly, Planet Art

Rays from the Rose Cross

A Christian Esoteric Magazine

Established by
Max Heindel
June 1913

Volume 90, No. 6

November/December—1998

USPS 471080—ISSN 0744-432X

Subscription in U.S.: one year, \$20.00; two years, \$38.00. **Your Zip Code must contain nine (9) digits (five + four).** California residents add applicable sales tax to all orders. Canada, Mexico and all other countries: one year, \$25.00; two years, \$43.00. Prices are in U.S. dollars and include postage. Foreign subscribers: please check current exchange rates for proper amount. Current single copies: \$5.00. Second class postage paid at Oceanside, CA, 92049-0713, U.S.A. Postmaster: Send address change to *Rays from the Rose Cross*, P.O. Box 713, Oceanside, CA 92049-0713, U.S.A.

Writers of published articles are alone responsible for statements made. Typed manuscripts are welcomed for all departments of the *Rays*.

Issued bi-monthly. Change of address must reach us by the 1st of month preceding any issue. Address ALL correspondence and make ALL remittances payable to The Rosicrucian Fellowship.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY
THE ROSICRUCIAN FELLOWSHIP

P.O. Box 713, Oceanside, California
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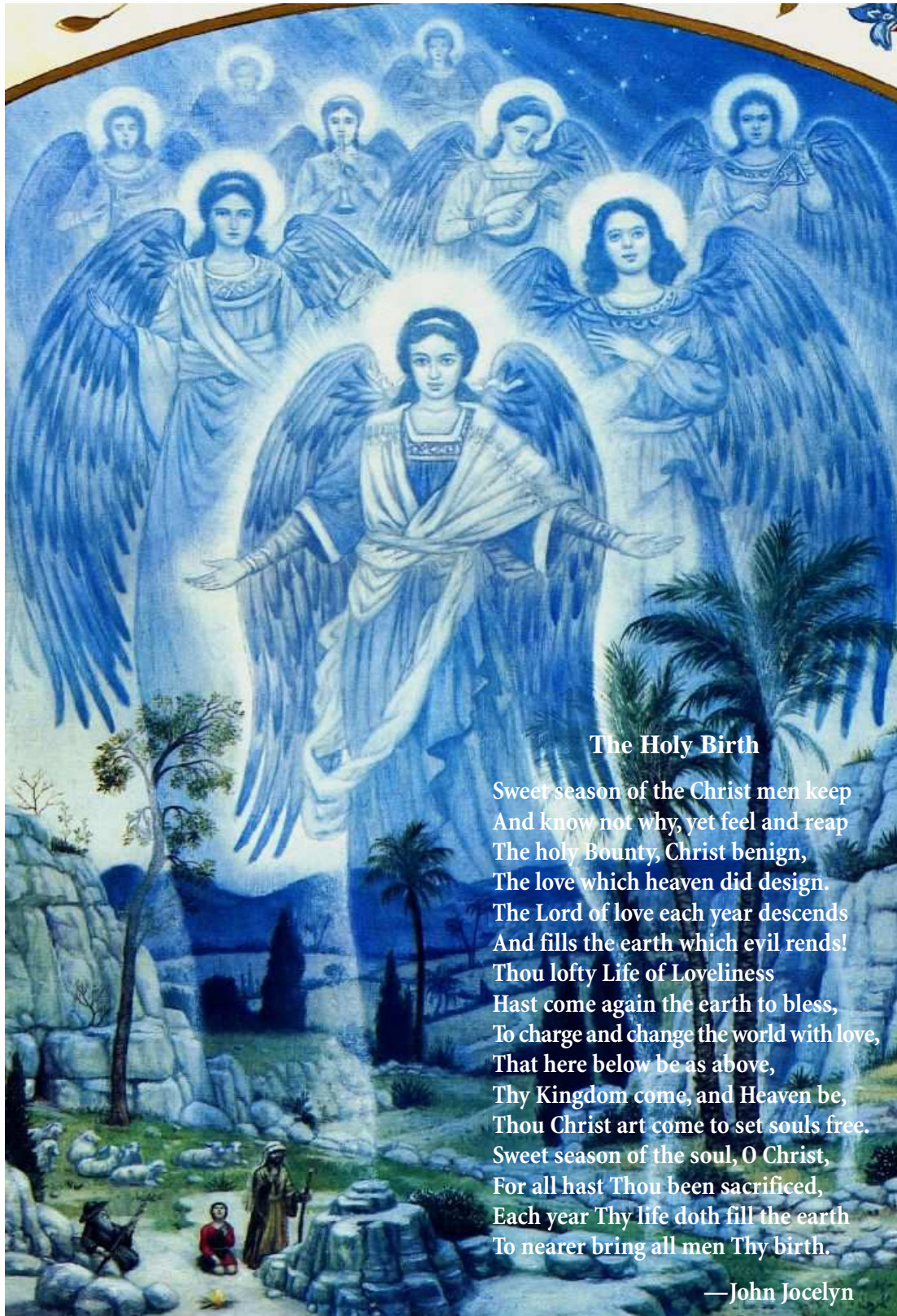
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*“A Sane Mind,
A Soft Heart,
A Sound Body”*

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FEATURE



From *The Nativity* by Ruth Sanderson. Copyright © 1993 by Ruth Sanderson. By permission of Little, Brown and Company

The Holy Birth

Sweet season of the Christ men keep
And know not why, yet feel and reap
The holy Bounty, Christ benign,
The love which heaven did design.
The Lord of love each year descends
And fills the earth which evil rends!
Thou lofty Life of Loveliness
Hast come again the earth to bless,
To charge and change the world with love,
That here below be as above,
Thy Kingdom come, and Heaven be,
Thou Christ art come to set souls free.
Sweet season of the soul, O Christ,
For all hast Thou been sacrificed,
Each year Thy life doth fill the earth
To nearer bring all men Thy birth.

—John Jocelyn

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”—Luke 2:13

Toward a World Christmas



Fresco (detail), Journey of the Magi, Benozzo Gozzoli (c.1421-1487), Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Florence

THE WINTER SOLSTICE marks the time of planetary renewal. Heavenly forces began descending to earth in midsummer. They entered the earth's sphere at autumn and became maximally condensed, maximally potent, when the sun entered the zodiacal sign of Capricorn. The potentiality for renewed being, for future becoming, begins to build at this time and to work outward from the deepest recesses of the earth's existence. Terrestrially, we refer to the life forces alight in the seed of all being, forces gifted to us from the spirit worlds. The material effect of these renewed forces in the plant world will be unfolded and first revealed as nibs and nodes of lifeforms breaking through the earth's envelope in spring and reaching for the meridian light of the summer sun.

Mankind experiences these same terrestrial rhythms of expansion and contraction in the life of his soul. During wintertime the heady high-flying thoughts of summer have come to roost, as it were, have descended to earth and become condensed as seed ideas. But they shall remain stillborn if they are not consciously seized upon by the will and permeated by the warmth of the feeling nature. Left untended, they will be but shells, earthbound notions, if the mind does not imaginatively embrace them and the heart permeate them with soul-filled ardor. For we understand that whereas ancient contact with the invisible worlds was a gift from the Gods, not due to man's own actions but

the donation of an involuntary clairvoyance, on the eve of the third Christian millennium what man would know of and become in the higher worlds requires a voluntary effort, deliberate choosing, willed thinking and creative feeling.

In this light, the "good will" proclaimed by the angels above the birth place of the infant Jesus describes the voluntary activities of the aspirant to Christ consciousness, made fertile by the Christ impulse and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Since Golgotha, Christ has entered human evolution. At wintertime He is most present in the Earth sphere, most available to help regenerate human thinking and enkindle human feeling through the enhanced ability to good willing, through the voluntary practice of soul exercises, whereby spiritual renewal can enter its germinative phase, whose flower shall bear fruit in the summer of spirit-directed becoming.

We envision and prepare for a worldwide Christmas, a collective rebirth of spiritual life that will break through the opaque shell of material consciousness and discern the star of Bethlehem, the planetary heart of love, the solar light of the cosmic Christ indwelling our earth, securing it for His and our heavenly Father. □

Peace on Earth, Good Will

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

S O DOES LUKE describe the opening of the heavens unto shepherds who were watching over their flock on Nativity night. The birth of the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world, was made known to a few simple shepherds, perhaps still endowed with involuntary clairvoyance. Anyone else? Matthew mentions three wise men, seers adept in reading the stellar script. Three foreigners and several humble shepherds are the only human witnesses to the birth of the most advanced Individuality in earth evolution, the future bearer of the Christ.

Should we be surprised by the anonymity of this occurrence? Somehow, it seems strangely fitting, in character with the Person and mission of Christ Jesus. The circumstances of His birth prefigure and are of like nature with the tone of His life, for He came not to overwhelm with power and glory but to bear the sins of the world, to know the abject state of human helplessness—He, the Son of God. This is ever a scandal for the material mind. Indeed, as the 16th century Spanish clairvoyant Mary of Agreda observes, by the very humbleness of its setting, Jesus’ birth went unnoticed by the infernal powers. It was inconceivable



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Oil and gold leaf on wood, Sister Marie Paul. Adapted from original with permission of the Printery House

The Nativity

This icon, painted in the traditional manner, is a pictorial composite of events relating to the birth of Jesus, including: his birth in a cave; the journey of the wise men; the angelic annunciation to the shepherds; Joseph’s temptation by the devil, disguised as an old shepherd, to disbelieve the virgin birth; and the washing of the infant by two midwives brought by Joseph to attend Mary. Some of these details are described in the apocryphal Gospels of pseudo-Matthew and pseudo-James.

that the Messiah, whose advent they surmised and whose mission they were resolved to oppose, would not be born as highest royalty and His name trumpeted far and wide. Nor, for the same reason, was the Messiah’s mother known to the Prince of Darkness. She was too pure and selfless to be

detected. Also, we are told, the spiritual effulgence of Mary and Jesus was cloaked by angels, even as the twelve Elder Brothers shield or form a sheath for the presence of Christian Rose Cross.

Consider the extraordinary conditions under which Jesus is born. His mother, great with child, nevertheless consents to travel by donkey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, where Joseph intends to pay tax to Caesar. What pregnant woman today would undertake such a journey? Nor, when Mary is about to deliver, can Joseph find lodging in the town but is compelled to seek shelter in a sheep's cave.

Isaiah's prophecy hits the mark: "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Jesus is rejected even before He is born. Is chance operating here, or was this incident foreseen and intended? Later, Christ Jesus remarked that the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head. Truly, there is no place in the material world where the divine Spirit is at home. A bed in an inn or an animal's eating trough (manger) may serve equally well to hold a baby, since a mother's love is its real cradle.

Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes, a practice common in His day, meant to insure regular growth of the limbs, as splints are now used to straighten broken bones. But for the Spirit this enclosure in tight strips of cloth was equivalent to being mummified. It prefigures the absolute restriction of the cross and is a dress rehearsal for the burial shroud.

Regarding the anonymity of Jesus' birth, we additionally note that the ox and ass depicted in iconic orthodox and medieval Nativity scenes are also witnesses of this pivotal event, fulfilling another prophecy by Isaiah (1:3) "The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand." This poignant passage has its cosmic echo in the prologue to John's Gospel: "And the light

shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.... He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own and his own received him not." (1:5, 10-11)

Precisely because Christ is not of this world did he require Jesus' body to be "born" into. Though he had nothing less than a cosmic mission to fulfill, and though he endured agony, He lived in and left the earth plane quietly, forging the drama that the worldly self will ever improvise, as expressed in the phrase "making a scene." He, without

Whom the world would have no history, is not recorded in so-called objective history.

He was born in a cave and laid on straw. The King of the Heavens, declining an earthly throne, was mounted on a cross. Refusing the crown of kings, He was crowned with thorns. He rejected the spoils of power that spoil the soul. He spurned the physical lures that are cold comfort

to the immaterial spirit. Bruce Barton's popular account of the life of Christ Jesus might more correctly be titled *The Man Who Would not be King*.

The Logos, the creative Principle by which all that is was "spoken" into existence from mental archetype—as in "Let there be"—this same Logos, Christ, lived and died as a human. No more humbling thought can be conceived, unless it be that God the Father so loved the world that He gave Himself through His Son to sinning humanity to be crucified. He showed His inordinate good will, God's will, by infusing His divine Being in human being. While Lucifer would be God, God freely abdicated His throne of light to adopt mortal consciousness. While Lucifer is filled with a vanity of divine illusions, Christ emptied Himself of real Divinity.

The Redeemer, the incarnation of God's goodness, took human form to vanquish death. As the glory of celestial hosts shone about the shepherds on Holy Night, in their hearts resounded the words,



Botticelli, detail from *The Nativity*, Florentine Art

“the Godhead is revealing Himself in the heights of the Cosmos, and peace will spring forth on earth in humans who are of good will.”

How will this happen? Through the Christ impulse vouchsafed the world in the total Self-giving of the Lord of Love. This giving was outwardly initiated at the first Christmas. It was advanced with the Christing of Jesus by John’s Jordan baptism, and was furthered by the hallowing of the earth through Christ’s shed blood and His birth into the earth sphere, as His planetary body, which, since Golgotha, the Resurrection, and Ascension, is annually revived, as the sun’s Regent descends from the throne of His heavenly Father into the earth, reaching its heart each Christmas.

What can we learn from the Nativity, from that event which we now celebrate as Christmas? Clement, a disciple of Peter, asks in his first epistle to the Corinthians, “If the Lord thus humbled himself, what should we do who are brought by him under the yoke of his grace?” (8:16) The continuous denial of all outward claims to privilege and personal rights by the world’s Creator surely has something to teach our self-indulgent age.

Not only is this the midnight time of the year; there is ample reason to regard the present time as the dark night of our civilization’s soul, a time when materialism—the breathless, unappeasable fascination with things: getting and spending, tracking down and trashing, flitting at full tilt from novelty to high-tech novelty—dazes the senses and deludes the Spirit. The Christ Child is ever born anew at this time of year, but is the inn of worldly consciousness still too full of virtual images to discern and receive a transforming truth? Does the daily fusillade of physical perceptions blind us to the Christ star, which can guide us to the good that has no price, to the peace that no dividend of earthly investment can secure?

Why was Christ “born” in an earthly body? He tells Pilate, “For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth,” the very truth which He incarnates in Jesus, for He says, “I am the truth.” That Pilate needs to ask, “What is truth?” shows his ignorance of the Spirit of truth. Distance in time and space permit us to patronize Pilate. But do we know the truth? It can



From the *Très Riches Heures* of Jean, Duke of Berry, Bibliothèque, Musée Condé, Chantilly

The Annunciation to the Shepherds

Choirng Angels appear in the heavens above marveling shepherds. Bethlehem becomes a medieval French castle and the spring suggests the One Who gives the waters of eternal life.

set us free. Are we freeing ourselves? Is the pursuit of things freeing? Is contention with our neighbor freeing? Is seeking special favor, or, disingenuously, seeking merely what we think is due us (and we’ll die trying to get it!), is this freeing?

The incarnation of Truth didn’t make Truth visible. It was still occult, but remarkable effects were produced by an apparently unremarkable human, by Him who was but a Nazarene, whose brothers and parents were known. Be it Bethlehem or Jordan, the message is the same: Bring occult truth to birth here in the physical world. Occult truth is eminently practical because it is in possession of the larger picture. If the only universe we know is material, we know but a cemetery and humanity’s future is grave indeed. We do not really know the Teachings until we bring them to bear on daily

circumstance, because their value and relevance for daily living demand it and are confirmed in the impulse this knowledge gives to enlightened action. Truth is dynamic, living. Brainbound concepts are abstract and static. Our work is to enliven these concepts with genuine warmth and good will, to transform the unleavened bread of text and terms into the living nutriment of spiritual understanding and healing deeds.

As the man Jesus was born in a cave, subterranean earth, so was the Archangel Christ born in the cave of Jesus' body. In the Garden of Gethsemane and then on the Cross, He plumbed the world of physical being to its uttermost depths, stripping death of its power over the human Spirit. By this victory Christ was able to enter the earth through the blood shed by His Jesus-body. He broke down the doors of Hades and freed the spiritually benumbed souls in limbo.

While His incarnation in human sheathes created for Christ the most restricting kind of spiritual winter, shearing the flower of His glory by the ice of flesh, the incommensurable Word compressed in the vise of human physical form, for humanity the advent of the solar Christ brought the dawn of a spiritual springtime that had not been known since prelapsarian Eden.

The heavenly host that appeared to the shepherds knew of Christ Jesus' mission. In great jubilation they glorified God as His love was embodied in the physical being of the Jesus child. What else did the angels proclaim? "On earth peace, good will toward men." Was this a prayer, a blessing, or a prediction? It was the annunciation of an aborning reality. The solar Prince of Peace had touched down on earth. At an earlier time, the apostate angels, the hosts of Lucifer, had been cast out of heaven by the archangel Michael. Those once supernal angels became infernal demons. And they resolved to wreck God's plans for His newly formed humans. That the Creator should

favor these callow creatures over Lucifer rankled the Proud One. His strategy was to foment ill will and war amongst the children of earth.

There will be no peace on earth as long as humans regard themselves as self-existing entities, as implied in the concept of the self-made man, man created in his own image—which is what? Absent God, man has no image but of chaos. No God, no man. Giving glory to God in the highest—this is Mary's way, as natural and necessary to her as breathing: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Would she elect amniocentesis, ultrasound, or fetal biopsy to make sure God's miraculous work was up to snuff? Not only "glory to God" but "Behold the

handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me as thou wouldst." Isn't this luminous obedience the substance of peace, the same substance that was fleshed in her womb as Jesus?

But what of the sword of the Word, doesn't it disturb the peace? Yes, the shallow peace of the status quo that caters to selfish interests and is maintained by divisive law. This sword sunders that individuals may join in a

higher and more inclusive order. It cuts through loveless legalisms and liberates the life of the Spirit to freely work toward global amity.

Peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives. Not Jerusalem, the old City of Peace that kills its prophets, but New Jerusalem, the New City of Peace, the etheric kingdom, where the lamb shall lie down with the lion. It is peace on earth, but a new earth, for the old earth shall be passed away, by virtue of God's will becoming man's whole desire and goal, becoming his highest good (summum bonum).

When the Kingdom of God is with men as manifest reality, then shall each be a Melchizadec, a king of Salem or Peace, in whom worldly and spiritual concerns are wholly integrated and harmonized.

Peace I give unto you, not as the world gives give I unto you. What kind of giving is this? Permanent, certain, unconditional. Not in effect one day and canceled the next. Not the paper peace

***While
will works in many
ways, none is more vital
than the committed con-
sciousness that does not
desert the living moment
for fixed regrets, past
glories, or future
fears.***



Tempera on panel, 1490. Fiorenzo di Lorenzo. Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia

Adoration of the Magi

of political treaties, or the peace of good intentions that are not good enough because the intenders are yet double-minded and not wholly about their heavenly Father's business.

The contemplation of Self that is especially appropriate at this time of year, in resonance with the Earth's withdrawal from the universe in maximum contraction, is not a navel-gazing. It is a penetration, through willed, heart-infused thinking, into the inner nature of man; it is vividly experiencing the action of cosmic forces on the formation, development, and future becoming of the Spirit of man.

There can be no peace on earth if we are not present now. While will works in many ways, none is more vital than the committed consciousness that does not desert the living moment for fixed regrets, past glories, or future fears. If we have not put

grievances and disruptive memories to rest, if we have not learned to live free from worry about what the future may bring, real peace is impossible. Peace on earth is peace in one's mind, being at peace with one's self. Peace on earth is a consciousness ordered and founded on the conviction and knowledge that God ceaselessly surrounds and sustains us. Peace grows in the soil of patience, in the patient acceptance of whatever is or seems to be. We can accept, even embrace, whatever is because we are living in God's creation. It is He that made us and not we ourselves. Acceptance, then, is based on knowledge, and *applied* knowledge, as Max Heindel says, is the only salvation.

Christmas season is the time for Spirit quickening, for the awakening in heightened awareness of spiritual being. It is only secondarily a hearkening back, a memorial festival. The historical Bethlehem Nativity, the birth of Jesus, and the Jordan nativity, the entrance of Christ into the Jesus body thirty years later, that double Christmas makes possible the real Christ birth in the individual soul. God in Christ now most clearly seeks a home in us, however outwardly homely it may appear. Now is the time for a sunrise of the Spirit in the darkness of the

material world—a world lit by the sham brilliance of strobe lights and strip lights and spot lights; an electrified midnight world that would dazzle us into a capitulation to the eye's homeless spaces, where nativity can be but the the ephemeral progeny of our senses, the fireworks and shooting stars of physical consciousness.

The light we seek is not found by pushing darkness back to the borders of consciousness, where fear holds it at bay as a dam holds back water. The light we seek lies in, through, and beyond all that darkness can muster as a barrier to our efforts. Whatever our personal Gethsemane, our resolve stays intact. We persevere. We drain the cup of its bitter contents, not as martyrs but as faith-fortified servants of an unfathomable Mercy.

Christ cannot be born in us unless something in us dies. Christ was born into the world to make vital connection with a planet and its people who were careering away from the orbit of God's

intention for them. Humanity follows Christ, takes Him to its soul, as did Mary, by dying to the world of seeming. The cross or its equivalent is the womb of Christian birth.

