

— ROSICRUCIAN —
BEACON

June 2013, Vol 22, No. 3



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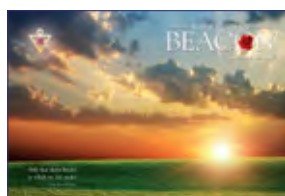
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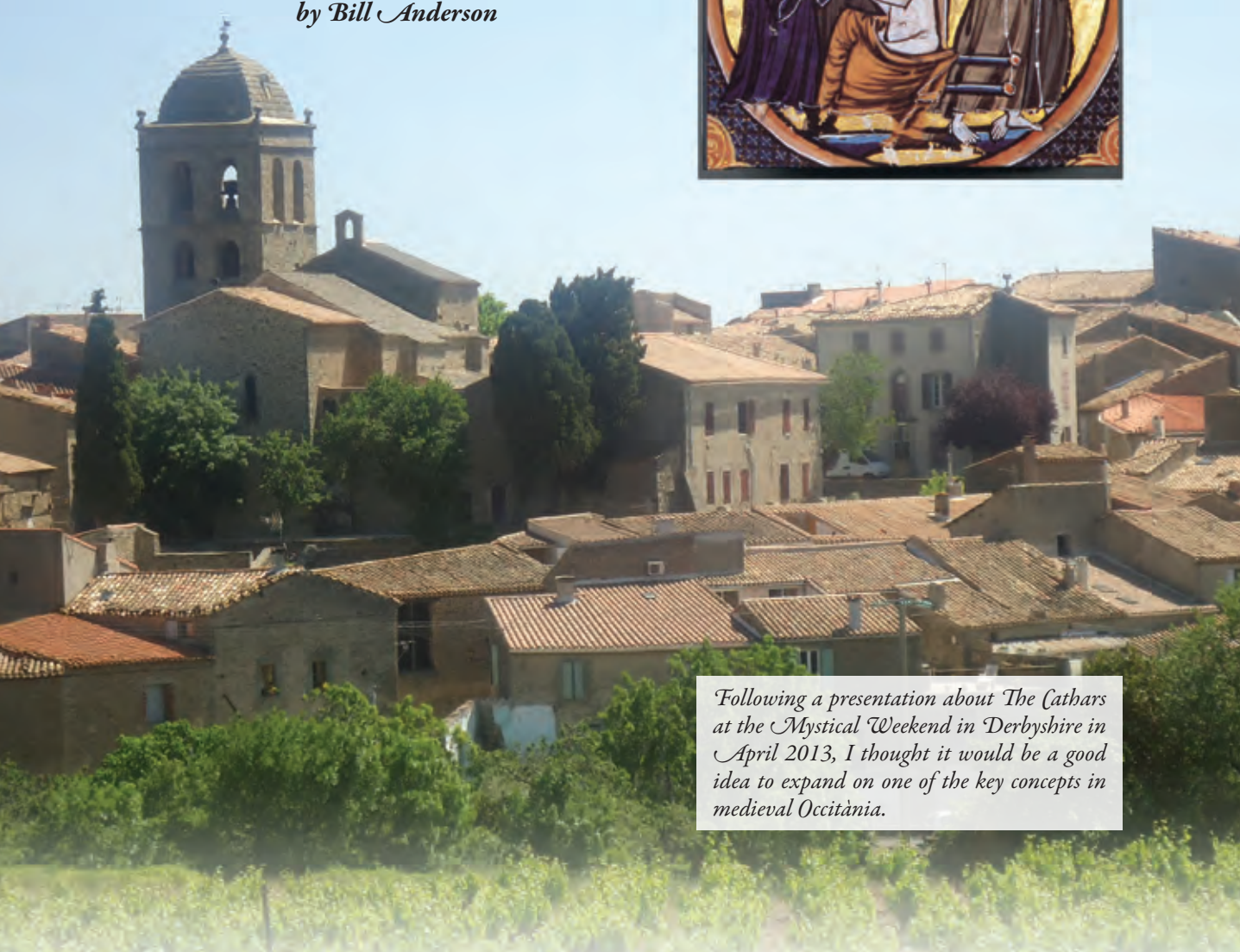
Cover spread

“Awake the Inner Dawn”



PARATGE

by *Bill Anderson*



Following a presentation about The Cathars at the Mystical Weekend in Derbyshire in April 2013, I thought it would be a good idea to expand on one of the key concepts in medieval Occitània.

TRAVELLERS TO the south of France, to Cathar country, a part of which is situated in the Languedoc-Roussillon region, may visit the village of Minerve in the Department of Hérault, (in the Occitan language: *lo departament Erau en la region Lengadòc-Rosselhon, en Occitània*).

Minerve itself is perhaps better known as the capital of the Minervois wine region. Perched on top of the gorge of the River Cesse, it is in a naturally strong

defensive position and survived the massacre inflicted on it by Simon de Montfort during the crusades against the Cathars. As you wander through the village you will come across a famous memorial stone inscribed *Als Catars* (To The Cathars), with a dove rising up to heaven, representing the souls of the dead Cathars.

There is another memorial plaque as well, commemorating the 800th anniversary of the massacre of 140 Cathars by French Catholic crusaders on 22 July 1210. The inhabitants of Minerve installed a memorial





Languedoc-Roussillon region, inset shows location in the South of France.

to their ancestors which states, in Occitan: *Menèrba se soven PARATGE* which translates as “Minerve remembers Paratge!”

What is this word Paratge, which the modern citizens of Minerve felt was so important that they had

What is this word Paratge, which the modern citizens of Minerve felt was so important that they had to commemorate it?

to commemorate it? The answer may well surprise you, as the Occitan word Paratge (pronounced like Pará-tchay) has essentially the same meaning as the ancient Egyptian word Ma’at and the ancient Persian concept of Asha; in other words “cosmic order”.

Convivència

Think of Renaissance, and your mind will turn to 14th - 17th Century Italy. To us, this is *the* Renaissance par excellence. But there was another earlier European Renaissance during the 12th Century. It was a time of great social, political and economic transformation and intellectual revitalisation.

But why did this 12th Century Renaissance occur at this particular time, and why has it been eclipsed by the better known Italian one? There were many reasons why

conditions favoured this intellectual upsurge. Intriguingly, the ‘Medieval Warm Period’ was in full flow. Climactically it was a time of warm conditions in the North Atlantic which may have been related to other climatic events around the world during the period lasting from around

950 to 1250 CE. This climatic event coincided with bumper crops; it encouraged the growth of towns and especially in Occitània, the nascent Middle Class, anxious to share in the good things of life, previously the realm only of the nobility.

In addition there was an increasing influx of knowledge from three main Muslim sources. The *Reconquista* in Spain, where the Christian kingdoms in the north of the peninsula started the re-conquest from the Moors, and they, in turn, became open to ideas



Simon de Montfort





Roger II of Sicily.

flooding in from the intellectually more advanced Muslim courts of Al-Andalus, especially the court of Toledo and the glittering court of Zaragoza. Thus, Muslim culture penetrated Occitània by way of the Catalan lands.

There was also the Norman conquest of the Muslim Emirate of Sicily. Here, they integrated the local Muslim and Jewish population with their own, and created a wonderful hybrid civilisation. The Normans came to appreciate and admire the rich culture in which

Paratge is more than a religious precept to do so-and-so because God says so; instead, it is a universal code of life.

they now found themselves. Many Normans in Sicily adopted some of the attributes of Muslim rulers in dress, language and literature. Like the multi-ethnic Caliphate of Córdoba, then only just eclipsed, the court of Roger II of Sicily became the most luminous centre of culture in the Mediterranean.

His court attracted scholars, scientists, poets, artists and artisans of all kinds. In Norman Sicily, still with heavy Arab influence, laws were issued in the language of the community to whom they were addressed. Muslims,



Norman Sicily, mosaics.