The *Arabian Gospel of the Childhood of Jesus* speaks of the supreme Christmas gift, the Gift of God in Christ Jesus:

He it is to whom our humble prayer rises.
He gave us substance and life; he brought us to light from our mother's womb. For our salvation he chose the human body as a sheath. He made us free and wishes to envelop us with eternal love. He wishes to prove his goodness to us in openness, in good work, in creativity, in good will. To him belong all revelation, all sense of the good, all world power and all kingdoms, now and in all cycles of time.

A modern initiate refers to the Nativity in the following words, which may well serve as a subject for fruitful meditation:

At the turning-point of Time
The Spirit-Light of the World
Entered the stream of Earthly Being.
Darkness of Night had held its sway;
Day-radiant Light
Poured into the souls of men;
Light that gives Warmth
To simple Shepherds' Hearts,
Light that enlightens
The wise Heads of Kings.

O Light Divine, O Sun of Christ!
Warm Thou Our Hearts
Enlighten Thou Our Heads,
That good may become
What from our Hearts we would found
And from our Heads direct
With single purpose.

As the Christ light is born on the darkest night of the year, may we use this time and meditate on this fact to seek in our own densest darkness the star of our new being, the Christ Being. Let us faithfully journey toward the light of renewal in these midnight times by bringing spiritual understanding



Fresco, 59 x 35 in., Fra Angelico (c. 1400-1455) and workshop, Monastery of San Marco, Florence

The Nativity

One of thirty-two scenes in the corridors and cells of Fra Angelico's monastery, from the Annunciation to the Coronation of Mary, "the series embraces the whole catena of the mystery of Christ's love."

to all our earthly endeavors, so that we may hasten a Christmas awakening, when the skies of world understanding will open and humanity will know peace throughout the planet and will be able to will the good by knowing the truth that radiates from the everpresent Christ.

We, as modern Magi, journeying in material darkness, seek the Light of the World, the Light that lighteth every man. We are led by this Light, at times clear and bright, at times dim or seemingly disappeared. And we shall come at length, in time, to the holy now, to the cave of our heart where the Christ Child even now is, to behold and adore and glorify God the Father for the love that has Personed in us, a love and a light which shall be with us, even until the end of the days of earth. □

—C.W.

Reincarnation—A Rational New Chance

THE DEAD HAVE never died. Death is merely God's giving us a new chance; the bestowing of a new garment on us that we may continue unfoldment and experience-getting, which evokes education and fits us for further ripening. It was a poor and impudent thing for our religious predecessors to call it a "curse" for some trivial apple incident, quite as shallow in imagination as to declare physical man "made in the image and likeness" of Deity. Did you ever think of the absurdity of Divinity looking like the physical (not spiritual) creature we call man?

Death is a wonderful devisement, a gracious new opportunity which is not denied the meanest creature. All in creation die: insect, animal, fishes, moons, suns, stars: all soever undergo change and rejuvenation. This is apparent in the dissolution of all physical matter, which finds subtle chemical forces awaiting to remold and utilize it. If matter is important, is spirit less so?

If the Creator gave us birth, does He not likewise afford us that corollary benison called death? One seems as inevitable as the other, and each supplements the other. How can we dread the one without fearing the precedent act of birth?

"Never the spirit was born. Spirit shall cease to be never." Everything cognizant possesses spirit; ergo, nothing ever perishes, but simply changes clothes, like unto the cocoon.

If we regarded death as a beneficent change, permitting renewed vitality, youth and opportunity, our hearts would glow with gratitude; nor would we be burdened by superstitious fears and groan-



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Cycle of Rebirth

"Since the matter and substance of things are indestructible, all its parts are subject to all forms, so that each and everything becomes everything and each, if not at one and the same time and in a single minute, then at various times and various moments, in sequence and in alternation."—Giordano Bruno, Ash Wednesday, 1584

ings, with fatuous weeping and self-pitying when some one of our loved ones undergoes this excellent way of carrying on. There are no dead! "What seems so is transition."

There is purpose in all life. The ultimate cannot even be imagined. To reflective minds there is no doubt of a divinity that shapes each going. The way is long, and ever longer. Despite our momentary cares and perplexities, often involving disbelief in the Providence of our Father and His unquestioned care of all, there is an ultimate good

When the body of an animal dies, the animal spirit has unconsciously derived a certain experience from functioning in that vehicle, and after a time it is reabsorbed into the spiritual body of the group spirit, where it remains for some time while the group spirit assimilates the experience gathered by that separate animal spirit. Thus in time the group spirit grows and evolves. So do the animal spirits which are its wards. They will become human in a future incarnation of the earth, and then the group spirit will look after them as race or a national spirit until they have become perfectly capable of taking care of themselves individually.—Max Heindel, Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers, Volume 1, p. 333

Now, when all the souls had chosen their lives...they all traveled into the plain of Lethe....In the evening they encamped by the Forgetful River, whose water no pitcher can hold. And all were compelled to drink a certain measure of its water; and those who had no wisdom to save them drank more than the measure. And as each man drank he forgot everything. When they had gone to rest, and it was now midnight, there was a clap of thunder and an earthquake; and in a moment the souls were carried up to their birth, this way and that, like shooting stars.—Plato, The Republic.

to be achieved. Nor will it be bestowed because of any vicarious intervention. We reap as we sow. Soul is developed and ripened by enduring strenuous endeavor, quite as the arm grows strong by exercise.

The idea of reincarnation or rebirth in human bodies is prehistoric in origin. Practically every one of the older nations accepted and believed it. It served to comfort many. Only moderns have presumed to say that this life is all, and such infidelity, in the goodness of the Creator, seems due to callowness and cynicism which many of this era scornfully assume as a feature of conceited sophistication—devil-may-care impudence common among the blasé.

Many of the more ancient peoples who accepted rebirth considered transmigration differently from later views, inasmuch as they reckoned that men were returned to earth in animal forms as punishment for sins in a preceding life. In this respect, transmigration and reincarnation were not the same. No advanced cult of today would accept this idea. The human ego never descends into animal bodies. Some teachers aver that animals appear on the spirit plane, and prevail there for a while with much the same disposition as while functioning on earth! but then, after a while, they disappear.

Presumably onto another plane of development.

The modern preaching of some is that there is but one life on earth and later, a weariness in a heavenly state and nothing to do. A most unattractive contemplation, really, and not based on truthful Scripture, for the Bible declares renewed life in many places. The reality of reincarnation is vehemently opposed by some because it nullifies their declaration of “belief” as being all-sufficient for entry into glory and perpetual bliss. And if once “saved” why come back to earth and revisit its temptations? Which brings only more prominently into view the disputations of the several Christian sects, their uncertainties in biblical meanings, their lassitude in thought lest their faith be disrupted by reasoning.

The subject of reincarnation is so broad and has had so many adherents and satisfied promulgators, many of whom were among the most outstanding thinkers of ancient and modern times, that it is rather a task to pick out new facts to bolster argument in this behalf. Most of the early Fathers of Christianity accepted and taught the doctrine. It never was much opposed until the more modern doctrines of salvation, and the popular notion that mere belief would carry sinners directly into unending celestial joy, made return to mundane life not only needless but a folly. Rebirth was an essential church teaching for several centuries, and was stamped with the authority of its leaders, until Western influences succeeded in having it

anathematized as heresy. Few clergymen today like to discuss it or have it mentioned. An honest interpretation of anteNicene church history would disclose the strong belief of the early Fathers of the Church in this doctrine.

We discard for the nonce all history of the subject during the ages, nor burden the page with innumerable names of philosophers and thinkers who deemed it a rational event, giving all a new chance and fresh opportunity in a new environment, another family circle, with enlarged intuition (spiritual knowledge acquired by the eductive forces of former life and lives); for despite any neglect or willful disregard, every career, however brief, carries lessons and enrichment of character. Each comes back to earth to utilize the experiences of hitherto time. The motive of life on earth is not to “save” but to gain experience and mellowness of soul that fit for an advance, new obligations, and continued education.

There is no end to life, and death in no sense completes our careers. Even the practical Henry Ford asserted: “We take up life about where we leave off, and go on from there.” He was a strong believer in reincarnation, too, as giving the simple, the falterer, the wastrel, another chance. It is the fatuous doctrine of “saving your soul” by belief, and only once, that causes so much clerical objection to the idea of return. Discussion of reincarnation in the presence of most clergymen arouses strong opposition, and in some cases the believer in rebirth is denominated an infidel, a man without faith—that is, the objector’s faith.

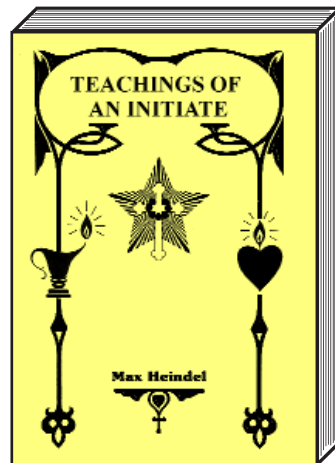
One article cannot fairly present the subject. Interested readers might enjoy looking into the words of Origen, Plato, Pythagoras, Plotinus the Zohar, the Cabala, and many poets and philosophers, as anticipating continuation of the theme. The poet Goethe says:

The soul of man is like the water:
From heaven it cometh, to heaven
it mounteth,
And thence at once it must to earth
come back,
Forever changing. □

—Ernest Crutcher, M.D.

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MYSTIC LIGHT

The Book in the Heart

Solomon Ben-David Voices A Mystic's Meditation

THERE IS A LIGHT in the spiritual body by which the Seer reads in heavenly Jerusalem, which is the Place of Peace. For even now there is a Temple, and a House, and Lights for the Altars.

There is a golden Light in the head which illuminates the mysteries pertaining to reason. There is a golden Light in the heart, which illuminates the things of the heart. There is a Book in the heart, which is the Book of the recording Angels, the One Cabala, which vibrates in the golden Light and is illuminated by it. It is a Book infinitely small, yet the universe is enscribed upon it. Out of that Book I was taught to understand a proverb, and a figure, the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

If the Book in the Heart is in darkness, because of the darkness of the heart when no Light is there, the Light in the head is of no avail in reading the Book. It is then as though the Book lies wrapped in thick layers of darkness, which the eyes, though illumined, cannot penetrate. Again, if the heart is in the Light, and the head in darkness, it is as though the book were brilliant with sunshine, but the eyes blindfolded, and the Book of Life remains unread.

To read in the Book of the Heart, then, requires that the Light be lighted in the head and also in the heart. It is this which enables us to know and read the history of the past, to understand the present, and to know the future, for in that Book all time is One. Consider, O my son, that this Book of the Heart is the Book of Wisdom, and keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Now it is plain that without some means of com-

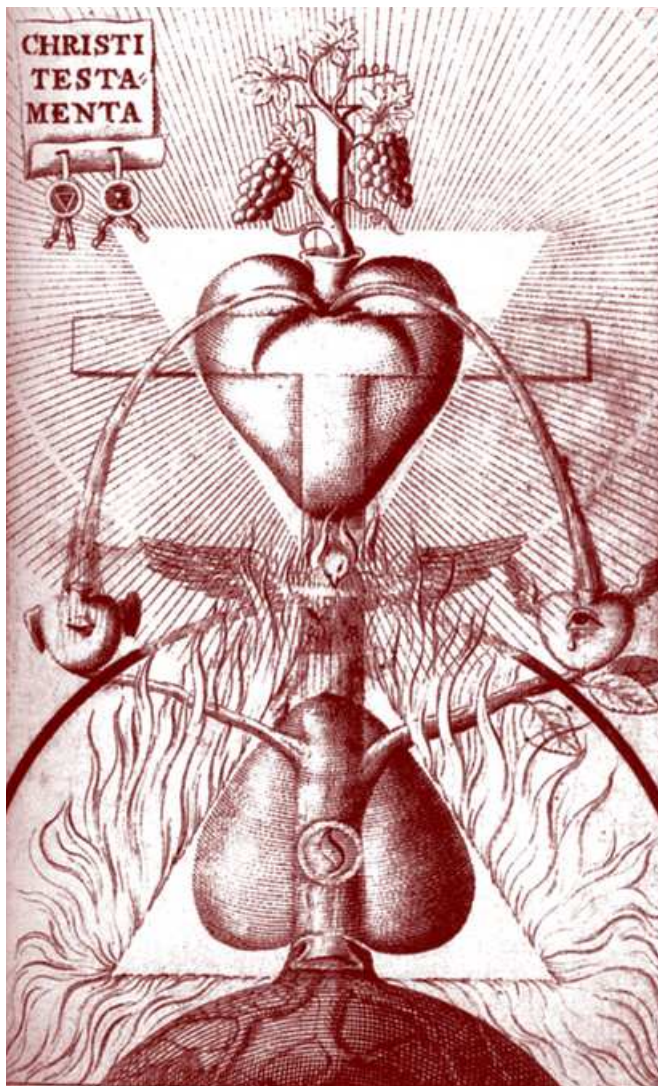
munication between heart and head, the Light from one could not reach the other. (I speak in the manner of earthly things, that there may be a path for reason to walk over.) And to understand the mystery of the communication, we consider how the angels instruct by picture and symbol; and we direct our gaze inward to behold the Tree of Life. Its roots are in the heart, and its branches are in the head, and its trunk is the connecting link, the bridge. For you must know that Man himself is the Holy Garden of God. There God walks; Wisdom is at His right hand, as she has been from the beginning, before the earth was.

Again, as the angels have spoken it, this is the Mystery of the Lily (for in the angelic language is the true Scripture written). The Lily blossom is in the head, the cup of the Light there; but there is another blossom in the heart, growing upward to the larynx, meeting in the larynx the base of the Lily. This is the channel of communication by which the Lily lights fuse and become one Light and the Book in the Heart is read at will.

Nevertheless, when either head or heart contains the Light, the qualities pertaining to the one or the other become illumined, so that through the heart comes the super-intuition, and through the head, the super-reason.

Now as to how the Light is lighted in head and heart:

The Light does not light itself; first there is the golden ether, which the angels help us to build into the form of the spiritual body—that body which becomes the glory of the saints. It is the immaculate Lily-body, the wedding garment. Yet without



From Jacob Boehme's *Theosophische Wercke*, Amsterdam, 1682

With somewhat different symbolism and emphasis than that used in this meditation's text, the illustration shows the fiery soul in its natural primal state as an inverted heart, which lies "in the Father's quality," in the fire of wrath. Through the sacrament of baptism, the name of Jesus is revealed in the name Jehovah, and the soul receives the Son's fire of love and light: The Father, through the Holy Spirit, baptizes with fire; the Son, through the same Holy Spirit, baptizes with light. The Son's light-irradiated blood transforms anger into love. As man completely enters into Christ's sacrificial death, "there will grow...a true Christ, a grape on Christ's vine."

the dark fire rising up the stem of the Lily there would be no glory, for that is the living Fire which lights the glory. Now the Lily-body shaped in its golden ether is the product of an overflowing love and helpfulness, but the dark fire is the mysterious alchemical essence of true, spiritual chastity.

Through love and kindness and doing good to others we build the golden Lily-body, which

"In the left ventricle [of the heart] is the seed atom of the physical body. This is man's *book of destiny* out of which he is judged by the Recording Angels at the end of an Earth Day. The Forces of the Cosmic Christ focus in the heart and there is a mysterious relationship existing between the great Angelic Heart of Leo and that of man....The important work of the aspirant is to *impress this heart memory upon the brain mind*. Man must learn to think with his heart. This will only be possible as love becomes the animating motive power of life. David, the poet-seer, understood these inner truths when he sang: "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Paracelsus writes: "As the Sun worketh in the planet, so does the heart in the body and the Moon in the brain." The mystic marriage is alchemically described as the uniting of the Sun and Moon. When complete regeneration is accomplished, a stream or nerve current of light will flow along the pneumogastric nerve, coordinating the powers of head and heart. This is the mystic highway traversed so often by Mary and Joseph between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. All the principal events in the Bible are also found within the body of man....

This organ [the heart] is destined to become the generative center of the body, with the spiritual fires playing only between the organs of the head, the larynx, and the heart. Jacob Boehme portrays this attainment in his diagram of the Tree of Life [see left], the roots of which are embedded in the heart while the fruit-laden branches spread out from the head.

—Corinne Heline,

Occult Anatomy and the Bible, p. 152 ff

means we build also its buds and blossoms into the head and the heart. In the hearts of some of the sons of men there is only a golden cloud. In the heads of some there is only a golden cloud. Yea, the flowers are unable to unfold by reason of the coldness, for there is little fire in the pale glow of the unborn Lily-Blossoms.

For without spiritual chastity, there is no dark fire to burst into flame in the Lily-blossom; and without love and kindness there is no Lily-blossom to be clothed in flame by the dark fire. And without the Light of the Lily, the Book of Wisdom remains forever unsearchable. Wherefore, according as your life is, so will your wisdom be.

Happy is the man that findeth Wisdom; she is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her. □

—Ann Barkhurst

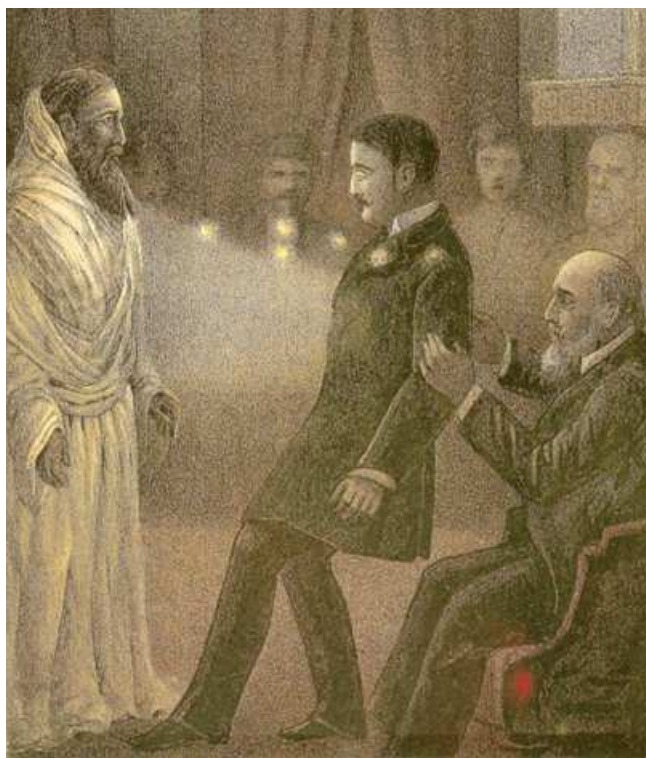
MYSTIC LIGHT

Magic, White and Black Part 1

IN A RECENT MAGAZINE an article appeared which sought to prove that there is no such thing as Black Magic. The writer seemed to be of the opinion that for magic to be “black,” it must be malicious. The Rosicrucian Fellowship teaches that not only malicious but any selfish use of magical powers constitutes Black Magic. The selfish use of magic is all too common, although in most cases the wrong is done in ignorance.

Studying magic is like exploring the swampy country in certain southern states: It is very fascinating. You will see interesting scenery such as you can see nowhere else. It is also safe to explore, provided you either have a competent guide with you, or you yourself know the landmarks well enough to tell at a glance whether a certain section is safe, questionable, or outright dangerous.

In the study of magic, unfortunately, many teachers who are perfectly competent in their own fields, insist upon acting as guides in fields with which they are not familiar. In this case, the advice and information they give is seriously misleading. In the unknown fields they usually seem more interested in Black Magic than in White, probably because Black Magic is always the more sensational of the two. In the early twentieth century, William James was probably the world’s best authority on religious psychology, so far as it dealt with the phenomena commonly taught in the orthodox churches. But he also made some investigations in the field of clairvoyance. Here he was off his own ground. He wrote an essay on “Psychical Research,” dealing at length with all



A representation of the materialization of a departed spirit through ectoplasm emanated from the medium's vital body. The sense centers of the medium's desire body spin counter clockwise (negatively) and the connection between the physical and vital bodies is "exceedingly lax." Mediumism may result in evolutionary retardation due to spirit controls retaining possession of the medium's desire body after death. Deprived of that vehicle, there is nothing to cause the ego to reincarnate.

the negative forms of psychic development—test mediumship, phantoms, crystal vision, etc.

On the other hand, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, he devotes only four pages to “the sense of a presence,” which is the psychologist’s term for positive clairvoyance. Then he dismisses the subject as “this false perception,” as if it were not even worthy of the investigation of a scientist, and as if his judgment of its “falseness” would never be questioned. In view of the thousands of cases which might be cited of this “sense of a presence,” James’ attitude is hardly scientific.

George Bartin Cutten was another authority on

the psychology of religion living in James' time. In his book *Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, Cutten, an orthodox Protestant, devotes a chapter to the study of "ecstasy," a practice cultivated primarily by the Roman Catholic church and certain extreme Protestant sects. Therefore, as we might expect, he states that there are two kinds of ecstasy, and follows this statement with a very scholarly study of the lower form which is artificially induced. The chapter is twelve pages long, but contains only part of one paragraph—three sentences, to be exact—describing the higher type.

Mrs. Eddy, in her textbook on spiritual healing, included a chapter on spiritualism or clairvoyance. She seemed to be wholly unaware that there are two kinds of clairvoyance, one positive, useful, and good; the other negative, harmful, and evil. From her constant references to matter, electricity, and the physical senses, it is evident that the only forms with which she was familiar were negative. The following statements could not possibly be applied to positive clairvoyance: "It [spiritualism] is the offspring of the physical senses....The so-called dead would need to be tangible and material or the material senses could take no cognizance of them....Spiritism consigns the so-called dead to a state resembling that of blighted buds, and they return to their old standpoints of matter....How can it [spirit] communicate with man through electric, material effects?"