Jews, Byzantine Greeks, Lombards and Normans worked together to form a society that historians have said created one of the most extraordinary countries the world has ever seen. This is the meaning of *Convivència*, where all peoples lived harmoniously together and all prospered materially and spiritually, just as happened in Occitània.

Finally, the various crusades in the Holy Land and the Levant opened European minds to new ideas as never before and contributed to the demise of the Dark Ages. These ideas had gradually infiltrated along the trade routes into Occitània, which fought to keep its independence by playing off the great powers of England, France and Aragón against each other. It was a careful balancing act that succeeded until the times of the Albigensian Crusade.

Sèm Amics de Dieu We Are Friends of God

When I was doing research on the Cathars for the presentation, I came upon a concept that seemed very familiar. In the June 2006 edition of the Rosicrucian Beacon, there was an article about Ma'at and Asha, the ancient Egyptian and ancient Persian concepts of Cosmic Order. Here, it seems, was a European version of the same concept, and it was found only in Occitània!

Occitan had become the courtly and chivalric language of the early Middle Ages, much as French did in later centuries. It was the first language of the English kings Richard the Lionheart and John, and their mother Eleanor of Aquitaine. Richard and John's sister Joan married Raymond VI, the Count of Toulouse. They all spoke the same language, Occitan, not French and not English. Occitan was also the language of the troubadours or wandering minstrels.

The troubadours sang about *Fin' Amor*, fine or refined love. At the heart of most troubadour poetry lay the theme of transcendence, the transformative power





Richard the Lionheart spoke the Occitan language.

of love that enabled man or woman to transcend to a higher moral and spiritual level. *Fin' Amor* is a love refined by alchemy where words were put to music to form an organic whole that touched both heart and mind simultaneously.

Paratge as a Concept

Paratge is a word that combines medieval chivalrous ideas of honour, gentility and courtesy with an additional obligation of a duty to 'do what is right'. It is a duty to a natural order and a balanced moral code. Paratge is more than a religious precept to do so-and-so because God says so; instead, it is a universal code of life. Paratge stood for what ought to be done to maintain the natural order, the balance inherent in the universe and suggests a nobility of the soul.

The nearest concept to Paratge seems to be the ancient Egyptian concept of Ma'at.

Paratge translates literally into English as 'peerage'. We got the word in English via French. But the word peerage gives almost no clue to the significance or meaning of the word in medieval Occitània. It denoted a whole world-view, almost a philosophy, as alien to us today as it was to the medieval French Crusaders.

The word does not seem to have been a distinctly Cathar notion, though they exemplified it. The Count of Toulouse reportedly used the word when reminding the Pope of his duty to Paratge. In any case, we have no indication of any disagreement between the two belief systems, which appear to have coexisted in complete harmony. The nearest concept to Paratge seems to be the ancient Egyptian concept of Ma'at, another untranslatable word carrying suggestions of right, cosmic

balance and natural order to which may be added ideas of contentment, joy and light.

Paratge is one of those wonderful words that defy translation because they express complex ideas, usually containing many subtexts of meaning, meanings within meanings. The components of Paratge are: *honour, civility, tolerance, right living, balance, courtesy, excellence, grace and nobility of soul.*

Honour: The worth or status of individuals or communities according to the degree to which their lives reflect the norms that they hold in great significance and value. For the people of Occitània, this meant the degree to which they adhered to the principles of Paratge.

Civility: Civilised conduct and politeness towards others even when in disagreement.

Tolerance: Essentially, freedom from bigotry. To have a permissive and fair attitude toward others whose opinions, practices, race, religion, gender or nationality differ from your own. Occitània was famous for its tolerance. Indeed, the pope and the northern crusaders hated the people of Occitània precisely because of their tolerance of the Cathars who could usually find safe haven there.