Anyone who has ever experienced positive clairvoyance knows that it is not dependent upon the physical senses, nor does it make use of electricity. Aside from the authority or the mistakes of teachers, however, there are certain landmarks in the field of magic by which even the layman can recognize at once the sound and the unsound. It has been said that the black forces often employ as their trademark, the star, with one point downward, while the white forces use a five-pointed star with two points down and one up. This, however, cannot be depended upon, as the black forces are not above counterfeiting. There are certain characteristics in the teachings themselves which will tell us instantly whether we are dealing with Black Magic or White.

Before describing these differences let us define the word "magic." Magic refers to the effects pro-

Magic is a process whereby we may accomplish certain results not achieved by means of laws ordinarily known....Both of them [White and Black Magicians] use and manipulate the same forces, the difference being the motive which prompts them. The White Magician is prompted altogether by love and benevolence. Although he is not actuated by thoughts of reward, a soul growth wonderful to contemplate results from his use of magic. He has put his talents out to usury and is gaining interest a hundredfold. The Black Magician, on the other hand, is in a sad state, for it is said that the "soul that sinneth, it shall die," and all we do contrary to the laws of God inevitably results in a deterioration of the soul qualities. —Max Heindel, *Questions and Answers*, Vol. 1 p. 279

duced by the activity of the highest, or spiritual, part of the mind, called by some the "superconscious" mind. American psychologists make so many blunders on this subject because, as a rule, they posit a mind that has only two sections—conscious and subconscious. They are not competent, therefore, to explain phenomena which really come from the superconscious.

In Scriptural language, magic is the use of "the gifts of the spirit," which are described in 1 Cor. 12: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit....For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirit; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." In contemporary language, magic includes such gifts as clairvoyance, spiritual healing, prophesying, the miraculous ability to speak or understand unknown languages. There is one other "gift" which may not properly belong to the field of magic but which we must consider because of the prominent role it has played in one particular ceremony—the condition the Roman Catholic church calls "ecstasy," literally, out of *stasis* or static body. The chief object of

the “witches sabbath,” practiced during the Middle Ages, was the (wrongful) induction of ecstasy.

A great deal can be learned about any philosophy from the moral character of its originating teacher. There is no more infallible rule than this: “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Magic is not a study for young souls. We have a right therefore to expect significant spiritual development in those qualified to teach it. The one who is competent to teach magic will be living in accordance with the highest moral standards known in his time and country. Not a high standard, but the very highest.

I once met a teacher who said he “had not tasted meat for several years.” Yet at the same time he not only smoked tobacco and drank liquor in moderation himself, but he made liquor and even gave it to minors! The teacher who considers himself so advanced as to be “above the law” is like a mathematician who has never had time to learn the multiplication table because he has been too busy teaching trigonometry.

Even Christ did not consider Himself above the law, but stated that He had “come not to destroy but to fulfill” the law. Concerning His own teachings, He told the Pharisees, “These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

Many saints have written about the effects their visions and mystical experiences exerted on their personal characters: St. John of the Cross tells us that “they enrich it [the soul] marvelously. A single one of them may be sufficient to abolish at a stroke certain imperfections of which the soul during its whole life had daily tried to rid itself.” St. Theresa says, “A genuine heavenly vision yields to her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches, and an admirable renewal of bodily strength. I alleged those reasons to those who so often accused my visions of being the work of the enemy of mankind....All those who knew me saw that I was changed; my confessor bore witness to the fact.... As for myself, it was impossible to believe that if the demon were its author, he would have used, in order to lose me and lead me to hell, an expedient



From Illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Gustave Doré (1833-1883)

The Simonists

Dante reserves the plight pictured above for those who, like Simon Magus, show their spiritual blindness by seeking to buy occult powers—in Simon's case, the power to confer gifts of the Holy Spirit.

so contrary to his own interests as that of uprooting my vices.”

The final goal of the White Magician is to reach the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” The fate of the Black Magician, at least the one who practices Black Magic in its vilest form, is to become a “lost soul,” and we can see signs of gradual moral (and sometimes mental) disintegration in those who follow its milder forms. They are the sign posts which God has set out, marking certain practices “dangerous.” I have known of two teachers who began by teaching apparently harmless, but selfish, philosophies. One, a woman, ended by teaching “free love” openly and frankly. The other, a man, became a sex degenerate.

We may establish, then, as our first rule:

Rule I. White Magic has a beneficial, and Black Magic an injurious, effect upon the moral charac-

ters of those who practice it for any length of time.

A second rule, to which we will not have to give much attention because it is already so well known and has been so widely discussed:

Rule 2. White Magic is never used either for money or for show. It is only used for some definitely good purpose. The Bible is the greatest textbook known on White Magic. We cannot do better therefore than to cite some examples from the Bible. The eighth chapter of the Book of Acts narrates the story of Simon the sorcerer, who sought to buy “the gifts of the spirit” with money. “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.”

Many times the Bible condemns the use of magical powers for show, or seeking after “signs and wonders.” In Matthew 16:4 Christ speaks of the Jews of his day as “a wicked and adulterous generation, [which] seeketh after a sign,” and adds that “there shall be no sign given unto it.” The third of the three temptations presented to Christ by Satan was to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple without harm, thus making a show of his power. Again, when brought before Herod, the king asked him to perform a miracle, for entertainment, but Christ refused.

There are several instances in the Bible of the temporary suspension of certain physical laws, such as gravity and the conduction of heat, but never merely for show. Christ walked upon the water in order to reach the boat in which His disciples were being tossed about by a “contrary” wind. The lives of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were preserved in the “seven times heated” furnace. The “gift of tongues” was not given originally as a “sign.” It was given, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, for a specific purpose; i.e., in order that the foreign-born Jews in the city of Jerusalem might understand the gospel when it was preached. One modern recorded instance of the gift of



Bartolome Esteban Murillo, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

Liberation of St. Peter

Technically, angelic intervention in human affairs is not magic because spiritual forces are not being directly wielded by the individual. Such manifestation is magical in the sense that laws governing normal physical processes have been suspended or superseded by higher laws relating to spirit worlds.

tongues concerns a man who was called as missionary to the Navajo Indians. Upon reaching their country, he found that he could already speak and understand their language without previous study.

There are many instances given in the Bible of the visits of angels or the return of spirits of the dead, but it is always for some purpose, never merely to astonish or impress. In fact, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, when Dives asked that the spirit of Lazarus be sent to earth as a “sign” to his brothers, the permission was refused because “if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” In 2 Kings 6, however, a whole army was sent to protect Elisha and his servant. In Acts 12 an angel was sent to deliver Peter from prison. Angels often appeared to comfort those in trouble. Elijah was so comforted in 1 Kings 19. Even Christ needed the ministrations of the angels after His temptation and in Gethsemane. An angel warned Lot to flee from Sodom. In Genesis 32 an angel directly

intervened to save a soul. There are many modern cases of the same sort of intervention. A woman left her two-year-old son in a high chair before a fire to go out into the yard to gather wood. As she started to pick up the first stick a voice said to her, "Go back and see if baby is fastened in his chair." She hurried in and found that the little boy was not fastened in and was just on the point of falling forward onto the red-hot stove.

On another occasion the same woman was working in a paper mill when one hand got caught in the machinery. She felt an invisible force seize her hand and snatch it out of the machine before any serious injury was done, although the end of one finger and the nail of another were lost.

White Magic always tends away from the physical toward the spiritual. This fact gives rise to the next two rules.

Rule 3. White Magic does not depend upon matter for its manifestation. Here we must consider the study of ecstasy. In the aforementioned book, *Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, George Bartin Cutten says: "There seem to be two distinct forms of ecstasy. The one is characterized by wild excitement, loss of self-control, and temporary madness. It is a sort of religious intoxication, indulged in largely for its delightful effects. This usually originates in dancing and other forms of physical manifestations. The other form is intense, but quiet and calm; it is usually spontaneous in origin, or else comes through mental rather than physical means. A certain amount of culture (and intellectual development) is necessary in persons experiencing this, and it shows itself in solitude rather than before a crowd, as the other form does. The former type is seen among dervishes and medicine men, the latter among the Hebrew prophets and Indian mystics."

In another part of the same work, Dr. Cutten discusses the artificial stimulation of ecstasy. "Literature of the orient, especially India, abounds in passages, extracts from which would form a working manual for the artificial attainment of ecstasy....Among primitive people, more crass methods are in use, such as beating drums, howling, convulsive movements, dancing, flagellations, etc." It will be seen that all these artificial methods

depend upon some form of physical sensation, combinations of sight, sound, or physical exercise. They might be used by anyone, no matter what his moral character or spiritual development. We must therefore set them all down as objectionable. But the Black Magician goes farther and takes up the use of harmful drugs in an effort to induce a state of ecstasy. The medieval "witches' sabbath" was little more than an unusually wild "dope party." The "witches' ointment" with which those attending a sabbath applied on their whole bodies, was a compound of certain powerful drugs. This mixture was rubbed into the pores of the skin. Not so very different, you see, from our modern practice of injecting drugs with a hypodermic needle.

We remember that many witches claimed the ability to fly through the air. Aconite and belladonna would, as a matter of fact, when taken together, produce an irregular action of the heart which would give all the sensations of flying. It is probable that a great many of the witches were quite sincere in their claims and that they really believed they had flown through the air.

Some modern writers still recommend the use of drugs as an aid in receiving metaphysical revelations. William James cites some cases in which nitrous oxide, ether, or chloroform have been used for this purpose. That was then. Now the practice is even more common, only the variety of drugs has changed.

It will now be clear why the Rosicrucians discourage the use of incense and alcoholic liquors, as well as such material props toward clairvoyance as the ouija board and mirror and crystal gazing. Low entities in the Desire World often use the fumes of incense and alcohol as media through which to make contact with the living. Compare this with the description of positive clairvoyance, which uses no material aids, given by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps in *Beyond the Gates*: "No optical illusion, no tactual hallucination, could hold the boy who took all the medals at the gymnasium. The hearty, healthy fellow could receive no abnormal sign from the love and longing of the dead. Only spirit unto spirit could attempt that strange out-reaching." (*Concluded next issue*) □

—Sylvia Baker

A Prophetic Vision

SOME TIME AGO we received a magazine from Germany entitled "Towards the Light" in which the following prophecy was printed. The editor claimed that this prophecy was sent to him by a Brother in the spring of 1904, that it was then published in a little pamphlet called "The Holy Grail," which he says is probably still in the hands of many of his readers from that time. The prophecy relates to the war in part, and the skeptical reader would probably discount it on the grounds that it is easy now to prophesy something that has already happened and is now going on. But there is one part of the prophecy which has not been fulfilled and which coincides with what we ourselves know to be in line with facts as they will develop in later years. As it would not seem proper to give this latter part of the prophecy without also printing the beginning, we herewith give the whole, translating from the German as follows:



"I awakened from a natural sleep, not to the ordinary waking consciousness, but to a higher supersensual, and I saw something which filled me with horror. It seemed as if I was hovering in the air and all Europe lay beneath me. Vibrations of unrest and strife came up towards me from the people on the whole continent. The atmosphere around me seemed to be darkened, as if the vibrations of unrest were concentrating themselves into a thundercloud—and that is what seemed actually to happen. Then the cloud floated hither and thither. Lightning-darts discharged themselves, now upon one country and now upon the other, but the thunder was the thunder of cannons and the light-

ning was fire from thousands and millions of guns. The cloud lay thick and dark over Europe and seemed also to go to each side over Asia and America, but it soon went away from the latter continent and somewhat later from Asia to lay all the heavier and darker over Europe. It rolled hither and thither like a fire-drake, often crossing here and there and then again drawing itself together. Below I could see the people, nations in war.

"Wherever the cloud hovered there they wrecked and ruined everything and the warring nations seemed to grow more and more like wild animals. Little by little the cloud seemed to disperse—but what a sight where it had been! The misery cannot be described, thousands of widows, maidens, and orphans lay upon the fresh graves and wept over their dead. Behind them stood the aged fathers and mothers who mourned for their sons that had been taken away in the prime of their young manhood.

"And while with sorrowing heart I looked down upon all this grief, there came a hot wind from the south which withered all that was green and there was a famine in most of the countries of Europe. Sorrow increased and many thousands were added to the dead. Then there came a great hand in the north which poured out an acid fluid, resulting in a great pestilence.

"Then I saw a great light which gradually dispelled the previous darkness but it came from the west, from North America, and shone upon the stricken countries of Europe. In it was hope, health, and healing. Many ships left the coasts of the new land laden with grain and foods. One thing

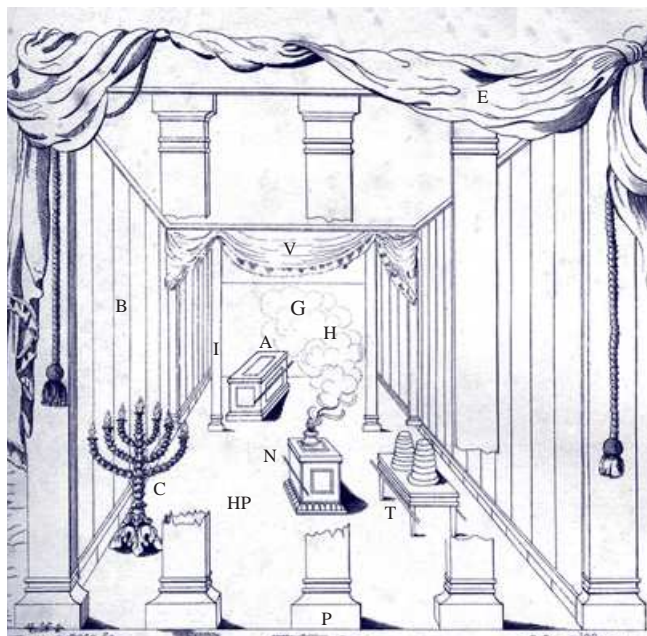
more I saw which had hitherto escaped my notice, in the westerly part, beyond the great mountain range in North America, I saw a great number of houses in a garden of wonderful beauty, and a dazzling light shone in the midst of this colony of holy men and women who had come out of all the lands of the world, because of its great sorrows. From thence they returned to their native countries with the fire of love burning brightly in their hearts, and the stone of philosophy as a sign upon their forehead that they might spread light and love over the whole world, and each kindled anew the light in his own fatherland.

“Then there came a new era, the nations of the earth put away their weapons and devoted their energy to building wonderful machinery which lightened the work of the world; ignorance, poverty, and all slavery was done away with and a golden era dawned. But all this became possible only because the faithful ones of the Lord had withdrawn from the world and fostered the holy light which brought the world its freedom.

“And as I wondered over what I had seen, there sounded in the heavens a choir of praise which sang ‘Praise to the Highest and to men Peace, Good Will, and Happiness.’ And there was given to me the command: ‘Write what you have seen and let it be known. The skeptics will laugh and sneer, but the wise will feel the truth in their hearts and they will seek for this place of safety, that they may not be swept away by the great catastrophe but preserve and defend the heavenly light, the fire of love, which is in their hearts, so that when the sorrow is past they may be able again to enkindle it in others.’”

While, as said, the writer does not know who this Brother is, and what is his standing, it has upon its face a certain stamp of truth which cannot be overlooked. Nowadays people are usually looking towards the East when they take up the quest of the Mystic Light. But as a matter of fact, the course of the stars is from east to west, and the heavenly Lightgivers above, as also the earthly place of light below, are periodically moved toward the west.

The Wise Men of the East, spoken of in the Bible, did not look towards the East for the Star but



H. The most Holy place. A. The Ark. G. The Cloud of Glory (Shekinah). I. The Four Pillars on which V. the Vail is hung dividing the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. HP. The Holy Place. N. Altar of Incense. C. Candlestick. T. Table of Shew Bread. B. Boards of the Tabernacle. P. Five Pillars on which the Curtain is hung at the Entrance of the Tabernacle. E. The Curtain at the entrance of the Tabernacle.

The tabernacle, its apartments, and accoutrements all have correlations with human occult anatomy and its structures.

they followed it and went with it towards the west.

In the ancient Atlantean Mystery temple, called the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, there was a light inside the eastern gate where the aspirant entered. He was then facing the West and he saw the light just inside, namely, the light on the Altar of Burnt Offerings. He was then like the candidate who appears at the door of the Masonic temple—he was blind and was looking for the light. This light confronts him when he looks towards the West. The law was his taskmaster to bring him to the light which then shone for his guidance, and as he followed it upon the path and journeyed westward towards the first veil, another light appeared—the seven-branched candlestick in the Holy Place. This was a purer and more holy light than the light of the Altar of Burnt Offerings, where the fire was fed upon the smoking and bleeding carcasses of the sacrifices. The light in the Holy Place was fed by the purest olive oil, especially made for that purpose; thus it was light of a higher order than that of the carcasses that burned without. But the candidate proceeded further westward, and when he came to the westernmost part of all, the Holy of

Holies, there was seeming darkness where stood the Ark of the Covenant. Above it there burned a *spiritual light*, spoken of in the Bible as “Shekinah Glory” which hovered above the Ark as a symbol of the purified man. While he was at the Eastern gate and the light shone without, the law was also without as a taskmaster which he only obeyed because he must. At this western end of the tabernacle he finds the Ark with the tables of the law within, symbolical of the fact the man who has attained to that height has taken within himself all the laws of nature and is at one with them. Therefore he obeys them readily; they are not to him taskmasters. He would not act contrary to them if he could. The golden pot of Manna, symbolizing the bread that came down from heaven, the Christ within, gives another key to the nature of this symbol. The Rod of Aaron, with which he wrought the miracles in Egypt, is, like the spear of the Grail, a symbol of the spiritual power which may be wielded by a man who has attained to that spiritual light in the West.

But the purpose of this attainment is, and must always be, service; therefore the staves were always in the rings of the Ark, that it might be moved upon an instant’s notice. Similarly the man or woman above whom shines that wonderful Shekinah Glory, and who has within himself or herself the tables of the law, the heavenly Manna and the sacred Rod, are every one alert to the slightest call for service that they may hasten to alleviate the suffering of their brothers and sisters who are behind upon the path of evolution, further towards the East.

These are mystic facts, and the vision of this mystic has perceived them aright. Everything changes as we go from East to West to further the development of the new attribute that we are to evolve in this age, that the coming era may be ushered in.

When the writer went to Germany in 1907 he felt most acutely the oppression of the group spirit there as a cloud over the land holding the people in its grip. Just as it is recorded that in ancient times Jehovah went before the Israelites and was **in the cloud**, so the national group spirit, each ruling over its own particular people, broods over, and develops in them certain characteristics. Therefore the



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Moses with the Law and Aaron’s Rod That Budded

“The wand of the magician, the holy spear of Parsifal the Grail King, and the budding Rod of Aaron are emblems of the divine creative force, which works wonders of such a nature that we call them miracles.”—Ancient and Modern Initiation, p. 44. Abused at an earlier time, this spiritual power is now hidden in the body’s ark. The picture above bears the words spoken by Jehovah: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron’s rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels” (Num 17:10).

types in Europe persist, despite the increasing frequency of international marriages, for the group spirit invariably stamps the offspring. It is different in America, which is the melting pot, the cradle of the new race, and no group spirit has yet been developed for it. The West Indies on the Atlantic side and Hawaii on the Pacific side are also gates through which the races of the East and West are being assimilated and prepared to mingle in the great new race now in its gestatory stage. And it is a fact ascertained by scientific investigators that the children of all nations born in America take on

a distinct contour of the head which is different from that of the parents' and different from the nationality from which they have sprung. Thus it is even physically demonstrable that a new race is being born in America, different from any in the old continent. A new class of Egos is coming into rebirth which has different traits of character and characteristics from those which exist among the older people.

When we investigate the climatic conditions we also find that there is a great difference between the atmosphere of America and of Europe. The atmosphere of America is electric. Particularly in southern California the ether abounds to a degree

the group spirit leads to persistence and perseverance, favors concentration, deep thought, and great insight. Here alone could the skeleton for such a book be written, but to finish it and give it that touch of life which it must have to make it a success among the masses, the electric atmosphere of America is required."

The mental attitude of a German, due to the group spirit in the atmosphere, may be likened to a man who travels from Berlin to Paris by stage coach—it will take him a long time but on the way he sees people of different nations, he becomes acquainted with every foot of the road and notices the scenery so that he is thoroughly acquainted with

"You were requested to come to Germany because this heavy atmosphere brooded over by the group spirit leads to persistence and perseverance, favors concentration, deep thought, and great insight. Here alone could the skeleton for such a book be written, but to finish it and give it that touch of life which it must have to make it a success among the masses, the electric atmosphere of America is required."

not experienced anywhere on the whole earth. This has a very brightening effect upon the people living in the different counties, and the writer cannot illustrate this better than by relating a certain incident and conversation that took place at the temple of the Rosy Cross in Germany which he visited by invitation to receive the teachings embodied in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. By incessant work night and day for a long time he had succeeded in making a sketch of the philosophy. This he showed to the Elder Brothers who were instructing him. But his feelings of enthusiasm were soon cooled when he was told that though he was now very much pleased with it, as soon as he should arrive in the United States the electric atmosphere there would cause him to look at things in a different way, that he would re-write it and make it totally different. This he thought absolutely impossible at the time, but the Elder Brothers then said:

"You were requested to come to Germany because this heavy atmosphere brooded over by

every step along the way and could give a good description of it were he afterwards required. The mental processes of the American are also like his methods of travel. When he desires to go from New York to Chicago, he takes a sleeper at night so as not to lose any of the precious daylight business hours. He rushes over the country at the rate of seventy miles an hour and arrives at his destination at an early hour of the following day. He knows nothing whatever of the country he has passed through, but he arrives quickly—that is the essential point.

A German would have taken at least two volumes to express his views upon all the details of the Panama Canal project. President Roosevelt [Theodore] covered the subject well in one speech; he arrived at his destination without all the details. That national trait is growing because the rays of Uranus and Neptune are stronger and affect the people of the United States more than any other part of the world. For under their tutelage a new race will be born and fostered to relieve the world's woe.

On another occasion when the question of headquarters was up for discussion, the writer was instructed to look for it in a place overlooking the Pacific Ocean in Southern California and having at the back of it snow-capped mountains. We tried first to buy a place which seemed partly to suit the descriptions, but obstacles were piled up so that we could not perfect the purchase. Then Mt. Ecclesia was found and at once recognized by the leaders as meeting all the conditions required. It seems as if the description given in the vision quoted at the beginning of this article would fit Mt. Ecclesia well. It has already become a Mecca for students from many lands that come here to gather inspirations and take back to their respective homes the light received here, and as time goes on we may hope that this will, indeed, become a center of a great spiritual influence in the world's work. Let us hitch the wagon of aspirations to the Star of Hope, and the higher our ideal the better perhaps we shall live up to it.

One thing is certain—that the spiritual temple

which we are building by our hopes and aspirations around the earthly sanctuary we have already erected, is gradually growing more and more beautiful, luminous and more like that wonderful temple which Manson describes so eloquently in *The Servant in the House*. By the grace of God we shall continue building, though it is not always in joy and gladness, as Manson said, "We have found it to be true that sometimes the work goes on in almost utter darkness, sometimes there come the rays of hope, the clouds break and the sunshine of joy and gladness shines through to lighten the load for a little while." But whether we are building in darkness or in the blinding light, it is something to be able to say that we have never ceased in our unwearying persistence. Helped by the aspirations of thousands of students centered upon this place, the work goes forward through joy or sorrow, and sometime the vision shall be realized, and Mt. Ecclesia, the headquarters of The Rosicrucian Fellowship, shall give its full share of light to the waiting world. □

THE ROSICRUCIAN COSMO-CONCEPTION

By Max Heindel

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READERS' QUESTIONS

Dealing with Evil Thoughts; Inheriting Parental Characteristics; Predicting Death by the Horoscope

QUESTION: IF A PERSON is constantly bothered by evil thoughts which keep coming into his mind, although he is constantly fighting them, is there any way in which he can cleanse his mind so that he will think only pure and good thoughts?

Answer: Yes, there is, and a very easy way at that. The inquirer has himself suggested the chief difficulty in his question, when he says that he is constantly fighting these thoughts. If we take an illustration we shall see the point. Suppose we have a particular dislike for a certain person whom we meet every day upon the street, perhaps a number of times. If we stop each time we meet that person and berate him for walking upon the street, for not keeping out of our sight, we are each time adding fuel to the fire of our enmity, we are stirring him up, and for pure spite he may seek to waylay us so much the more.



A Choir of Angels (detail), Simon Marmion (died 1489), National Gallery, London

Both like and dislike have a tendency to attract a thought or an idea to us, and the added thought force which we send out to fight evil thoughts will keep them alive and bring them to our mind the oftener, in the same way that quarreling will cause the person we dislike to waylay us for spite. But if, instead of fighting him, we adopt the tactics of indifference, if we turn our heads the other way when we meet him upon the street, he

will soon grow tired of following us. On the same principle, when thoughts of evil come into our minds, if we will but turn away with indifference and apply our minds to something that is good and ideal, we shall find in due time that we are rid of their companionship and have only the good thoughts we desire to entertain.

Question: How do you explain the fact that a child so often inherits the bad characteristics of the parents?

Answer: We explain by saying that it is not a fact. Unfortunately, people seem to lay their bad traits to heredity, blaming their parents for their faults, while taking to themselves all the credit for the good. The very fact that we differentiate between that which is inherited and that which is our own, shows that there are two sides to man's nature, the side of the *form* and the *life* side.

The man, the thinker, comes here equipped with a mental and a moral nature, which are entirely his own, taking from his parents only the material for the physical body. We are drawn to certain people by the law of causation, and the law of association. The same law which causes musicians to seek the company of one another in concert halls, gamblers to congregate at the race tracks or in pool rooms, and people of a studious nature to flock to libraries, also causes

people of similar tendencies, characteristics, and tastes to be born in the same family. Thus, when we hear a person say, "Yes, I know I am thriftless, but then my people never were used to work, we always had servants," it shows that similarity of tastes and nothing more is needed to explain it. When another person says, "Oh, yes, I know I am extravagant, but I just cannot help it, it runs in the family," it is again the law of association, and the sooner we recognize that instead of making the law of heredity an excuse for our evil habits we should seek to conquer them and cultivate virtues instead, the better for us. We would not recognize it as a valid excuse if the drunkard should say, "No, I cannot help drinking, all my associates drink." We would tell him to get away from them as quickly as possible and assert his own individuality, and we would advise people to cease shielding themselves behind their ancestors as an excuse for bad habits.

Question: Our time of dying is given in our horoscope. What if we alter our manner of living—can we then make our time on earth longer or shorter?

Answer: The time of dying is *not* given in the horoscope. That is a common delusion. The horoscope merely indicates the periods during which a person will be under heavy physical or nervous strain, but it positively does not indicate whether or not he will succumb to it. There are numberless incidents where the horoscope showed what appeared to be almost overwhelming influences brought to bear at a certain time apparently indicating death and through which the person lived quite comfortably. There are numberless other instances where people died at periods when the horoscope, according to the ordinary rules, showed comparatively little strain. Of course the fact is that only a comparatively few of the rules of astrology have been given out by the Masters of evolution, because if full information were given out, it would put too much power into the hands of the masses, which in their present undeveloped moral state they would use for destructive purposes relative both to themselves and others.

As regards changing our tenure of life by altering our manner of living, this can be done only to

Faith

Does the Moon question whom it is serving
When it brings us its soft, mellow light?
Does it pause lest some soul, undeserving,
May rejoice in the beauty of night?

When the evening stars are appearing
And our toil-weary hearts are made glad,
Does God dim the stars' brightness, fearing
That a few of those hearts may be bad?

Before drenching our Earth in beauty
Does He ask us to believe or care?
Must we prove devotion to duty
'Ere the Father will grant us our share?

If we pause a moment and ponder
Such a love for the children of men,
Can we doubt that somewhere out yonder
He will bring us all beauty, again?

Then, why conjure a Future unpleasant,
Or despair o'er the path we have trod?
Let us play our part in the Present
While we trust the veiled Future to God.

—L. Paul Roberts

a very small degree. The archetype at birth is wound up, so to speak, and set to terminate its vibration at a certain time, at which time death ordinarily occurs. If a person lives a very careful life and conserves the energy of the archetype, he may to a certain limited degree prolong his life. On the other hand if he uses his energies up in a profligate manner, the archetype will be exhausted somewhat sooner than the allotted time. We are also told that in those cases where the ego departs radically from the plan which was outlined for it and refuses to make the progress which it should, the Lords of Destiny terminate the life for the sake of the conservation of energy and stop the vibration of the archetype. Similarly, the Lords of Destiny can prolong the vibration of the archetype beyond the allotted time when a person is doing particularly good or important work. □

The Star of Bethlehem

AT ONE TIME we dwelt upon the Sun; that is to say, that even in this Earth Period we were in that central firemist, and we were there up to the time spoken of as the Hyperborean Epoch. There we crystallized until we could not respond to the high vibrations the other solar beings responded to. They could progress in solar vibrations, we could not; therefore we crystallized a part of that firemist to shield ourselves, and in consequence we had to be thrown off. Then when we had gone the proper distance away from the Sun we could crystallize again, and later we threw off that part which is now known as the Moon. Those beings who are now on the Moon were too far crystallized; they were behind us; therefore we had to throw them off. From these two sources come two sets of vibrations that enables us to hold our bodies together.

At that time man was perfectly unconscious. He used his force only to build organs inside. Then gradually the Earth crystallized more and more, until in the middle part of Atlantis the Ego had at last drawn into humanity and man had become possessed of all the vehicles that he has now. Then he became conscious of the world, but he was in a far, far different state than now. When consciousness is awakened it begins to work as a leaven in matter. Since we were in Atlantis and had our eyes fully opened, since the atmosphere cleared and we first saw things about us clearly, we have worked in the Earth in the materials of our bodies as a leaven works in the loaf and raises it. Thus we have lightened conditions and are continually lightening them.

In Lemuria man had the three lower bodies—the desire body, the vital body, and the dense body. Outside hovered the Spirit. At that time the Earth was in a condition of fire. There were masses of crust and around them seething, boiling water, and

volcanic outbursts were very, frequent. Man had at that time lungs that were like tubes. He had a bladder such as fishes have now, wherewith he could lift himself and leap great chasms.

As the Earth condensed more and more, the fire fog atmosphere of Lemuria condensed into a very dense fog in the early part of Atlantis. There those tubes had changed to gill-clefts, and humanity was breathing more as the fish do. This can be seen now in embryological development, where man goes through the same stages he went through at that time. The embryo lies in the amniotic fluid and has these gill clefts, such as man had in the early part of Atlantis. He breathed in that manner in the dense watery atmosphere of Atlantis, but gradually that settled more and more, and man began to breathe as we do now.

In the early third of Atlantis there was a brotherhood; separation into nations had not begun. Mankind was a universal brotherhood, and the Rite of Baptism, which makes one a member of a holy Brotherhood, is in remembrance of that time. Man was truly innocent and lovable, he had no evil in him. In the middle third of Atlantis all that changed. Man began to separate into communities, for the watery atmosphere was clearing somewhat and he was beginning to breathe by means of lungs. The human Ego was very weak, and had to get help from someone else. Therefore Jehovah, the Highest Initiate, the ruler over the Angels and Archangels that work with men, breathed into man's nostrils, gave him lungs, and gave him the Race Spirit in the air that was to curb the hardening tendencies of the desire body and help him to get it under control.

The desire body has control of the voluntary muscles. Every movement we make is caused by desire, and every exertion breaks down tissue and hardens more and more every particle of our tissue.

Therefore Jehovah aimed to help mankind out of their dense condition by means of law. The Race religions are all based upon law. "I am a jealous God, and if you fulfill my commandments I will bless you abundantly and make your seed as multitudinous as the sands upon the seashore," says the Race God; "but if you do not obey I will send your enemies upon you and they shall gain the victory over you." Jehovah is the ruler of all the races and all the religions. He gave to each of these races an Archangel to be their ruler, to be their special Prince. In Daniel 12:1, it is said that Michael is Prince over the Jews, and in the tenth chapter another Race Spirit says: "I am going to fight against the Prince of Persia, and the Prince of Grecia shall go up".

Thus these Race Spirits work with man, punishing him by means of other people, and giving him rewards or punishments for his good or bad deeds. The fear of God and the desire for material reward was pitted against the desires of the flesh and therefore these Race religions under Jehovah are such as to build up the National-spirit. They subjected, or rather they neglected, the individual for the sake of the nation. The interests of the individual are always made subservient to the interests of the nation.

The Race Spirit took special care of certain sects of people, for example, the Levites among the Jews, who were destined specially for priesthood and they were herded around the temples and were specially bred to be the forerunners and teachers of their brethren. Their system of mating and regulation of the sex life of these special protégés produced a more lax connection between the vital body and the dense body, which was necessary in order that Initiation might take place and help man to advance. As long as the Race Spirit works with us we are under the law, we are only overcoming the influence of the desire body; therefore Paul says well that the law was until Christ. Not until Christ came 2,000 years ago, but until "Christ be formed in you." When we release ourselves from the toils of the desire body and live up to the vibrations of the vital body, we become imbued by the Christ Spirit. Then and only then do we rise out of the national, the separating principle. Then do we become capable of being brothers to men.



Unknown provenance

The Archangel Michael

The race spirit of the Old Testament Jewish people, since 1879 Michael is the ruling Spirit of the emerging New Age peoples. He is sometimes referred to as "the Face of Christ."

Now we see why Christ said so emphatically, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Ego was before the nation and must be exalted over the nation. To that end Christ came, because as long as there were nations, there could not be brotherhood. If we have a number of houses, and they are built of bricks, they are unavailable for building a single structure until torn down. When all the bricks have been separated we may begin building. When all nations have been chopped into individuals we may begin to build the grand universal Brotherhood of Man.

That is why the Race religions failed—they separate men into antagonistic groups. So the Race religions must be abrogated. We cannot do away with nations except we separate the individual. Therefore, we have wars; therefore, we have had revolutions,

where men have rebelled against kings and rulers, and have instituted republics. But they are not enough. We want to be free individually. We want to be every man a law unto himself, and this is where a great, great danger lies. We cannot be laws unto ourselves—we cannot be free, until we have learned to respect everybody else's rights.

So then, under the Race religion, men grew by obedience to the law. Under the Christ regime that is to come, man is to rise above law, and to be a law unto himself. As Goethe says:

“From every power that binds the world in chains,
Man liberates himself, when self-control he gains.”

That is the goal—self-mastery—which everyone must gain before he is fit to be a law unto himself, to be above the law, for no one except the very undisciplined man will think to improve matters by having the power to shoot down people. By obeying every law, man rises above law, and by and by he will rise above the need of all law. Then and only then can he be a law unto himself. In the Christ regime man will be impelled and guided by love, and “perfect love casteth out fear.” The Race religions compel man to do right by means of fear, but the Christ religion will impel man through love. Then he cannot do otherwise than right.

All Race religions—every one of them without exception—are looking for someone to come. The Egyptian religion looked forward to Osiris, the bright Sun Spirit; the Persian looked to Mithras; and the Babylonian to Tammuz. All looked for someone to come, to free the Earth. We find the same thing in the Norse mythology. The old Norsemen looked for the “Twilight of the Gods,” when the present regime must perish, and then out of the South from Muspelheim, the region of heat, should come that bright Sun Spirit, Sutar, and he should set up a new Heaven and a new Earth. Such we hear of in all religions, and even in the Christian religion we find them looking forward to a Sun Spirit. At one time in the ritual of the Catholic Church they used the phrase, “Our Lord the Sun.” It is from the visible Sun that every particle of physical energy comes, and it is from the spiritual invisible Sun that all of the spiritual energy comes.

At the present time we cannot bear to look directly

at the Sun. It would blind us. But we can look at the reflected sunlight that comes from the Moon. In the same way, man cannot stand the direct spiritual impulse that comes from the Sun, and therefore it had to be sent by way of the Moon, through the mediumship of Jehovah, the Regent of the Moon. That is the origin of the Race religions. Later came the time when man could take the spiritual impulse more directly and Christ, the present Earth Spirit, came to prepare this. Before the advent of Christ all spiritual impulse came to man by way of the Moon as Race religions. Only by initiation was it possible to get into direct touch with the spiritual solar impulse. A veil hung before the temple.

When the time arrived that the Christ Spirit could be entertained on the Earth, a ray from the Cosmic Christ came here, and incarnated in the body of our Elder Brother Jesus. After the sacrifice on Golgotha had been completed, He drew Himself into the Earth. He said, “This is my body.” He showed the bread, and it is the Earth Spirit that brings forth that bread. “This is my blood.” The juices that are in the plant make the wine. It was not said, “This symbolizes my body or blood.” He said unequivocally, “This is my blood.”

In John 13:18 in our New Testament, it is stated: “He that eats my bread hath lifted up his heel against me.” Luther, who translated the Bible in German, and was not tied by any of the restrictions of the translators of the King James Bible, put it: “He that eats my bread trampled upon me.” We do trample, at every step we take, upon the Earth Spirit, and that Spirit's body and blood is consumed among us, and that Spirit is waiting for the day of redemption, when we shall be lifted so far from our material conditions that it shall be possible for the Earth Spirit to become liberated from its present cramped and dense existence.

The Christ Spirit, then, is the first incoming of a direct spiritual impulse. We know that at the time when the Sun Spirit is in the northern regions we have all the physical impacts upon the Earth. We get all the good there is in the Sun along physical lines; that is the time when the grain and the grape are ripening, and when everything is bringing forth in the Physical World. Then the spiritual impulse is abrogated for the time being; but when the Sun goes



Fresco (200 x 247 cm), Fra Angelico (c. 1400-1455) and workshop, Monastery of San Marco, Florence

The Eucharist

The flood of life that transforms our planet each spring is the life of the Earth Spirit, the Christ, from which come both the wheat and the grape. They are the body and blood of the imprisoned Lord of Life, given to sustain mankind during the present phase of its evolution.

into the winter solstice in December, the spiritual impulse is strongest. Also, we have the spiritual impulse stronger in the night than in the daytime, and we can see that at the time when the days are shortest and the nights are the longest—on that Holy Night that we speak of, when the Christ was born, as a Sun, who was to lighten our darkness—the spiritual influence is then strongest and can be reached easiest. It was this great truth that is at the bottom of the Star in the Holy Night, illuminating the longest and darkest night of the year.

In the olden times, before the Christ came, only a chosen few could follow the path of initiation. Nobody could seek that path except a few chosen ones, such as were the priests and Levites. These were brought to the temples and there herded together. They were married to one another in a certain way, certain people were mated with a definite end in view; namely, that they might develop the proper laxity between the vital body and the dense body that is necessary to initiation. A separation has to take place in order that we may lift the two higher ethers out and leave the other two. That could not be done with ordinary humanity. They were yet much

in bondage to the desire body. They must wait until a later time.

Even with those people who were around the temples, it was very dangerous work to free them. It could be done best at certain times, and this longest night was one of those times. When the greatest spiritual impulse was here, they had a better chance to get in touch with it than at any other time of the year. So on the Holy Night which we call Christmas, it was usual for the Wise Men (those who were beyond the ordinary humanity) to take the ones who were also becoming wise, and therefore entitled to initiation, into the temples. Certain ceremonies were performed and the candidates were entranced. They could not at that time be given an initiation in their full waking state, it had to be done in trance. When the spiritual perception was awakened in them, they could look through the Earth, which became transparent, as it were, and they saw the Star at midnight, the spiritual Sun.

Do not think it shone only at that time. It is easier now than then to see it, for when Christ came He altered the vibrations of the Earth and has been changing them all the time since. He “rent the

temple veil”—He made the Holy of Holies, the place of initiation, open to “Whosoever will!” From that time on no more trance is needed, no more subjective states in order to go through initiation. There is a conscious going forth into the Temple by everyone who wills to come.

We have one more thing to consider: the gifts these wise men brought—the gifts that were to be laid at the feet of the Savior. The legend tells us that one brought gold, one brought myrrh, and the third brought frankin-

cense. The gold we always hear spoken of in symbology as the emblem of the Spirit. The Spirit is symbolized thus in the Niebelungen Ring, for instance. There in the opening scene we see the Rhinegold. The river Rhine is taken as the emblem of the water, and there the gold is seen shining on the rock, symbolizing the Universal Spirit in its perfect purity. Later it is stolen and made into a ring by Alberich, representing mankind in the middle of Atlantis, when the Spirit had drawn into them. Then the gold became debased, was lost, and was the cause of all sorrow on the Earth. Later still we hear of the alchemists who tried to transmute base metal into gold; that is the spiritual way of saying that they wanted to purify the dense body, to refine it and extract the spiritual essence.

Therefore, the gift of one wise man is the Spirit. The next one brings myrrh. Myrrh is the extract of an aromatic plant that grows in Arabia, a very rare plant, very rare indeed. Therefore, it symbolizes the thing that man extracts when he cleanses himself. When he has cleansed his blood of passion he becomes plant-like, chaste and pure. Then his body is an aromatic essence. It is an actual fact that there are men and women so holy that they emit an aroma



Watercolor (101 x 152 inches—largest of the 19th century), 1891, Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), Manchester Museum and Art Gallery

The Gift of the Magi

A Pre-Raphaelite rendition of the adoration of the Magi, the three Wise Men, representing collective humanity, consecrate body (frankincense), soul (myrrh), and spirit (gold) to the Infant Redeemer. An angel bears the star that has guided the three kings on their journey.

from them. It is said of some of the saints, and it is true. Therefore, the myrrh stands for that soul essence that is drawn out of the experience of the body. It is the soul.

The third gift was incense. Incense is a physical substance of a very light character that is often used in religious services. It serves as an embodiment for the ministering unseen forces, and thus symbolizes the body. This is the key to the three gifts that were offered up by the Wise Men—the Spirit, the soul, and the body. As Christ said, “If you want to follow me, you must sell all you have. You are not to keep anything for yourself.” You are to give up body, soul, and Spirit, everything for the higher life, everything for the Christ. Not to an exterior Christ, however, but to the Christ within.