Right Living: Doing what is right because it is consistent with a higher set of values rather than shunning what is right for immediate advantage, or simply because you can get away with it. At the time of the Second Crusade a legendary example of Paratge was when Saladin, who has been described as embodying the ideals of Paratge, on hearing that his enemy Richard the Lionheart lost his



Crusades





Saladin

horse, sent him a replacement before resuming their war. Also, when Richard was ill, it is said that Saladin himself went disguised as a doctor to tend him.

Balance: A state of equilibrium; the avoidance of excess and being in harmony with the universe.

Courtesy: Nowadays, this would be seen as synonymous with civility. However, in Occitània it had a more refined meaning, namely gentle politeness and courtly manners.

Excellence: A talent, skill or quality that surpassed the ordinary, and set a standard to which people could aspire. Among the Cathars, this could refer to the devotion with which they followed the principles of their religion.

Nobility of Soul: The refusal to yield to the forces of chaos or evil. To defend cherished virtues even when facing overwhelming odds.

Grace: Elegance or beauty of form, movement or manner. The charm and courtliness of the troubadours was an expression of grace.

The Cançon

Paratge was used extensively in Occitan writings, and it features often in the works of troubadours and especially in the *Cançon de la Crosada* or *Song of the Cathar Wars*. If you knew that someone upheld Paratge, then that was really all you needed to know about him/her. Similarly, if you knew a certain person despised Paratge, then again that was all you needed to know about that person.

In the latter part of the *Cançon*, written in Occitan, the writer is horrified and mystified that the French invaders seem to have no respect for Paratge, or even any understanding of it. This charge is more serious than any other. Lack of understanding of Paratge suggested deceit, brutality, vandalism, lying, hypocrisy, even mass-murder. Here is an observation referring to the French Catholic Crusader victory over the joint forces of King Pèire (Peter) II of Aragón and Count Raymond VI of Toulouse defending their lands at the town of Muret. Following the slaughter at the Battle of Muret, the *Cançon* reports: “It diminished the whole world, be sure of that. For it destroyed and drove out Paratge. It disgraced and shamed all Christendom.”

Elsewhere the *Cançon* reports that Simon de Montfort’s death filled the world with light and set Paratge free. In addition, it states about Raymond VI: “...the count of Montfort who destroys men, he and the Church at Rome and the preachers are covering Paratge with shame. They have cast it down from its high place, and if you do not raise it up, it will vanish forever. If worth and Paratge do not rise again through you, then Paratge will die, [and] with it the whole world will die.

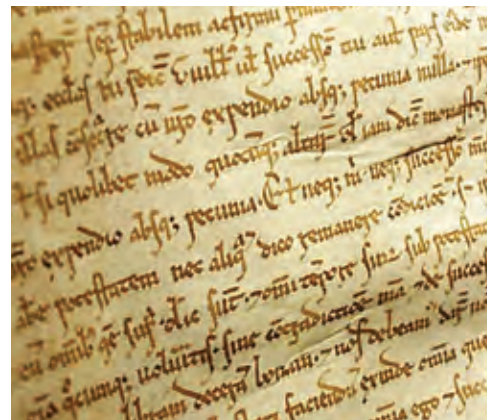
You are the true hope of all Paratge and the choice is yours: either you show valour, or Paratge dies!”

Here is another passage. Raymond VI and his son, the future Raymond VII, had left Rome after the Fourth Lateran Council in 1216 and travelled separately

until they met at Genoa and then travelled together to Marseille. Having been stripped of his lands and title, the Count’s vassals might well have taken the opportunity to abandon him, but events turned out differently. Here is an extract from the *Cançon*:

“Reaching Marseille, they dismounted by the shore and were welcomed with joy and delight. The Count took up residence in the castle of Toneu. Then on the fourth day a messenger arrived, greeted the Count and said: My Lord Count, tomorrow morning be ready early for the best men in Avignon are waiting for you on the river bank! More than three hundred will be there to do you homage.”