The three Wise Men are said in the legend to be yellow, black, and white, representatives of the three races that we have on the Earth: the Mongolian, the Negro, and the Caucasian. Therefore we see that it is very well shown in the legend that eventually they will all come into this beneficent Christ religion. “To Him every knee shall bow.” To Him each one will in time be led by the Star. □

—Max Heindel

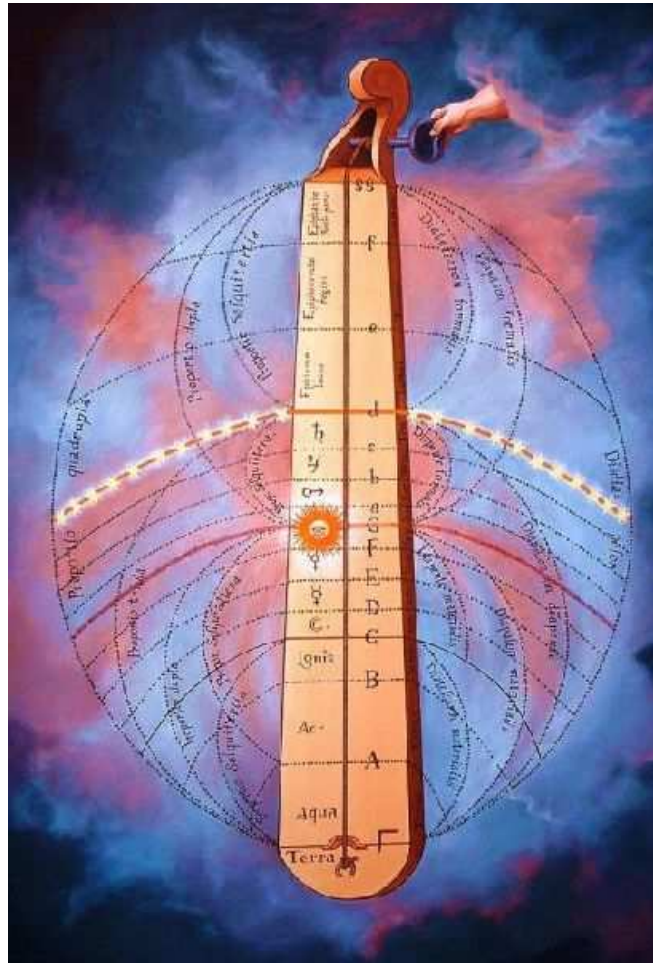
Measure of Amenability to Planetary Vibrations

Part 2

TO PRIMITIVE MAN, driven by the whiplash of saturnine necessity, when not by the animal lust and passions of Mars and the Moon, the world looks gloomy. Fear is the keynote of his existence—fear of animals, fear of other men, fear of the nature forces, fear of everything around him. He must ever be watchful and on the alert; vigilance is eternally the price of safety. But when evolution makes him amenable to the influence of Venus and Mercury, they soften his emotions and brighten the mentality. He begins to feel love and reason as factors in life.

The Sun also begins to brighten his outlook upon life, and sunshine in the nature of man during this phase of his evolution partially dispels the cloud of Saturn. Thus, by degrees, as he evolves and becomes responsive to the music of spheres, one string after another of the celestial harp strikes a kindred chord in the human soul and makes man amenable to its vibrations. Thus as a tuning fork which is struck awakens the music in other tuning forks of even pitch within reasonable distance, so the planets in our solar system have in evolutionary succession struck various chords that have found an echo in the human heart.

But the strings on the celestial Lyre of Apollo are not all in harmony; some are in actual discord. While man responds to certain cries, he must necessarily remain at least partially unresponsive to others. In fact, before it is possible to respond perfectly to the rays of Venus it is necessary for man to conquer Mars to a considerable degree and bring him under control, so that certain undesirable mar-



Engraving by De Bry from Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi Historia*, Part II, *de Arte Naturae, Musicam*, Oppenheim, 1617. Source of color version, Eric Dollard.

The Divine Monochord

According to Fludd, "the monochord is the internal principle which, from the center of the whole, brings about the harmony of all life in the cosmos." Vibratory differentiation in the "Great Chord" of God determines the form, density and function of all worlds and their entities, from the empyrean to the earth. The seven planetary spheres are ranged along the cosmic chord, consisting of an upper, ideal, active octave, and a lower, material, passive octave. The upper principle of light moves down into dark matter, and at their intersection the sun assumes the power of transformation.

tial traits in his nature are kept in the background while others, which may be valuable, are retained. The Venus love which is willing to give all for the loved ones cannot dwell side by side in the heart with the Mars ray which demands all for self.

Therefore the savage must learn to conquer himself in a certain measure before he may become the more civilized family man of modern times.

Under the unrestrained rays of Mars and the Moon parents bring children into the world and leave them to take care of themselves almost as animals do, for they are products of animal passion. The females are bought and sold as a horse or a cow, or else taken by force and carried away. Even as late as the medieval Dark Ages, the knight often carried away his bride by force of arms, practically in the same manner that the male animals battle for possession of the female at mating time.

Thus we see that the first step toward civilization requires that a man conquer one or more of the planets to a certain degree at least. Unbridled passion such as is generated by the primitive Mars ray is no longer permissible under the regime of modern civilization. Neither is the tenet that "might is right" any longer admissible, save in wars when we return to barbarism. The Mars quality of physical prowess that at one time made it a virtue to attack others and take away property, is no longer admired in the individual. It is punished by various means according to law, though it is still effective as far as nations are concerned, which go to war under this primitive impulse for territorial aggrandizement. However, as said, Mars has been conquered to a great degree in civil and social life in order that the Venus love might take the place of the Mars passion.

As previously noted, the children of primitive man were left to their own resources as soon as they had been taught to defend themselves in physical warfare. With the advent of Mercury another method is observable. The battle of life nowadays is no longer fought with physical weapons alone. Brain rather than brawn determines success. Therefore the period of education has been lengthened as mankind has advanced. Education now aims principally at mental accomplishments because of the Mercury rays which accompany the Venus development of modern civilization. Man sees nature from a more sunny side when he has learned to respond to the Sun, Venus, Mercury, Mars, Moon, and Saturn, even if only in a very slight measure.

But although the various stages of evolution have

gradually brought man under the dominance of a number of planetary rays, the development has been one-sided, for it has aimed to foster interest solely in things in which he has a proprietary right: *his* business, *his* house, *his* family, *his* cattle, *his* farm—all are vitally important and must be taken care of. *His* possessions must be increased, if possible, no matter what happens to the possessions and family of anyone else; those are not his concern. But before he can reach a higher stage of evolution, it is necessary that this desire to appropriate the earth and retain it for himself if possible, give way to a desire to benefit his fellow men. In other words, egotism must give way to altruism. Just as Saturn, by wielding the whiplash of necessity over him in his primitive days brought him up to his present point of civilization, so also Jupiter, the planet of benevolence, is destined to raise him from the estate of man to that of superman where he will come under the Uranian ray with respect to his emotional nature, where passion generated by Mars will be replaced by compassion, and where the childlike consciousness of lunar origin will be replaced by the cosmic consciousness of the Neptunian ray.

Therefore the advent into our lives of the Jupiterian ray marks a very distinct advance in human development. As taught in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, we are to advance from our present Earth Period into the Jupiter Period, and therefore the Jupiterian ray marks that high stage of altruism which will then be a prominent factor in our relations, one with the other. It will be easily understood that before we can readily respond to the rays of Jupiter, we must in a measure cultivate altruism and conquer the egotism that comes through the Mercurial reasoning power. We have learned to conquer some of the phases of Mars and the Moon and we may have also learned to conquer some of the lower phases of Mercury and Venus. The more we have overcome these the better we are able to respond to the highest vibratory forces emanating from these planets. Yes, if we strive earnestly we shall some day be able to overcome even the highest stage of the Venus love, which love always attaches itself to an object owned by us. We love our children because they are ours; we love our husband

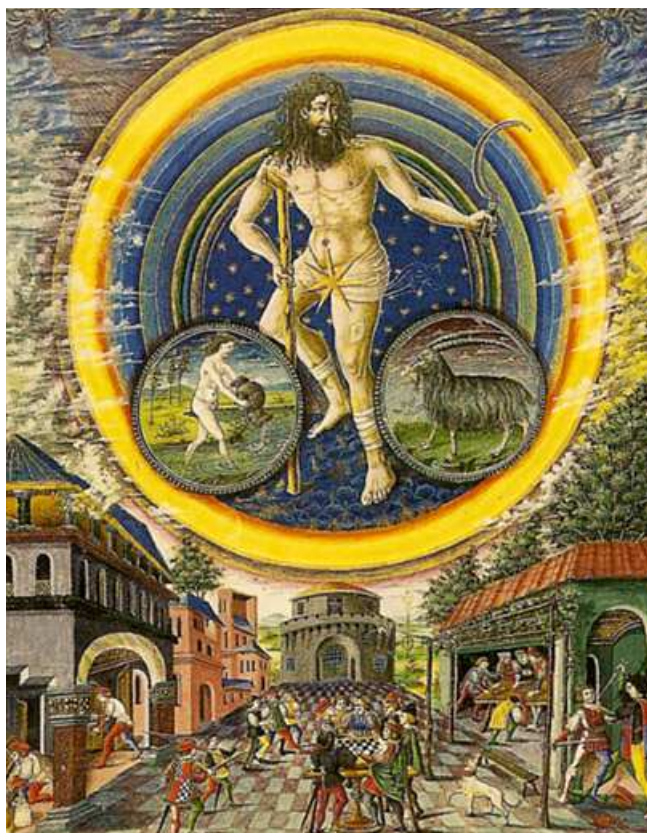
or wife because he or she belongs to us; we take pride, Venusian pride, in their moral characteristics, or Mercurial pride in their accomplishments.

But Christ set a higher standard: “Unless a man leave his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple.” The idea that we should neglect our father or mother or that we must hate them in order to follow Him was far from His mind, of course. But father and mother are only bodies; the soul that inhabits the body of the father or mother is to be loved, not the mere physical garment. Our love should be the same whether a person is old or young, ugly or beautiful.

We should look for the beauty of the soul, for the universal relationship of all souls, and not mind so much the relationship of the bodies. “Who is my mother and my brother?” asked Christ, and pointed to His disciples, those who were at one with Him in His great work. They were closer to Him than anyone else could be through mere physical relationship. This attitude constitutes an upward step from the Venus love, which places the emphasis on the physical garments of the loved ones and leaves out of consideration the soul that is within.

The Jupiterian love, on the other hand, takes cognizance only of the soul, regardless of the body it wears. The Mercurial or reasoning phase of mentality is also changed by response to the altruistic Jupiter. Cold calculation is then out of the question. One who feels the expansive ray of Jupiter is big-hearted first, last, and all the time, and in every respect big-hearted where his emotions are concerned, also big-hearted where the things of the world are concerned. “A jovial fellow” is an apt expression to describe such a man. He is welcomed and loved by everyone he meets, because he radiates not the common selfishness, but a desire to benefit others that breeds in us a feeling of trust, diametrically different from the sense of distrust we instinctively have when we come in contact with a Saturn-Mercury man.

It is a matter of actual experience with astrologers endowed with spiritual sight that every man’s planetary rays produce certain colors in his aura, in addition to the basic color which is the stamp of the race to which he belongs. The man with the thin, sickly blue of a commingled Saturn and Mercury is



Planetary seal, illumination from 15th century manuscript *De Sphaera*, Biblioteca Estense, Modena

Saturn

Time-keeper Saturn (Chronos) carries the scythe, has rulership over Aquarius and Capricorn, and counts as his children, murderers, prisoners, the poor, hermits, and peasants.

to be pitied rather than censured for the avarice and gloom which are his constant attitude of mind. He sees everything in the world through that auric mirror which he has created around himself; he feels that the world is cold, hard, and selfish, and therefore that it is necessary for him to be more selfish and more cold in order that he may protect himself.

On the other hand, when we see the divine blue ray of Jupiter tinted perhaps with the refined gold of the Uranian nature, we realize how differently such an exalted individual must view the world from the usual sordid way of seeing and judging things. Even those who have the faintest Jupiterian tinge are in a world filled with sunshine and blooming flowers; everything in nature is gay and glad. And by looking at the world through such an atmosphere they call forth from other sources a similar response, as the tuning fork previously mentioned generates a similar vibration in another of even pitch. □

—Max Heindel

The Dragon Path

UPON A CLAY tablet peculiarly engraved with cipher characters and mystical symbols, an ancient Initiate left these instructions to his followers, mystic students of Egypt: “The path is one, disciple, yet in the end, twofold....At one end bliss immediate, and at the other bliss deferred. Both are of merit the reward; the choice is thine....Search for the Paths.”

The two paths, as interpreted by the mystics, refer to liberation and renunciation: the discerning of the real from the false, and giving up of the material self.

To a student of stellar knowledge who studies the subject esoterically and views a horoscope through the crystal clear visions of the soul, this ancient missive, when deciphered astrologically, has a profound relation to the twofold Path of Wisdom, or the Trail of the Serpent, the Dragon’s Head and Tail.

The map of the heavens drawn for the time of birth shows what experience the Ego comes to gain in this life. These experiences may be few or many, stormy or peaceful, painful or pleasant, but they are always such as the evolution of the Ego requires. Inharmonious planetary conditions show lessons to be learned. The favorable conditions of the birth map indicate that we are about to reap from the good seeds sown in some previous life; this particular lesson was well mastered and now comes the reward of a deed well done.

The position of the Dragon’s Head and Tail (or the Moon’s North and South Nodes, as they are usually called), is of particular significance in



Photo: Arno Garrais

P. Apian, *Astronomicum Caesareum*, Ingolstadt, 1540, Stadtbibliothek Mainz

The two points of intersection of the moon’s orbit and the ecliptic (sun’s path) are called lunar nodes or “dragon points.” The ascending node is the head of the dragon, the descending one its tail. Both points enable calculation of lunar and solar eclipses. The above disc enables the user to calculate the position of the ascending lunar node on a particular date.

studying the individual’s lesson to be learned in this life. It is this, without a doubt, which the mystic refers to as the one path, “yet in the end twofold.” Many astrological gems may be found spoken of in parables in some ancient mystic literature, to be deciphered by those who will read between the lines. Somewhere in the mystic scrolls of some lost Egyptian papyrus, or clay tablets long turned to ashes and dust, lies many a secret of the ancient art of the star lore.

The Dragon’s Tail shows, by its house and sign position in a nativity, what department of life will provide experiences needed for higher realization.

It is "bliss deferred," for a lesson now learned is bound to have its reward in some later day, or life, which will manifest through ideal conditions existing in this section of the horoscope. When seen in this light, the Dragon's Tail ceases to be the most maligned factor in astrology, as it is often represented.

On the other hand, the position of the Dragon's Head shows through what things, persons, or conditions we reap the reward of a lesson well learned. Therefore the mystic words: "Both are of merit the reward."

Even as the path referred to is twofold so the real mission of the Dragon's Tail is to teach a twofold lesson. By renunciation we gain liberation; by being unselfish in the house and sign matters shown by the position of the Dragon's Tail in our horoscope, we gain freedom and abundance in the opposite section of the wheel of life, occupied by the other extremity of the Reptile. For example, if the Dragon's Tail occupies the eighth house of birth, by being scrupulously honest and unselfish in financial dealings with our partners and the public in general, we gain liberty which money and possessions give, as indicated by the Dragon's Head placed in the second house.

The house containing the Dragon's Head shows that the matters denoted by this section of the horoscope come to us without any great effort on our part; the opposite house, sheltering the other extremity of the Dragon, is an indication that this department of life requires our vigilant efforts to maintain a comparatively harmonious condition. Even then, if we ourselves are not the cause of inharmony, it comes to us through others, showing that disappointments coming through these conditions teach us most effectively the price we pay for having transgressed the laws in some previous life.

The Dragon's Tail nestling in the eighth house cannot cause us to be dishonest and careless of the interests of others if we realize fully the laws of cause and effect, and discern right from wrong. But, we shall suffer such treatment from others in financial matters of partnership and dealing with the public's possessions, and thus we learn the lesson that honesty is the best policy, especially in eighth house matters.

One person having this position of the Dragon's Tail has entered several business partnerships; in each case the partner was an irresponsible, selfish, unscrupulous type of person. The planetary laws will etch this lesson deeply into the consciousness of the native. But the Dragon's Head in the second house compensates amply for these losses. Having suffered from dishonesty of others, his conscience will be strongly opposed to any misbehavior in these matters. However, the native himself, if not recognizing the higher laws, may be the cause of such losses to his associates, and in the end the benefits of the Head in the second house may become void or nil. He thus learns his life's lesson.

Another instance shows the Dragon's Head in the eleventh house, the Dragon's Tail in the fifth house. Although very loyal himself and having many faithful friends, yet he was sadly disappointed in matters of sentimental friendship. Death, misunderstandings, unhappy partings were the result. Later in life the children whom he idolized remained distant to him and severely criticized their father. Through being disillusioned he has learned his life's lesson. In some other life he has probably caused misery to others; now he is on the receiving end himself. The laws of karma are always just.

The Dragon's Head and Tail, when placed over the angles of the horoscope, are very strong in their influence upon the life of the native. A cheery personality, good health, and a strong constitution are promised by the Head over the Ascendant; and the Fates are always kind to those who have this end of the Reptile on the Midheaven, by bringing honors and recognition in worldly affairs. But the Tail in the opposite section of the horoscope will bring limitations, and what honors come to the native will be the well-earned reward of tireless effort; one cannot trust to Fate or Luck.

We gain knowledge through learning, but wisdom is gained only by experiences which add to our insight and true discernment. The effects which the Dragon's Head and Tail bring to us through our horoscopes are such as to cause experiences that will teach us wisdom. The twofold path of the Reptile is therefore aptly termed the Path of Wisdom.

It is entirely up to us whether we will accept the message which the Dragon's Path points out in our nativity. The ancient mystic has said: "The choice is thine." The serpent was used in the ancient teachings to represent wisdom. The experience we gain when the Dragon is transiting a pair of our astrological houses is such as to add abundantly to our worldly wisdom.

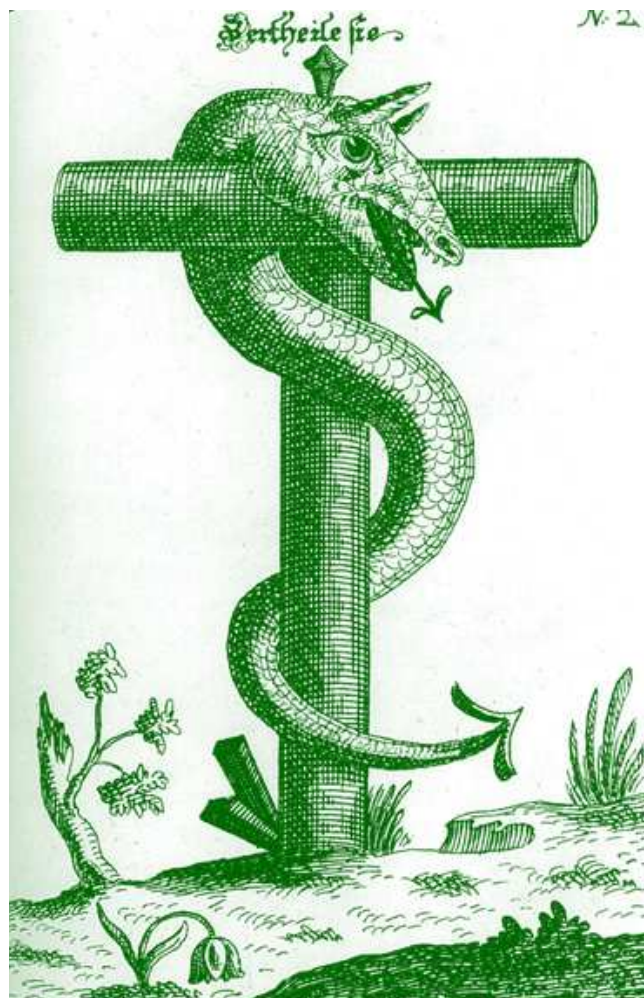
In a certain illustration, the wisdom principle is shown as being worked out in life after life by the constant motion of the Serpent through the horoscope, the result of the action of both extremities being indicated by the symbol of the "Part of Fortune" placed midway in the body of the Reptile. This implies a gain of worldly wisdom equal to material possessions. Through the events which the Dragon's Head and Tail bring us, we reap amply in wisdom and experience. It is truly said that wisdom is a good purchase, though we pay dearly for it.

The Dragon's Head and Tail in the horoscope of birth mark the life lesson to be learned, but their circling through the horoscope after birth, which is completed once every nineteen years, presents the lesson which will be the source of our immediately coming joys or trials.

The Dragon's Head and Tail, by slowly moving through the houses of a nativity, are as heavenly watchers who are cleaning up the house that the Tail is transiting, in order to make us realize the advantages that are ours, and are being mirrored in the opposite house, transited by the Dragon's Head.

The influence of the Dragon is peculiar, inasmuch as it affects the houses, particularly the cusps and angles, much more strongly than it does any planet or luminary it happens to transit in a nativity. The houses rule the fate connected with the environment, that which may be overcome by the inherent will of the native. This shows that the influence it exerts, while greatly affecting our material conditions, is evil or good only as we are in a state of mind such as to respond to either quality.

When the Dragon's Head and Tail transit the degree of the Ascendant and the seventh house of one's nativity, an important period of life will just be entered into. It always marks a period of transition: a new life, new interests, and an altered envi-



A. Eleazar, *Uraltes chymisches Werk*, Leipzig, 1760, Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg

Both an alchemical and religious symbol, the serpent nailed to the cross is a generic depiction of the nodal (serpentine) path of all planets, including the sun, as they intersect (cross over) the straight line of the equator. Planetary cycles of time can thus be measured in terms of these "serpentine" nodes.

ronment. Our contacts with the public, and marriage or business partnership, will also take on a new aspect. The house holding the Head promises pleasant relationships in this department of life but the house which the Tail occupies will now undergo a "house-cleaning"; we shall very probably lose something we valued too much, of the nature of the house in question.

When the Midheaven and Nadir are the points transited by the Dragon, changes in connection with either one of the parents are likely, or problems in domestic and business life. When the Dragon's Head is at the Midheaven, one usually changes his outlook on life, forming new conceptions and views on subjects of vital importance.

For one with occult leanings, this, as well as the transit over the Ascendant, is a sign of spiritual awakening: some step will be taken towards spiritual attainment.

The sixth and twelfth houses show that the native has to render some service to others coming into his life, or that his physical condition will be such as to require this service of others. Confinement and restraint are probable; also occult research, if the horoscope shows these tendencies.

The fifth and eleventh houses bring our social problems to the fore; they show altered relationships with those whom we love and those who love us. Persons we now contact make a permanent influence in our life. Emotions and social instincts are likely to be more active than before or after the Dragon transit.

When the Dragon transits the third and ninth houses, it gives a studious attitude of mind, and opportunities for improvement of the mental abilities; also studies of occultism, religion, and philosophy. Or, it may bring up travels, voyages, publicity, and other matters ruled by these houses.

The second and eighth houses, as a result of the Dragon's passage therein, will likely bring up issues pertaining to finances, inheritance, or the partner's money and possessions. Money or its equivalent will now cause some good fortune or a loss, depending upon which of the houses is being transited by the more favorable extremity of the Dragon.

When the Dragon's Head or Tail transits a double sign, it brings to us dual experiences, or more than one event signified by the house it occupies. Transiting of the planets, and even aspects formed

with them, will bring about experiences relating to the nature of the planet in question, but these experiences will be of less importance and of shorter duration than those indicated by the house position of the Dragon's Head or Tail. They are not to be overlooked, however. The transit over the radical Sun, particularly, is usually accompanied by marked results. This also applies to the strongest planet in the nativity, and to the ruler and subruler of the Ascendant.

The late Evangeline Adams, one of America's better known astrologers, is said to have predicted her own death. She knew that she was then facing a "period of transition," as the Dragon nestled over her Ascendant and seventh house at the time of her sudden death.

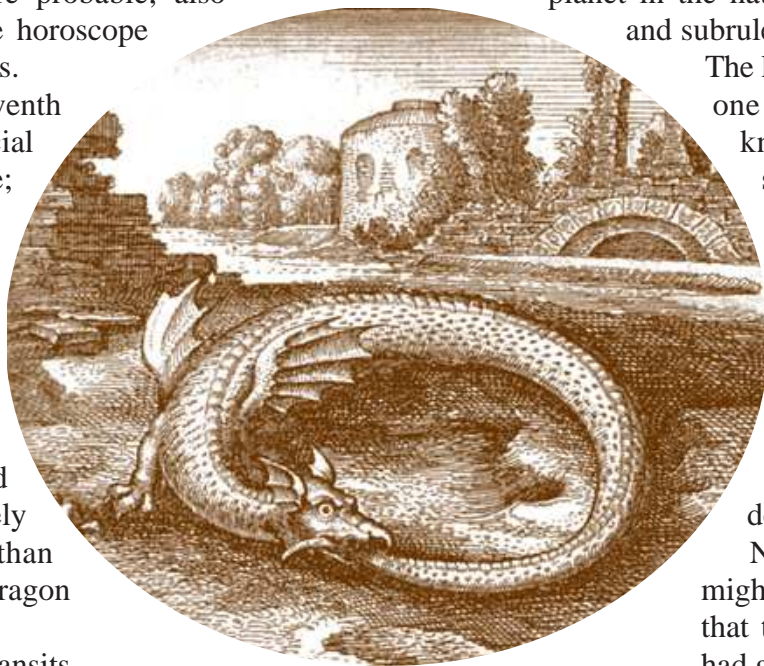
Numerous instances might be given to illustrate that the ancient astrologers had good reasons for stressing the importance of the influence of the Dragon's Head and Tail. By reviewing a number of horoscopes, students of astrology

will prove the importance of these and other less common factors in astrology, not discussed by today's astrologers.

Forewarned is forearmed. Be ever prepared to utilize all the wisdom that the Dragon is about to impart to you through any particular department of your horoscope.

Through the twofold Path of Wisdom, or the Dragon Path, we are shown in which department of life we shall acquire such experiences and knowledge as will prepare us to be the disciples of the Great One. Therefore, in the words of the wise prophet Solomon: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." □

—Louise S. Ivey



Michael Maier, *Atalanta fugiens*, Oppenheim, 1618, Stadtbibliothek Mainz
The Ouroboros, the serpent or dragon swallowing its tail, symbolized transformative processes in alchemy and the return of the year, or the completion of any cycle of time. As such, it becomes a symbol of eternity.

I Heard the Call of a Seraph

Listening as Spiritual Activity

MYSTICS—THOSE who have had the simultaneous experience of knowing, loving, and sensing the presence of God in their lives—link listening with the active reception of God. Entire treatises have been written about the care of the senses in the cultivation of the spiritual life. Saint Maximus (580-662) of the Eastern Orthodox tradition emphasizes the primacy of the senses in the development of holiness: “The powers of soul expand and develop through the senses.”

The words of Isaiah the prophet are clear: “Hear, and your soul shall live” (55:3). The contemporary physician Alfred Tomatis says, “Listening is the royal route to the divine.” In Hebrew, to be heard is already to be answered, and to listen is to obey. The central affirmation in Judaism is: “I am heard.” David Wolpe tells the story of Rabbi Harold Schulweis: “If you ask me—is prayer heard? I’ll ask you—are you listening?”

The early church father Origen (c.185-254) understood hearing as “inner readiness” and listening as an “attitude of soul” toward God for the



Painted for The Rosicrucian Fellowship from unknown provenance

Consecrated listening invites inspiration from the spirits of harmony.

This article is drawn, with permission, from an introductory essay to the book So That You May Be One, FROM THE VISIONS OF JOA BOLENDAS, published by Lindisfarne Books, Hudson, New York 12534. Refer to Book Review section for a review of this work. The writer is harpist Therese Schroeder-Sheker, who maintains dual careers in music and palliative medicine. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in 1980. She is currently the Academic Dean of the School of Music-Thanaology, Chalice of Repose Project, in Missoula, Montana.

inner dialogue which takes place without sound from the soul to God, and from God to the soul. “Sin” (literally: alienation, being off the mark) causes “deafness in the soul.” For Origen, “quiet readiness” brings about a mysterious close union with God, but this spiritual hearing can only be maintained when “linked with action.” Any such inspired “action,” of course—some intentional or contemplative work that serves the soul of the world—prevents this interior listening from

retreating into elitist privatism. This spirituality of listening linked with “action” is immediately put to the test, for example, in the use of music and sung prayer in the care of the dying.

For the Benedictine abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), hearing is receiving; not being able to hear or receive is wilderness, wasteland, desert. “We would be vacant if we were unable to hear and perceive,” she says. She sees the inability or unwillingness to hear as a closure. Furthermore, she understands not listening as a hearing disturbance and the cause of illness. She says that we take what is sacred in with our ears; with sight we come to know, but with hearing we come to understand. In her vision of the end of time, she hears the body of Christ, with a harp at his heart.

The Eastern Orthodox Nicodemos from Mount Athos (1749-1809) tells us to guard the sense of hearing, because sounds impress themselves upon the imagination. He cautions us not only about sound pollution, but about the deadly sounds which carry slander. Slander actually slays the life-formative forces in the soul that fill one with the warmth of enthusiasm. Nicodemos finally says that hearing is available to help us develop compassion and understanding. The former Benedictine monk Tom Moore extends the Nicodemian ideal and is even more explicit: “The soul becomes pregnant through what is heard. Words impregnate.”

The composer and musicologist Anny von Lange (1861-1925) understood the spiritual and sacramental dimensions of listening: “To listen is to make oneself selfless,” she said. For von Lange, hearing-listening as an inner activity creates the capacity for love in the soul, and a listening being is in constant readiness for self-sacrifice.

For me, in music, specifically in the experience of tone, one perceives the activity of the spirit penetrating matter, disclosing the spirit within matter. Hearing-listening is another way of describing the witnessing of spirit impregnating matter. A being becomes audible and in doing so, reveals spiritual activity. This can also explain why hearing-listening is so linked to the development of conscience. I am not suggesting that hearing-impaired people are lacking in conscience. We may be hearing-impaired and still capable of profound reception,



Tapestry, Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98), Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Angeli Laudantes

The figures are based on a cartoon designed for a window in Salisbury Cathedral. Tapestry is woven from wools and silks.

because this reception can occur through the opening of the heart, is extended over the surface of the skin, and is magnified in an inner attitude in which one welcomes the future. These subtleties are present throughout daily life as well as in at least three areas (in which I have intimate involvement): the educational processes devoted to the formation of contemplative musicians; activities and capacities required in the concert and recording world; and in the uses of prescriptive music in the palliative care of the dying.

Having had the opportunity to work with and live in the *visionlieder* of Joa Bolendas has made all the above-mentioned and other teachings leap off the page. When one has the opportunity to experience these things directly, sound reintroduces beauty into the soul like a burning bush. Where there is spiritual fire, there is warmth and light in the music. This is the quality that makes music living and streaming; this is the content that must be poured into the music, transforming chilly laryngeal or fingertip perfection into something

that is vivid and full of life.

It is possible to play or sing well-coordinated correct notes at reasonable tempi and with intelligent phrasing, and yet deliver “dead” music, music that doesn’t move, affect, ennoble, or transform doers or receivers. Any repertoire can be reenacted, “played,” but remain limp, lifeless, impotent. The question arises then about calling something back into existence. How is it done? What happens when we are working with the score for musical prayer? The score is merely a map, the repertoire is still a kind of vessel, and the sensitive musician continually asks: Can I find something in myself to pour into this container? How does one bring living, streaming music into the world? What is involved in bringing something from a mere indication on paper back into fully dimensional life? How does one sing living prayer? Authentic prayer?

Ultimately, to me, these questions revolve around the notion of *transubstantiation*, for living music can only occur at the threshold where matter and spirit meet, where spirit impregnates matter, and is then made audible, freely available to the hungry. In this perspective, the sacramental aspect of music is primary: in living, streaming music, the human, even the broken and wounded human, as either musical doer or musical receiver, can experience the presence of the divine in multiple ways, in body, soul, and spirit. Such music can express joy and celebration or its opposite. I also feel that, ultimately, much authentic music becomes pure prayer in Simone Weil’s sense of the word: rapt attention. To work with the *visionlieder* of Joa Bolendas is to understand music in its (Boethian) capacity as spiritual medicine, as a *materia medica* revealed to care for the body and cure the soul, and as a repertoire filled with life forces, streaming through the universe, connecting and bridging while healing.

Working with Sung Prayer, Working with Visionlieder

Life-in-music and *life-in-prayer* need not be understood as two separate and polarized activities of concentration and expansion. They can flourish in the midst of a fully active life of work in the world and feed the souls of the many when they exist as the warp and weft of one singular fabric:



Fresco, Paris Nogari (c.1536-1601), Sala Vecchia degli Svizzeri, Vatican, Rome

Silence

The sacramental presence that shines through music is intimately bound up with intentional fasting from sound in the practice of silence, spiritual listening, and inner emptiness.

sung prayer. Each point of intersection, each place where music and prayer cross paths and become one, makes room for a mysterious Third. It is in this selfless attitude of pure readiness for the Word of God by which we open ourselves. This soul-gesture asks us to become more chalice-like, and, in doing so, we make room for the divine, the presence of the Third. Hans Urs von Balthasar says, “Mysticism is a particular mission...a continual and complete movement away from oneself, in self-forgetting and virginal readiness for the Word of God.”

As singers working with the *visionlieder*, if we understand the Bolendas legacy in its mystical context, then the work of singing is sacramental. Here, our fleeting, temporal, and imperfect person-

alities die many small deaths in order to make way for something far greater, something eternal. This sacramental presence shines through the music, and is intimately bound up with four interpenetrating fields:

- 1) the spiritual practice of *listening*,
- 2) the intentional *fasting from sound* in the practice of *silence*,
- 3) the practice of *kenosis* or inner-emptiness,
- 4) the cultivation of the burning desire for *communion*.

This communion takes place with the God of love, with the saints and angels, with the communities of the living and the communities of the dead. Even when we shut the door and go into the privacy of our rooms to pray, we do not do so alone. The silence that emerges out of the practice of *kenosis* (emptying ourselves of attachments) is anything but a void. In this pulsating silence, music and sung prayer can be met anew. The immediacy of sensing, knowing, and loving God in sung prayer affects both body and soul. We can describe this deepening process which grows over time as *contemplative musicianship*. This orientation is available to all, in solitude and in community.

The chanters' maxim "*to sing is to pray twice*" summarizes the potency of this direction. It is a line I have heard since youth. Can you imagine how startled and humbled I was then, one grace-filled day in a quiet Alpine mountain village, to receive the potentized version of this saying? The following brief account of a few moments of my initial meeting with Joa distills the urgency of her message: storm heaven, renew prayer, pray for the unity of the churches, everyone's participation is needed.

The Joa Bolendas Legacy Quenches Spiritual Thirst

At the Chalice of Repose Project, our sole focus is the care of the dying with prescriptive music. This contemplative practice is called music-thanaology and is a standard component of supportive care and palliative care in all the health care agencies in Missoula. Our graduates are now going out into the world and are working in hospitals and hospices across the country, and even as far away as Australia. With voice and harp, specially trained



Oil on canvas, Julius Kronberg (1850-1921), National Museum, Stockholm

Saul and David

I Samuel 16:23 records the therapeutic value of music when David's dulcet playing refreshed the melancholy Saul "and the evil spirit departed from him." On the occasion depicted above, however, the moody King, nursing his jealousy of the shepherd-musician's popularity, is impervious to the serene tones and broods over the thought of murder (18:10-11).

musician-clinicians attend to the needs of the dying 365 days of the year. The clinical basis for prescriptive music applications is based on a body-systems phenomenology. It far exceeds the scope of this article to describe the ways in which the *visionlieder* are employed and delivered in palliative care and in prescriptive music, but it is enough to let readers know that the thematic material (of some of the *visionlieder*) is incorporated into our work. The *visionlieder* are a source of inspiration and strength for some of our most difficult and mysterious hours attending the deathbed vigil. The patient response to this music has been remarkable.

To contrast *music-for-the-dying* with *music-for-the-living*, I have also included Joa's music in some way or other in all my solo concerts since 1988, European and American. There are even spe-

cial occasions in which it has been appropriate and desirable to announce the evenings as occasions for sung prayer. One such example is a Pentecost Festival concert that occurred in Rotterdam (Netherlands) each year for eight years. In 1994, the Pentecost theme chosen by the organizers and which I developed in my repertoire concerned *the fire of the heart*. The music I chose began with Hildegarde of Bingen and ended with Joa Bolendas.

It wasn't a typical situation; after six consecutive years, the field had been very sensitively cultivated. The Dutch people joined me in sung prayer! They filled the church with the light streaming from their opened hands and hearts and sang Joa's song of Pentecost light. In her notebooks she wrote, "On Pentecost, when the breath of the Holy Spirit becomes more perceptible, I love to think of people when I am praying. And so it happened, that during prayer I heard the little song: *Jesus Christ, we implore You: through the power of the Holy Spirit, give us LIGHT!* As usual, I sang along, to learn it, and was astonished, how, in doing so, rays of light went out to people who were sick, and often quite unexpectedly to weak or sick places in their bodies."

A few days later, in a Franciscan chapel at de Voorde near Venlo, the Dutch people joined together for an ecumenical evening. Christians, Sufis, and Jews gathered together for sung prayer. I remembered the line from James Agee which Samuel Barber set to music: "Sure on this shining night, I weep for wonder...all is healed, all is health!" What happened? I played the harp and sang pieces from many traditions, but ended in Joa's Pentecost song. It is not that the people "dropped" or forgot their important religious intentions and identities. It must be that they lived a spiritual experience which transcended the definitions that separate us, and allowed them to bridge the differences, embody hope, and generate goodwill to all. They kept singing as if to drink in the light. Later, in silence, they simply would not leave the chapel, preferring to sit with eyes closed and hands still open. It was wondrous.

There is yet another way of singing, however, outside the context of opera, where one actually



Detail, oil on Canvas (1594-96), Caravaggio (1569-1609), Doria Pamphilj Gallery, Rome

Rest During the Flight into Egypt

Music speaks to the human spirit of its home world. An angel comforts and refreshes the Holy Family on their journey to Egypt.

sacrifices something of the volume and much of the vibrato, but nothing of clarity or tonal color. Here the singer sings in something slightly more silvery than pure tone, letting more of the longing for God fill the air, and redirects some of the tonal substance or sound stream back into the body. This is called bone-conduction singing, employing the skeleton as a soundboard. It creates a sweet ringing sound. This voice is not appropriate for all repertoire, but it is completely transformative in many settings and contexts.

I think that to sing from the future, something like Pentecost (*Whitsun*—White Sun) will occur internally, bodily. The skeleton will shimmer from within, and the singer's voice will ring in warm circles like the tones of a bell. As humans, we are meant to sing radiance. This radiance occurs, among other ways, when prayer and love become one in song. If we image health as interior harmony

or as numerous right relationships within the body, between the body and the soul, and between the soul and the spirit, it is then the human voice, in the activity of singing, that discloses our relationships or lack of them. The sacred singing schools of the past (*schola cantoriae*) always sang the repertoire *a cappella*. Were these schools sacred because they sang music for specific liturgies? I don't think this explanation penetrates the depths nor allows for the presence of mystery.

A *cappella* hymnody requires spiritual transparency from all the singers. They must begin in silence, inhale, and, in doing so, breathe in oxygen, take something in. Physically, chemically, this colorless, odorless, and tasteless oxygen then travels from the nose and mouth, moves through the trachea and larynx, through the vocal folds, the vocal tract, and finally, we release the air, now stripped of something. It is exhaled as carbon dioxide, something that acts like a poison in the world. I would like to suggest that the larynx is an alchemical seat where we can transform coal and dark-

ened lead into gold.

There at the larynx, literally a threshold, the dead air can be transformed and spiritualized up one step higher; when this occurs, it is characterized by movement, sound is sculpted, and sensitive listeners can even perceive the flow forms in the various tones. We can transform the poisonous carbon dioxide to some degree, and the air can be released as song, love made audible. Because the larynx is a kind of altar, a holy ground in which some sacrifice is offered, spirit becomes audible, perceptible. Listeners can hear the air shimmer like gold or silver. Logos-filled words, whether spoken or sung, can be understood as a generative activity, for which we have responsibility. This larynx as altar is a second generative seat, a metamorphosis of the motherly womb. These creative, generative capacities and activities, however, are available to both men and women, and I am convinced that this was understood by monasticism in an earlier age. It magnifies the role of fire in truth-filled words and phrases. □

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RELIGION AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity Part 2

THERE ARE different ways of thinking about economic liberalism. One theoretical foundation for legitimating economic competition is the Darwinian principle of life as struggle. As global wealth grows, it is said that the victory of the fitter and stronger will serve the general interest in the long run, even if it means the elimination of the weaker and has as its result less rather than more equality. Thus the utopian dream of equality falls prey to the doctrine of “*Might is Right*,” a doctrine supposedly rooted in the physical, psychological, and even biological reality not only of the human species but of all living creatures. This doctrine has been with us for a long time. It was set forth by Joseph Arthur de Gobineau in his 1853 *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, and in 1859 received a more comprehensive theoretical development in Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

Another dispute between conflicting ideas has also undermined the ideal of equality in our time. Is equality served by erasing differences between people, or by defiantly asserting them? At first the idea gained ascendancy that, in order to advance equality, differences should be denied, ignored, or declared irrelevant. This strategy of deliberate blindness, however, raised the suspicion that it might be just a more subtle way of reinforcing the doctrine of “*Might is Right*.” The historical fact is that programs of leveling—cultural, social, or political—have ended up by serving the interests of the stronger. In addition, the attempted negation of differences has provoked those who see them-



Oil on canvas, 1881, Caspar David Friedrich, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden

The Cross in the Mountains

The vine-entwined, life-imbuing cross rises from mineral earth bearing the crucified Son of God whose sacrificial deed exposes the delusion that liberty, equality and fraternity are primarily sourced and secured by political institutions.

selves in a disadvantaged position to assert all the more insistently what they believe to be their distinctive differences, and to demand respect for those differences.

The contradictions in the modern striving for equality are mainly evident in three areas: ethnic identity, relations between the sexes, and the bodily condition of the human being. Despite the abominations of the Nazi regime, equality between the races remains an issue today. Indeed, in France the claim that human races are not equal has recently re-ignited polemics that we hoped were a thing of the past. At the same time, biologists are reminding us that, in scientific fact, there is but one human race. At a recent conference in Paris, leading biologists from around the world declared that “genetically speaking, a ‘race’ is a population that can be defined by ‘absolute’ markers, that is to say

by a number of biological characteristics that are found exclusively among all the members of this population.” Research all over the world demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of the genetic characteristics of the human species are found in virtually all populations. “In consequence,” the scientists declared, “there exists only one human race, not several.” The notions of equality and inequality, they said, make sense in the political, social, and juridical spheres, but find no support whatever in honest science. And yet the issue of racial inequality does not go away, as witness the recent controversy surrounding the

publication of *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein. Claims about racial inequality require not only a scientific and philosophical response, but also a moral response. My response is derived from an experience when I first traveled extensively in the United States, long

before I was a bishop. I had the privilege of attending in Chicago a meeting organized by the Reverend Jesse Jackson in 1969, and I have never forgotten the antiphonal exchange between the Reverend Jackson and thousands of young black people defiantly shouting, “I am somebody!” In that simple assertion is a profound moral and spiritual truth that must inform our response to all talk about inequality between the “races.”