“Count Raymond was very pleased to hear this. Next morning he and his son set off and when they had almost reached the meeting place beside the river, the Count



Song of the Cathar Wars in Occitan.



dismounted from his good Arab horse and found the men from Avignon kneeling on strewn branches. They and the Count greeted each other with delight.

“One thousand knights, brave and experienced men, and one hundred thousand other valiant men have made oath and pledged by sureties that from now on they will strive to recover all your losses. You shall hold all your rightful lands in Provence, including all rents, quitrents, tolls on goods and on passage, and no one shall use the roads without paying for a safe-conduct. And we shall hold all the crossing places on the Rhône and shall carry death and slaughter across the fief until you have regained Toulouse and your rightful inheritance.

“And the dispossessed knights shall come out of the greenwood and need no longer fear storms and bad weather. You have no enemy in the world so fierce that he will not suffer shame if he does you wrong or injury.

‘My Lord’ said the Count, ‘in coming to my defence you show both valour and good sense. Your own country and all Christendom will praise you for re-establishing honest men, for restoring Paratge and joy.’”

Epilogue

The shining light of Occitània was a beacon in the darkness that was Western Europe. It was a land where culture blossomed. It was a land of music and laughter, a land of love and romance, a land of tolerance, social mobility and equality.

Some of the earliest concepts of Occitan medieval court society have become part of Western culture. These concepts were spread by the troubadours and by Dante Alighieri in his writings. Among those concepts are *Prètz*, means someone’s intrinsic worth or merit. It has nothing to do with gender, class, race or religion. It is the value which corresponds to the public recognition of the personal value. Then there’s *Convivència*, meaning something more than tolerance; all peoples and creeds living together in harmony.

One part of the heritage of the troubadour poetry is certainly the concept of courtly love or *Fin’ Amor*, which in the late Middle Ages established the concept of idealised love as a tool for spiritual enrichment. Then, through the writings of Dante and Petrarch this new approach to love spread throughout Europe deep into the feeling of Western men and women. Other concepts coming from the court heritage are *Paratge*, the loyalty and nobleness of soul and *Largueza*, generosity, the ability of giving without asking for anything in return. The Albigensian Crusade, sanctioned by the Pope, led to the rape of the Languedoc, the confiscation of the lands of southern lords, and their subjugation to the French king. Also, the crusade paved the way for the brutal Inquisition.



Count Raymond VI

Of course, the southerners mourned the loss of their lands and, in some cases, their loved ones. And no doubt they were terrified by the northern crusading knights. But what horrified them most it is said, was the shocking realisation that the northerners did not honour Paratge. Instead, the northern knights promoted an ethic of acquisition through violence and the subjugation of the poor by the wealthy. Such a thing was almost inconceivable to the people of the

Their love for all life and their beautiful souls wove them into the very fabric of Occitan civilisation.

south. The Cathars were loved and protected, not because they followed a strict almost Calvinist form of Christianity, but because they embodied the very concept of Paratge. And their love for all life and their beautiful souls wove them into the very fabric of Occitan civilisation.

If we look at the modern *Rosicrucian Code of Life* and the *Confession to Ma’at* (both published by The Rosicrucian Order) we find echoes from that time. Paratge did not die with the demise of Occitània; it survived and still survives in the heart of every true Rosicrucian. We can only imagine what our world would be like if the Occitanians had won and Paratge was the ethos that was passed on to us.

Acknowledgements

1. <http://www.midi-france.info/>
2. http://www.dhaxem.com/data/handt/Cathar_Honour.pdf
3. <http://www.normangautreau.com/paratge>.





Our Beautiful World

by James Wilson

Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it – Confucius

A Simple Exercise

I WOULD LIKE to share with you an exercise I'm fond of doing. Unfortunately I don't do this exercise often, as it requires one to sit comfortably outdoors for a period of time, and in our frustrating British climate it is a rare occasion when it's both dry and warm enough to do so! However, please indulge me and imagine that I am sitting

on top of Malling Down, my favourite spot here on the South Downs of Sussex. This exercise is best done from a good vantage point. I make myself comfortable and begin to breathe fully in and out, holding the breath for a short period and then slowly releasing it and willing myself to relax more and more with each exhalation.

I do this for a few minutes and then begin the exercise. It's a very simple exercise, because it involves only looking, or should I say 'seeing'. I begin by looking out



to the horizon and then bring my gaze steadily back and take in the landscape from the furthest point I can see, back to the hill I'm sitting on. I look carefully at the way both nature and humans have shaped this landscape over time. I look at the contrast of form and colour between the natural environment and the towns and villages. I see the river and reservoir, the roads and pylons. I take in the woods and far hills of the North Downs as well as the farmyards and ploughed fields. I try to be completely non-judgemental when I see something that doesn't appeal to my sense of aesthetics..., what may be termed a 'blot on the landscape.' Instead I try to think about the human achievement behind it.

Having spent some time looking at the wider environment, I then begin focusing my attention on my more immediate environment. I begin to look at the individual trees and shrubs around me, the flowers on the hillside and manmade structures such as fences, gates and water troughs. I watch the cattle and the sheep and if I have my binoculars with me, I take a closer look at the birds and butterflies that are resting or feeding nearby. I try and take in as much detail as possible, all the time looking at tones and shades of colour, the light and shadows, texture, form and even the 'shapes' of the spaces in between the various solid objects. The idea is to see what I would not ordinarily see if I were just walking along this hilltop glancing casually from side to side.

For the final part of the exercise I begin to look at the micro-environment that is most immediate to me. In other words, I begin to take a very close look at the world that is within just two feet from where I'm sitting. Being very careful not to cause too much disturbance, I start to gently explore the long grass around me. I notice the different varieties of grasses with their long and graceful stems and perfectly formed seed heads. I note the way the grass moves in the gentle breeze before I part the grass, take a closer look and wonder at the tiny size and diversity of the creatures that live in this particular habitat. By simply prying the grass apart, I have discovered a whole new micro-universe. If I am fortunate, I have remembered to bring my magnifying glass so I can explore in even more detail this tiny universe and the life forms that inhabit it.

Feeling Beauty

*A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry,
and see a fine picture every day of his life, in order that
worldly cares may not obliterate the sense of the beautiful
which God has implanted in the human soul.
-- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe --*

What is the point of this exercise? Well, absorbing oneself

in nature is immensely relaxing and uplifting, but endlessly fascinating too. Also, how many of us can say that we truly see the things around us? How often do we take the time to take in so much detail? To do so not only opens the eyes but also opens the heart to the beauty that is all around us. When I practise an exercise such as this, my mind is absorbed with thoughts of the wonder of creation and my heart is filled with higher emotions. I find myself contemplating the universal forces inherent in all things and I can feel, not just see, a beauty that is not ordinarily experienced. There is no doubt in my mind and heart at such times as these that an attunement is taking place; an attunement with some power that is within us and all around us. It is a power that is ineffably beautiful, peaceful, graceful and sometimes overwhelming.

I feel intuitively that during such moments I experience just a very small proportion of the beauty and peace that could be obtainable by us. However, it is enough to lift me and temporarily release me from the usual mundaneness of life. It is also enough to enhance an ever increasing awareness of the divinity behind all life and particularly within my own being. It is a mere hint, a subtle suggestion, but it is there nonetheless. To contemplate such things and to try and attune with the higher aspect of ourselves and the beauty and peace inherent within the universe is one of the goals of the Rosicrucian and we try to do this through practical methods of meditation. Exercises such as the one described can certainly be a form of meditation and can produce surprising results.

I am reminded of an incident from a book I read many years ago which was supposedly based on a true story. It involved a little girl growing up in 1930's London who had been abandoned by her parents



and taken in by a young man and his mother. Her name was Anna and she had a very intimate and communicative relationship with 'Mr. God.' One day she was walking down the street and was suddenly completely captivated by a patch of rust on some railings. She became very excited by this and stopped each passer-by to show them what she had found. The response was always the same; a pat on the head and a look of pity for this sweet but strange girl.