As agitated today, perhaps even more so, is the question of the relationship between the sexes. Of course there are many forms of feminism, but the more aggressive expression of the feminist movement may be leading our civilization into a blind alley. I think it indisputable, although it is surely disputed by some, that the differences between man and woman are anthropologically grounded. They are irreducible and linked to our condition as creatures. Such differences did not make necessary, and certainly do not justify, social and other

inequalities that are rightly protested. But I am persuaded that such inequalities will be remedied neither by the confusion of the sexes nor by war between the sexes.

The third area in which the ideal of equality is today under challenge has to do with the human condition itself, insofar as our condition is bodily. We are fragile beings. Fragility is the condition of the child in the mother’s womb, of old people who have lost their physical or mental capacities, of innumerable others who are maimed by illness, accident, or their own behavior. The laws of our societies attempt to single out and protect some of

these disabled persons, placing them under guardianship because of their inability to care for themselves or make responsible decisions.

However, legal efforts to protect the most fragile among us are far from comprehensive or systematic. Protection is not extended to the unborn

children, nor to all those who are subjected to one form or another of mercy-killing and euthanasia. Indeed, the tragic fact is that in recent decades there have been ominous retreats from the responsibility to guard those who cannot guard themselves. These retreats have been most dramatic at the entrance and exit gates of life, but there is also slight concern for the countless people in the middle of their lives who must simply put up with the fact that they are “less equal” than those who are healthy and self-sufficient. They are the victims of the unwritten rule that “Might is Right.” They are misfits, domestic exiles, freaks, derelicts, pariahs, untouchables. Through its witness and ministries of mercy, the Church must never tire of declaring to society that these people, too, are somebodies.

In these three areas—ethnic identity, relations between the sexes, and the neediness of the most fragile—the law is made by the stronger, and human beings trample upon the hope for equality.

Human dignity is a derived dignity; it is the gift of God. This is not simply our answer to the question, “What is man?” It is God’s answer. Such dignity must never be subjected to our comparative measurements, for it has its source in the sovereign decision of the divine liberty.

Our reflection on the misadventures of liberty led us to ask again the question of Psalm 8, “What is man?” The opening pages of Genesis provide the answer: He is created “in the image and likeness of God.” Human dignity is a derived dignity; it is the gift of God. This is not simply our answer to the question, “What is man?” It is God’s answer. Such dignity must never be subjected to our comparative measurements, for it has its source in the sovereign decision of the divine liberty. Human dignity must never be understood as resting on the differences that human sinfulness has introduced into history.

As I have suggested, these modern questions are very old. The disciples of Jesus, we are told, quarreled over the question, “Who is the greatest?” (Mark 9:33-37, 10:42-45) In response, Jesus places a child in the midst of them. He also points to himself, noting that they call him lord and master and yet he has come not to be served but to serve. He is the servant, indeed the slave, of his servants, and he freely accepts the humiliation this entails. He accepts such humiliation, as St. Paul says, “to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Phil. 2:8)

God’s revelation could not be more direct in challenging the doctrine that “Might is Right.” The teaching and the life of the crucified Messiah stand in sharpest antithesis to the human will to power. This is not a dialectical relationship between power and powerlessness, but a victorious contradiction. The cross of Christ is indelibly imprinted upon history as the sign that what makes the world intelligible is this permanent and inescapable contradiction. It is a scandal that will not go away. Jesus invites those who would be greatest to make themselves the least and the servant of all.

The entirety of Christian truth rests inescapably and absolutely on this mystery. We dare not attempt to compromise it. The Christian message was rejected again in the nineteenth century by philosophies that invested their hopes in strength and progress. Influential thinkers declared repugnant a faith that invested its hope in a crucified Messiah and produced, they claimed, an ethic worthy only of the weak and cowardly. Their ideologies promised to liberate man from the alienation supported, they said, by Christianity. But now all



Altar piece, oil on canvas, 1873, Carl Bloch, Holbeck Church, Denmark

Christ Blesses a Little Child

The disciples disputed amongst themselves as to who would be the greatest upon the passing of Christ Jesus. He responded, “If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all,” and added that “whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me.” Later, James and John sought privileged status in heaven, prompting the Lord’s words: “Whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be servant of all.”—Mark 9:35, 37; 10:44.

should know better. What they and their ideologies failed to understand is that the secret of true strength is revealed in the weakness of the humiliated Messiah.

This and only this is the way of strength that can conquer violence. Exhibiting the wounds of his suffering, the risen Christ reveals that, across all their differences, human beings are fundamentally equal, even and especially those who are the weak

and downtrodden. Our differences are not eliminated, and many of them are deserving of respect, but they are not the measure of our dignity. This is the key to the secret of human existence and of any promising human future. At the end of this terrible century, we must discover it again. The key, and we must learn to say it again without compromise or embarrassment, is love. It is the love of forgetting oneself in order to give oneself to the other. As Jesus said, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matt. 10:39)

Who is the greatest? The answer is: The one who makes himself the smallest, who loses everything and, as a result, is given everything. This is the principle of what Paul VI and John Paul II have called "the civilization of love." This is not a utopian dream. It is the way reality most truly is, as revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the lives of people beyond number who have followed him. Let the proponents of "Might is Right" scoff if they will. We know through bitter experience the fruits of those who propose alternatives to the way of love.

Confronted by God's revelation, we are asked: What kind of civilization do you want? What are you willing to pay for it? We examined the misadventures of liberty and were led to the mystery of creation. We examined the misadventures of equality and were led to the mystery of redemption. Now we must examine the misadventures of fraternity.

At first flush, fraternity would seem to be no more than the logical consequence of liberty and equality. But it has other roots at the deepest levels of human self-consciousness. Brothers and sisters are born of the same father and the same mother. They are more to one another than are other relatives. Their common origin means that they share one and the same identity. For each, it is not possible to say "I" without entailing "we."

The idea of universal fraternity reflects the wish that all human beings might live together as loving brothers and sisters, each with the other as "another self." The commandment to love one's neighbor is given in Leviticus (19:18), and is joined by the Gospel with the commandment to love God (Matt.

5:43). The modern aspiration toward fraternity conforms to this commandment. One can treat like oneself only another self, or somebody who is perceived to be another self, as with a brother or sister.

The demand of fraternity raises its own questions, questions that have no easy answers. Again, the key question was put to Jesus: "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29) The need for fraternity is urgently felt in our day, and becomes more urgent as we consider the new millennium that is almost upon us. And yet, it seems that the demand is ever more cruelly crushed by the increasingly powerful means at man's disposal. Once again, there are three problems that must be addressed and may be decisive for the human future.

First, there is the problem of peace. At the beginning of the eighteenth century a new literary genre was born, the literature of pacifism. It began in 1712 when the Abbe de Saint-Pierre published his *Project to Make Peace Perpetual in Europe*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Judgment on the Project of Perpetual Peace* was published posthumously in Geneva in 1782, and in 1795 an aging Immanuel Kant produced his *Project of Perpetual Peace*. There the idea of a "society of nations" was first formulated.

Also in our century we have seen various efforts to produce political, legal, and diplomatic systems that would ensure peace between the nations of the world. And yet, never before in human history have wars killed so many people as during these last two hundred years. After the end of the Cold War, some are so foolish as to think that the specter of war has vanished. More thoughtful people understand the terror of conflicts that may await us in the future.

The fear of war, the wish for peace, and the dream of universal fraternity are typically expressed in a synchronic vision of the world. That is to say, we think in terms of the relationships between peoples and nations at a given moment of history. But there is also the phenomenon of diachronic fraternity, of fraternity across time. Here I would direct our attention to the relationship between the generations. Probably more than others, Western societies, and the United States in particular, have dreamed of fashioning the rela-

tionship between older and younger generations on the model of fraternity. The consequence, and often the intent, is to eliminate the factor of authority that is inherent in paternal and maternal responsibilities.

This aspiration to fraternity has influenced deeply our educational systems and our everyday ways of living, popularly called our lifestyles. The result of this misadventure of fraternity has been, once again, just the opposite of what was hoped for. The voluntary withdrawal of parents, or their inability to play their role that necessarily involves the exercise of authority, has broken the vital links of transmission from one generation to another. The result is that the young then constitute themselves as a separate, autonomous social class. This is the “youth culture” that declares itself a world unto itself.

The attempt at diachronic fraternity ends up by undermining both diachrony and fraternity. When the responsibilities of paternity and maternity are denied, memory is weakened, and the very notion of history becomes unthinkable. Human experience is compressed, and distorted, by an all-pervasive presentism. The attempt at diachronic fraternity results in discarding life as something that, in its very essence, is received and is to be given to others. When young people no longer know that they have received their lives from their parents and, through them, from God, life becomes meaningless. Life is no longer open to others and, ultimately, to God.

This trend does not signify “the end of history,” as some suggested at the disappearance of the hostile brother, meaning the former Soviet Union. In fact, the disappearance of the father could be a much more momentous development. We must not forget that civilizations that appear at some point in history can also disappear when they forget their origin and destiny. Paul Valery rightly said, “We civilizations know only too well that we are mortal.”

The third domain in which the aspiration to fraternity is being put to the test is the ecological. The appearance of ecological concerns has several facets. At one level, it may reflect a kind of psychological regression, a longing to return to “Mother Earth” as depicted in ancient mythologies. But I would raise the caution that it is too



Oil on canvas, 1882. George Frederick Watts (1817-1904), Manchester Art Gallery

The Good Samaritan

“To be neighbor to others as God is neighbor to us—this is a possibility only through our participation in the resurrected life of Christ.” All we do is unto Christ.

easy to caricature the excesses and distortions that march under the banner of ecological concern. Environmentalism asks a very important question touching on fraternity, namely, What is humanity’s spiritual goal when the aim is to master the cosmos?

The Bible teaches that the world has been given to man with the mandate that he care for it, so that it may bear fruit to the glory of the Creator whose deputy man is. In this view, man is like a father who receives from his father a legacy from which all the members of the family are to benefit. The cosmos may be seen as the home inhabited by the human fraternity. We are to cherish this home, exploring its greatness and its secrets. For us human beings, the cosmos is like the body of our bodies, and we are responsible for all the creatures that surround us and depend for survival upon our care of the world in which we and they live.

Peace, the relationship between generations, and

ecology—in all three areas the aspiration to fraternity is challenged. In all three, God’s revelation provides our culture with directions for fostering fraternity among peoples and nations, between the generations, and with the entire creation. If we ask how it is possible to foster fraternity in all these dimensions, we are in fact asking the question put to Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” After telling the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus responds with another question, “Which of these, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” And the lawyer who asked the first question said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” “Go, and do likewise,” said Jesus (Luke 10:25-37).

Most translations say that the Samaritan “had compassion on” the man by the roadside. The words used by Luke, however, indicate that the Samaritan was moved to pity “deep in his entrails.” The Gospels reserve this Greek expression to describe not human compassion but what Jesus feels when he encounters the suffering. This is the case when he meets the widow of Nain (Luke 7:13), when he sees the crowd without a shepherd (Mark 6:34), and when the two blind men call out to him as he leaves Jericho (Matt. 20:34). This is also the expression used to indicate God’s response when he sees his wounded and lost creatures. It is how the father felt when he saw his prodigal son coming back home (Luke 15:20); it is the attitude of the master toward the servant who could not pay his debt (Matt. 18:27).

In the Good Samaritan parable, the answer reported by Luke—“The one who showed mercy on him”—employs the Greek word normally used in the Gospels to depict God’s love as it is manifested in his Son. Thus also the Blessed Virgin Mary in her Magnificat: “And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation...” (Luke 1:50) Zechariah takes up the same truth in the Benedictus: “To perform the mercy promised to our fathers...through the tender mercy of our God when the day shall dawn upon us from on high...” (Luke 1:72, 78) When Jesus concludes the parable with the command to go and do likewise, he is saying that to “make oneself neighbor” to the wounded, the abandoned, and the needy is to

act divinely. It is to act as the Heavenly Father has, in Jesus Christ, acted toward us.

Even for the believer, such a command seems to be altogether too much. It challenges our human weakness. This command can make sense only within the logic of the mystery of the glorification of humanity. Liberty led us to an encounter with creation; equality led us to an encounter with redemption; and now fraternity brings us to glorification. To be neighbor to others as God is neighbor to us—this is a possibility only through our participation in the resurrected life of Christ. In the language of St. Paul, the Holy Spirit comforts our spirits, giving us the strength to love as we are loved (Rom. 8:16). The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to taste already now, in this historical moment before the End Time, the first fruits and the pledge of the final glorification when humanity enters God’s abode and becomes the temple of its Creator and Redeemer (2 Cor. 1:22).

Of course this participation in the final consummation is an act of faith, a glimmering of dawn that stirs and sustains hope for the sunrise. The contradictions that challenge and test our culture’s aspirations to liberty, equality, and fraternity also challenge and test faith’s response to these aspirations, which are in fact engraved in history by God’s revelation. How can we help our culture to keep on hoping in the face of so much that seems to deny any reason for hope?

I have contended that the aspirations to liberty, equality, and fraternity have their origin in Christian faith. So also their future depends upon Christians who know that, despite all their misadventures these aspirations are not in vain. They are not sentimental idealism or utopian delusion. They are human responses to God’s love and faithfulness in creation, redemption, and glorification. Even when others despair, we Christians must, for our sake and for the sake of all humanity, keep the faith. This is the mission we have received from God as the disciples of Jesus Christ. Gratefully receiving what has been given us, we are to live out the gift; until the end of time faithfully bearing witness to the advent of the Kingdom of God among us. □

—Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger

The Chemical Manipulation of Consciousness

THAT AMERICA IS A DRUG culture is no news. Though this reputation first brings to mind illicit drugs, whose illegality occasions tremendous violence and cutthroat profiteering, far more profit and just possibly more violence, though of a subtler nature, are associated with legal drugs that flood the American marketplace and the bloodstreams of its consumer citizens.

Legal drug users are quick to distinguish between their legitimate ingestion of synthetic chemicals and the criminal practice of using drugs simply to “get high” or to induce a mood change. Licit drug use is remedial, or, to invoke the full sanction, medical. One has an illness or dysfunction which drugs may be able to eliminate, or at least make more tolerable, so that, for instance, one may live with less pain, or get more sleep, or reduce anxiety, or weight or... Whereas, so the argument goes, the recreational use of drugs is not medically motivated. The user simply wants some excitement or a quick ticket to euphoria.

The drawback with most drugs is their harmful and even fatal side effects. Many, particularly pain reducers, carry the potential for addiction. Yet it is commonly thought that the most addicting drugs are illegal, which is *why* they are illegal. Where does that put cigarettes, whose primary active ingredient, nicotine, has been demonstrated in clinical tests to be more difficult to stop using than heroin and which alone is causally related to over 400,000 deaths annually in the United States?

Recent pharmacological studies (*Time*, cover article “How Mood Drugs Work...and Fail,” September 29, 1997) have investigated a class of chemicals called neurotransmitters, including norepinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin, whose function is to carry electrical impulses between noncontiguous nerve cells. The drug-induced activation and release of these neurotransmitters, or the improvement of their contact with receptor sites, has made possible the treatment of a host of disorders that seem to derive from this neurotransmitter func-



© Charles Lewallen

St. John's wort

Described as “Germany’s favorite antidepressant” (Time 9/22/97), this herbal folk remedy (Hypericum perforatum) is almost as potent as Prozac, without Prozac’s troubling side effects.

tion. Chemical manipulation of this mechanism has spawned: the antidepressants prozac, zoloft, paxil, and elavil, whose naturally occurring analogue, St. John’s wort, has been used in Europe for centuries; redux and pondimin for inducing the “full” feeling that dieters seek; prozac and zoloft for a variety of problems, including eating disorders and obsessive-compulsive behavior; and clozapine, the antipsychotic drug that reduces schizophrenic hallucinations. All these drugs affect serotonic activity in various ways.

Surely amelioration of these

conditions is desirable. But two mitigating considerations dampen our enthusiasm. One is purely medical. It is rare that a man-made chemical designed to treat a human disorder, be it physical, emotional, or mental, doesn't have side effects ranging from the merely annoying to the life-threatening. The subtle hazard is posed by those drugs whose negative impact is imperceptible in the short term but grave with extended use. The human organism is averse to virtually any synthetic compound that does not replicate a naturally occurring substance. Because the human body is an astonishingly intricate network of interrelated subsystems, the introduction of one active compound may have repercussions that affect the entire physical ecology. It has been observed that knowledge of the universe is greater than that of the micro cosmos, the human body. Most drug therapies are therefore experimental and fraught with unknown consequences.

A second concern with the pharma-chemical "doctoring" of the human body is that it is done in ignorance of both occult anatomy and the esoteric understanding of the origin of human disorder—at whatever level. The human ego—as threefold spirit indwelling a threefold body, from which, with the link of mind, it elaborates a threefold soul—has bequeathed its present bodies to itself as the deserved inheritance of the sum total of its former lives. What we each are is a living chronicle



Oil on Canvas (c.1580), 42-1/2 in. x 31-1/2 in., Paolo Veronese (1528-1588), Brera Museum, Milan

Christ in the Garden Supported by an Angel

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us....And we know that all things work for good to them that love God."—Romans 8:18, 28

and embodiment of our cumulative past's will and testament. My today is heir to all my yesterdays. My discomforts, my so-called abnormalities (be they a heart murmur, hare lip, hodgkins disease, hemorrhoids, or hallucinations) present to me the effects of self-initiated prior causes. Typically, the abuse or misuse of a higher body in one life manifests in a lower-body impairment the succeeding life: from the desire body to the vital and from the vital to the dense physical. The correlations are not always obvious!

What we now experience as ill health and dysfunction is a reformulation and outpicturing of our former beliefs, feelings, and deeds. We are meant to experience this present condition, to live, if need be, disabled, disordered, discouraged, seemingly deprived—*until* we can see more light, better understand how we got to be where we are, know in our heart that whatever distress and pain we now sustain is neither arbitrary nor unjust. Indeed, it is finally a means by which we can be brought to the knowledge of a deeper, a holy, a God-blessed purpose to life. Then we realize that the most potent, the most effective medicine we can be given, we ourselves must prescribe and administer—and it starts with acceptance of our condition as we perceive it. This honesty, this frank, good-natured self-encounter is the portal to real healing. Not resignation but transformative understanding. Whether or not we carry our particular debility or suffering through the rest of our life, a deeper sense will circumscribe the affliction, make it more finite, because our mind has been reconciled to our plight. We know that God can only be unbounded goodness and total wisdom and that in His Mind we are always and only

whole. This understanding, perfectly realized, or at least fully affirmed, is the substance of miracles—those transformations medically classified as “spontaneous remissions,” or, as some allow, “acts of God.”

Drugs have their role. Certainly anesthetics are a mercy to those who require surgery, and it is but common decency to prescribe palliatives for persons suffering excruciating terminal and even temporary pain. But increasingly the esoteric student, intent upon in-personing the Christ life, shuns no Gethsemane or Golgotha in his desire to bring light to the universe of his physical, vital, and desire bodies through spirit-infused thinking. In all honesty, we can't really profess Christ, put Him on, and then not submit all that hinders this spiritual investment to the conviction that God the Father, the Great Physician, is attending our “case” and seeking our complete cooperation. We might ask, were he living today, would the Apostle Paul consult a physician about the mysterious “thorn in his flesh”? He did thrice consult his spiritual Doctor, the Lord, with the hope that his affliction might depart from him. “And he [the Lord] said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee.” Heroic medicine? Yes, but then our strength can be made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:7-9).

To medicate our problems, to chemically manipulate our moods, is to deny ourselves the opportunity to learn from our past actions, to defer their full impact and teaching value, and to tacitly rebel against our lot, as if it weren't of our own making. And the lot of many seems grievous indeed. In close, it is. But no one is spared what is necessary to arrest their careering into loveless egoism and turn them toward the saving power of the inner Christ.

The greater the understanding of the physical body's biochemical processes, divorced from occult laws and the soft heart, the greater the temptation to use wonder drugs to make us feel more like natives of the material world. The dangers of such accommodation, such delusion, such dumbing down, are grave. Knowledge of esoteric truths and acting on this knowledge is the best possible medicine that can be prescribed for all our mortal ills. □

A Few Thoughts on

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- I cannot pray **Our**,
if my faith has no room for others and their need.
- I cannot pray **Father**,
if I do not demonstrate this relationship
to God in my daily living.
- I cannot pray **Who art in heaven**,
if all of my interests and pursuits
are in earthly things.
- I cannot pray **hallowed be Thy Name**,
if I am not striving, with God's help, to be holy.
- I cannot pray **Thy kingdom come**,
if I am unwilling to accept God's rule in my life.
- I cannot pray **Thy will be done**,
if I am unwilling or resentful
of having God's will direct my life.
- I cannot pray **on earth as it is in heaven**,
unless I am truly ready to give myself
to God's service here and now.
- I cannot pray **give us this day our daily bread**,
without expending honest effort for it,
or if I would withhold from my neighbor
the bread that I receive.
- I cannot pray **forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us**,
if I continue to harbor a grudge against anyone.
- I cannot pray **lead us not into temptation**,
if I deliberately choose to remain in a
situation where I am likely to be tempted.
- I cannot pray **deliver us from evil**,
if I am not prepared to fight evil
with my life and my prayer.
- I cannot pray **Thine is the kingdom**,
if I am unwilling to obey the King.
- I cannot pray **and the power and the glory**,
if I am seeking power for myself
and my own glory before the glory of God.
- I cannot pray **forever and ever**,
if I am too anxious about every day's affairs.
- I cannot pray **AMEN**,
unless from my heart I can say,
“Cost what it may, this is my prayer.”

—Anonymous

BOOK REVIEWS

So That You

JOA BOLENDAS is not her real name. But her visions were real, real for the world, for humanity. She did not obtain these insights by cleaving to the arduous path of initiation. They are not the direct result of her personal achievements, spiritually advanced as she was. They were vouchsafed her. She was elected, preconditioned by a prayerful and pure life, to receive and disseminate messages from a number of human and heavenly beings intent on promoting light-forged world harmony. Joa is described by one of her friends as “fierce, like fire, yet humble, like a candle, only brighter.”

This reviewer deferred the book’s several introductions until after reading the primary text, a sequence based on the common tendency for introductory comments to bias all but the most objective reader. However, in this instance, the reader of *So That You May Be One* (Lindisfarne Books, 1997) is urged to read Robert Sardello’s most helpful introduction *first*. Among other things, he defines and distinguishes between the various kinds of spirit-sourced writings. It is evident that we are not dealing here with “channeled information” because Joa Bolendas is completely awake and aware during her visions. She is not taken over by spirit beings or spoken through by them. She retains her own voice and independence of con-



Oil on copper Carlo Dolci (1616-1686), Ringling Museum of Art, Florida

Saint John the Evangelist

Writing the Book of Revelation

While the title of her book comes from John's Gospel, Joa Bolendas' auditions from the spirit world have the decisiveness and impact of the Apocalyptic text. Above, the one closest to Jesus' heart envisions the Woman clothed with the Sun.

May Be One

sciousness. Indeed, she frequently summons the courage to ask questions of her spirit visitors.

Joa is not a medium. Mediums report what they see. What is seen, however, does not in turn “operate as an interactive partner, adding, modifying or correcting the medium’s experience,” as it does with Joa. Her revelations are visionary experiences. She truly sees. But does she see true? We are not in a position to confirm the ultimate truth of her visions; that is properly an

individual assignment. But we can, as Sardello does, make some preliminary distinctions between hallucinations and visions. We can determine whether the origin of the appearances are from within or from outside the body.

Hallucinations result from a “distorted sensation of physical reality,” while the subject of visions “exists in a world other than physical reality.” Symptoms accompanying hallucinatory experience include: changes in the physical body; a “confusion” of subject-object boundaries, in which the person “fuses with” the environment; “a destabilizing of everything sensed; the stoppage of time; a boundlessness of space; and the disintegration of the order of experiential connection.”

In auditory hallucinations one hears voices but does not “see” the objective beings who speak. Moreover, the voices both seem to surround and

press in on the hearer and are typically derisive, commanding, or persecuting. In short, authentic visionary experiences do not curtail the freedom of the person receiving them.

A final distinction may be considered. Are Joa's visions the product of "active imagination"? Do they derive from dream or fantasy life, or are they conjured from the realm of the unconscious and then conversationally engaged as if they were real? Sardello, a psychologist and founder of the School of Spiritual Psychology, writes that "in such imaginal conversations the images do not cross the boundaries of their own world

and intermingle with outer reality. Their reality is purely psychic." Visions, on the other hand, are not restricted to the inner world. Joa Bolendas would see rays of light entering the head and issuing from the mouth of ministers delivering inspired sermons, or

observe menacing snakelike arms kept at bay by an auric field of light surrounding the spirit-filled speaker.

The student of Western Wisdom Teachings has been alerted to the dangers of directly seeking spiritual phenomena, either as diverting curiosities or as benefits conferred by acquiring occult powers. Knowing, then, that this book consists of a series of revelations from spirit worlds, how should we encounter it? Not as a cache of esoteric information but as the occasion for transformative experience. There *is* information here that may be new to the reader: Mary relates that for a period of ten years Jesus and Mark journeyed to mystery centers in the company of two other God-fearing men; Christ informs Joa that Mark's gospel was the first to be written and that he carried the word to the Copts in Egypt and to the Armenians; Joseph reports that Jesus had four younger brothers and that he (Joseph) died when Jesus was twenty-eight;

John is said to have traveled to southern France and southern Italy; Luke acknowledges that John was Lazarus.

These and many other details are intriguing—and controversial. But, finally, they are just data, more information. Sardello writes that in our age of burgeoning information, "There is a very great danger that abstraction will effectively seal off the possibility of learning anything truly new." And so saying, he opens up a clear view to the central deception of the technology-driven information juggernaut that is the engine of western world

economies and threatens to displace theistic faiths as *the* contemporary religion, the agent of millennial utopia.

The "inherent deception" of the information revolution is that "knowing new information has little to do with learning. Learning is the transformation of our body and soul and the

vivifying of our spirit through the development of otherwise dormant capacities." Information has only quantitative value and horizontal impact on thinking and being. More is only more of the same. It allows us to be more clever, but not more human. The pursuit of information can easily become addicting, as it promises ever new horizons, new disclosures. Newness takes on independent value and is sought for its own sake. Information lures its purveyors and consumers with the promise of power. On the material plane, on the surface of things, perhaps. But in the winnowing of life's harvest, information is chaff.

Only as the carrier of soul and spirit does information have real qualitative value. When the medium itself becomes the message, humans become more like the computers they have invented to access and exchange information—mechanical processors and virtual warehouses of bits and bytes of data.

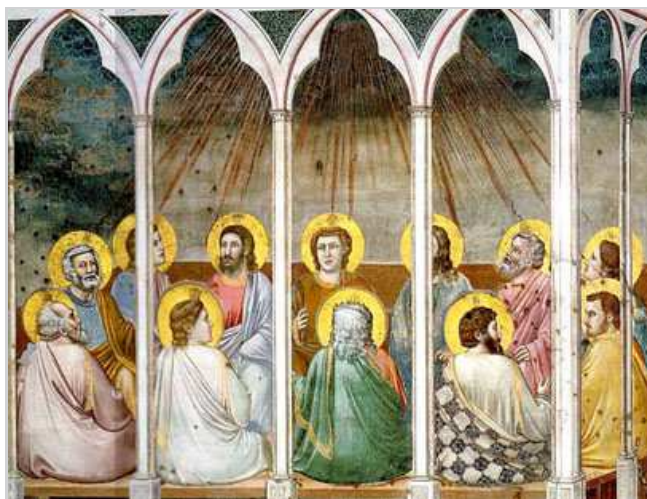
Information has only quantitative value and horizontal impact on thinking and being. More is only more of the same. It allows us to be more clever, but not more human. The pursuit of information can easily become addicting.

These prefatory remarks are important for a right reading of Joa Bolendas' visions. Their value and substance will elude us if we do not adopt the attitude described to Joa by one who has risen from the dead: "Devotion and concentration are needed. Whenever someone receives revelation, the brain works more quickly and the heart beats more slow-

When are we most likely to truly know something? When we are undividedly present, focused, open, and empty—when we have the humility to allow our pre-existing understanding to be challenged, undone, nullified.

ly." The speeding up of the brain is not a mechanical acceleration; it describes another kind of mental work—intuitive thinking, thinking with the heart. We cannot be in a hurry to get something from the spirit worlds. Rather do we present ourselves in a state of consecrated poise, inward stillness, and alert abeyance. Most information does not warrant or merit devotional attention. Indeed, it is to be discouraged. But if the soul does not participate in what revelation offers, its power to reveal is denied and no transformation is possible.

One last comment. While *So That You May Be One* consists of recorded visions, supersensible seings, those visions are accompanied by nonearthy words spoken from out of spirit worlds, words which the writer was at pains to translate. We come closest to being where the hearer was when we adopt a disposition of rapt and reverent listening, as when we adjust ourselves to receive something important that another wishes to tell us. To do this we must quell all inward self-talk, dismiss any expectation of the extraordinary, even surrender our sense of knowingness. For when are we most likely to truly know something? When we are undividedly present, focused, open, and empty—when we have the humility to allow our pre-existing understanding to be challenged, undone, nullified.



Fresco, c.1305, Giotto (c.1266-1337), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua

The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

"Since Pentecost you are entitled to ask directly for God's Spirit."

The thrust of *So That You May Be One* is just that—becoming one—as individual persons and as members of the ecumenical church of collective humanity. The book is divided into three sections: (1) Joa's early visions, which assumed full flow in 1957 when she was forty, and excerpts from her journals. (2) Visions in which saints, angels, church martyrs, and religious figures, including Mary and Jesus, deliver messages of wisdom, reveal the value of icons, describe the treasures of faith (baptism, repentance, prayer, Pentecost), and trace the development and spiritual needs of the major peoples of the world. (3) Laconic, oracular pronouncements by Paul, the Gospel writers and other holy figures on the Old and New Testaments, including Acts and Revelation. They distinguish between what is merely historical and dated and what is symbolic and of enduring relevance.

The self-identified figures speak on many subjects and in many ways. They give:

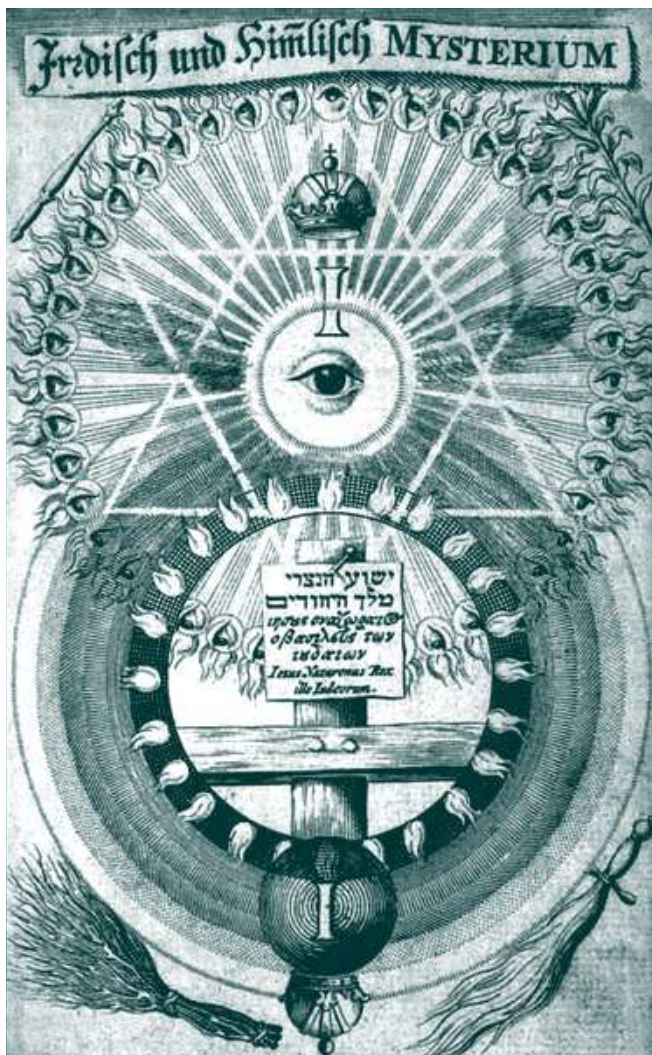
Warnings: "Prayers, many prayers are needed to influence the power of Islam."

Prophecies: "The first unity in soul and spirit will be achieved between these two peoples" of China and Africa. In the future Johannine church "there will be no spiritual domination."

Cultural Diagnoses: "India has become lost in its own mythology."

Biblical Re-Visions: "First God created a woman."

Gospel Paraphrases: "Whoever loves his father



Jacob Böhme (1575-1624), *Theosophische Wercke*, Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg

"The wheel of life turns and the spirit of love is in its axis—at the very core of life." Here, at the core of the terrestrial wheel, is the cross of incarnation, upon which the Heart and Source of love was impaled: For God so loved the world.

or mother more than Christ is not free."

Advice for Soul Development: "It is better to pass over into sleep having your eyes on earthly matters" (nightly retrospection!).

The book concludes with twelve *visionleider* or sung prayers heard by Joa and transmitted for scoring to harpist Therese Schroeder-Sheker. In her own prefatory essay entitled "I Heard the Call of the Seraph," (see excerpts beginning on page 39 of this issue) she describes these angel-born songs as "a veritable world and spiritual *materia medica*." "They purify and renew body and soul."

That You May Be One was translated from the German by John Hill, a Jungian therapist and friend

of the mystic, who contributes his own enlightening thoughts and respectful remembrances. Joa told him that it was "most important that these records be published in America," which retains "much of what is primitive in humankind" but is destined for "a rich period of blossoming and maturity" linked to the Christian way of life.

When Joa Bolendas was sixteen she had a vision attended by the words, "Wake up, keep watch, and pray." Here is a prescription for individual healing and world unity. To wake up is "to enter into faith as a spirit mode of knowing." But faith can go to sleep, can sink into the material mode of knowing, the routine of gathering and processing information dissociated from spirit awareness. What keeps faith vital and vertical is prayer, "the soul's mode of conversation with the spirit" and the means by which latent soul powers may be developed into active capabilities enabling intercourse with the worlds of spirit.

If one were to formulate a progression on the continuum from unconscious to conscious contact with the spirit worlds, it might be something like the following: Channeling, mediumism, active imagination, prayer, vision, initiation. Joa Bolendas lived in the upper end of this continuum. She kept her own identity when holy messengers appeared before her. She insisted on her own freedom (having been raised with a strong Protestant ethic!), and was informed that human dignity and spiritual development are not possible without it. If the reader engages her "visions" with a portion of the heightened prayerfulness that characterized the regular disposition of her soul, whether in or out of visionary experiences, the silences and the sounds, the intonations and emphases of these exactingly chosen words will work a subtle transformation in his soul.

In conclusion, we may heed the words spoken to Joa by Mary: "Hold on to this: The new church, the unified church, is all that makes men and women into people of light....Do not be small-minded; be open and generous! You will discern all things through love." And the measured words of an angel: "The wheel of life turns and the spirit of love is in its axis—at the very core of life." □

—Carl Swan

HEALING

Constructive Living

RADIANT HEALTH bespeaks constructive living. The faculties of the spiritual, mental, and physical vehicles are used in a constructive manner—that is, they are used to add to the sum total of progress and good in the world.

To construct, in the fullest sense of the word, involves the use of the creative powers for the benefit or welfare of others. The object to be accomplished must point toward the betterment of all, for we should never lose sight of the fact that we are all one in God.

When we endeavor to live unselfishly and helpfully, we work with the trend of evolution, for the progress of the whole. Looking for the good in every person and situation is as constructive a thing as we can do. Seeing the good and giving it thought and attention increases that good, builds a power unconquerable. Ignoring evil, except to permit it to spur us on to do more good, is also a part of constructive living. Thus we learn to “overcome evil with good,” as Christ Jesus taught.

The constructive attitude is based upon the free flow of the spirit, while the lack of desire and effort to use the creative powers in the service of humanity bespeaks crystallization. Self-centeredness is an infallible sign of crystallization, which always manifests outwardly in some physical imbalance. The more we devote ourselves to the welfare of others, the more easily are we able to live constructively—in harmony with God’s divine laws. The more constructively we live, the more we manifest radiant health. □



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Visible Helpers are just as necessary as Invisible Helpers, and our friends and patients may share in a high privilege, as well as add much to the power of liberated healing force, by joining us in prayer for the sick. Our Healing Service is held every evening in the Healing Temple at 6:30 and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M. when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

November.....2—8—15—22—29
December.....5—12—19—26

Relax, close your eyes, and make a mental picture of the pure white rose in the center of the Rosicrucian Emblem on the west wall of our Pro-Ecclesia, and concentrate on Divine Love and Healing.

The Day's Work Before Sunrise



THERE WAS A SMITH and a smithy. But the Smith was not an ordinary one, for his day's work was done before sun-up. That is a very hard day's work. One becomes still and patient in performing it. It takes much strength for one lives alone and forges in the dawn.

Now it was night and the Smith was not in his workshop. The fire-spirit in the embers heaped up around the flue was fast asleep. Only his breath glowed beneath the ashes, sending forth a fiery sparklet here and there in the darkness. But the spark soon died out. Only a faint glimmer remained and hastened erringly and searchingly through the obscurity of the smithy.

The big stomach of the bellows had collapsed into a heap of sagging folds that looked like the wrinkles in a grumbler's face. It reminded one of a fat man who had suddenly become very thin. It looked comical enough to make one laugh, but there was no one in the smithy who knew how to laugh.

Slowly the anvil with his big head turned his pointy snout in every direction, sizing up the old iron that was to be forged today. It was not very much, only a few pieces. They lay piled up in one corner, soiled and rusty, covered with dust, like people who had a long and burdensome journey behind them.

The anvil was annoyed, saying: "What a low and mean rabble this, piling up here. It is a good thing it has first to go into the forge before it is laid on my shiny head. It would not be very wholesome. Thanks, people like us are clean" The anvil con-

temptuously turned up his nose and looked the other way. The anvil was stupid. It had never occurred to him that he was also made of iron, and that the old iron that had wandered so far would be as bright as he after the firespirit had had a hold of it, and the hammer belabored it. To his way of thinking there was only bright iron to begin with—and dusty and rusty on the other hand, and that settled it. He was just a blockhead, nor did he know how painstakingly his master had gathered this old iron in order to transform it at the dawn of day.

The pieces of old iron felt much relieved when the anvil had turned his back upon them so that they no longer felt his resentful glances. They had felt them quite distinctly although they were so dusty and soiled. Whereupon they began a conversation in whispering tones.

They were individual pieces that were quite different as to age. There were some very old ones that really belonged in a museum of antiquities. But there were also quite young ones who had been in this world only a few years. But in appearance they were all alike.

"My goodness, how rusty you are," said a chain sympathetically to an old sword, "that is a very serious illness. I am sure you are not feeling well at all!"

The sword sobbed creakingly between hilt and blade. "Yes, it is an old trouble, I have had it for hundreds of years. They are bloodstains. I have seen some dreadful things in my days. Scores have been my masters. One killed the other with me. One stole me from another, only to kill others again with me. All this blood and tears have eaten

into my tissues. I have had little rest. I have waded hilt deep in blood and he who had spilled the most blood tolled the church-bells with the selfsame hands and called it his victory.”

“I have lived only a few years here on earth,” said a young saber, “but have known the same horrors.”

“I have seen different kinds of victories,” said an old rusty bolt. “I have seen men who had vanquished themselves and the world with their thoughts. I secured the gates behind which they were incarcerated. In there they sat and perished, in a living tomb. But their thoughts I saw passing me, through prison-vault and walls, to go out into all the world.

“Look here,” said another bolt, “I am much younger than you but I have had to do the identical thing and experienced the same phenomenon.”

The fire-spirit in the forge breathed more deeply

ministers of the gospel from Europe, sneered at the old man because of his faith.”

“Now we have Europe with its culture,” said the saber, rattling furiously so that an old, silly tassel, suspended from a gold braid that had been wrapped around the hilt, dropped to the floor.

“We have to pass through many forms,” replied the knife. “I know that from the old man in India. Only, I do not know which one we are going to take on now.”

“We cannot remain in these shapes,” they all cried out together. “We are soiled and full of stains. We want to be re-forged We want to see the fire-spirit and ask him for a different body. But we do not want to wait until the sun rises. We do not want the sun to find us like this. Then he will shine upon our filth and dust. However, the Smith will not

***“and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruninghooks”—Isaiah 2:4***

and the first rays of early morning fell upon all the old iron in the corner. They became very depressed and perplexed for now the many stains and spots stood out more visibly than in the faint gleam of the fire-spirit who was breathing laboriously in the crammed forge. All the pieces looked upon their soiled bodies, talking confusedly and plaintively among themselves.

“I had to hold a murderer,” wailed the chain; “it was his last night. Beside him sat a man in a long, black robe, holding before him in his hands a book upon which was graven a golden cross.”

“I had to work in a shambles,” said a long knife. “I have looked thousands of creatures in their terror-stricken eyes before they closed. I have seen thousands of animal-souls floundering about in a house full of blood and horror. And to think! a piece of myself was once upon a time a bead in the rosary of an old feeble man in India; and the old, silent man used to brush the path before him so that he might not step on any living thing. He called the worm his brother and asked a blessing from God on it. He was in the habit of speaking of the ‘chain of things.’ He would draw the sign of the cross in the sand and resignedly fondled his rosary when the wind blurred its design. The foreign visitors,

come so soon. He is very likely to be still asleep.”

Suddenly, a spark from the forge sallied forth, landing right in the midst of the old iron. “The Smith is not asleep,” hissed the spark, “he will be here directly. He is no ordinary Smith. His day’s work is done before sunrise.” Then the spark died out. The door opened and the Smith entered. He was a stern and quiet man with sad eyes. That was because of his day’s work. He stepped on the treadle of the bellows so that it rounded out, unfolding all the creases in its big stomach. The fire-spirit busied himself coming out of his narrow confines to set the coals aglow that the Smith had heaped upon the embers. The Smith laid the old iron in the roaring forge, and after its baptism of fire put it upon the anvil.

“What is going to become of us?—what form?—what destiny?” asked the old iron, and the thoughts of the knife wandered to the poor old man in India.

The Smith hammered away. The sparks flew in every direction. He forged but one form, the last of all forms. Today he forged the soul of the iron. It was his day’s task. When it was done there stood a shining plowshare in the dew-decked meadow before the smithy. Then the sun rose. □

—Manfred Kyber