The reason that Anna failed to get any of the passers-by excited about what she saw, was because all they could see was a bland bit of brown rust on some old railings that badly needed a lick of paint. What Anna saw in the rust however, was a world of sparkling colour, beautiful texture and glistening light. This incident illustrates the difference between merely *looking* as opposed to *seeing* what are to many the hidden beauties of the world.

Creating Beauty

I never saw an ugly thing in my life: for let the form of an object be what it may – light, shade, and perspective will always make it beautiful – John Constable (1776 – 1837)

Most of the time, the majority of us only casually look at the world around us. Occasionally we may see something that takes our breath away, such as a beautiful sunset, and we then may feel something of what I have described. However, how often do we actually see such a sunset in this country? Why wait for such moments when, with a

Beauty is not only physical of course. Beauty can also be found in our thoughts, emotions and actions.

little effort, we can actively look for and really begin to see and feel the beauty that is all around us all the time? And of course, beauty is not only to be found in nature.

While we humans are most certainly very capable of creating ugliness in this world, we also have a remarkable capacity to create beauty and thankfully we don't always have to wait for that dry, warm day to seek it out. Beauty can be found everywhere if we look. It may be found in an art gallery, a museum, an aquarium or any number of places that exhibit natural or manmade works of art. It may simply be found in a vase on a windowsill or in the glossy photographs within the pages of a book. And let us not forget that beauty is not just to be observed with our visual sense. We have four other physical senses with which we can discover the beauties of this world.



*'Beauty can be found everywhere if we look,
It may simply be found in a vase on a windowsill.'*

Beauty is not only physical of course. Beauty can also be found in our thoughts, emotions and actions. We could get truly philosophical about it and assert that beauty is a state of consciousness only and that it exists only in the mind. For the purposes of this article it matters only that beauty is something we experience and surely it is something we all seek. It is hard to imagine anyone actively seeking to bring ugliness into their life. However, rather than just seek it, can we not also make a point of adding to the beauty of this world? As individuals we can all do this. For instance, do we not contribute to a beautiful world when we plant seeds or young plants and nurture them into maturity?

We can make our homes and our gardens, and even where we work, places of beauty. We can help to keep our natural environment beautiful by avoiding despoiling it in any way. We can add to the beauty of this world by buying only items that are of real quality rather than buying cheaply and poorly made massed produced goods, as this creates a demand for craftsmanship. Likewise, supporting businesses that are ethical in their approach and practices helps to create a better and more beautiful world for all.

We can also help add beauty to this world by supporting those outstanding organisations that help protect the environment, help those in crisis or work for peace in this world. Most importantly, we can contribute to the beauty of this world by ensuring that our own thoughts are only for peace and beauty and our conduct admirable in all respects. Look for and enjoy the beauty in this world. Actively seek it and look more closely at the world around you. Seek it everywhere you look, listen for it, feel for it and, most importantly of all, take time to seek it also within your own being.





THE AKHENATEN “HERESY”

How Revolutionary
Were the Reforms?

by Ailsa de Motte

ATEN WAS NOT a new god. He had been an aspect of Ra since the earliest times. In the *Hymn to the Aten*, Akhenaten says : “*Thou art Ra*”. Ra was not just a solar god, but the Great Creator, the spiritual cosmic force behind the sun, synonymous with Atum: as Atum-Ra he was acknowledged as the Supreme *Neter*, even though other

gods were worshiped in many places. Ra was the symbol of “God”, and had been seen as such since prehistoric times.

But Ra had been depicted in different aspects: as Khepri, the scarab, in the hour before dawn; as Aten, the sun disc, during the day; and as Ra-Horakhty (Horus of the Two Horizons) at sunrise and sunset. Akhenaten removed these anthropomorphic and zoomorphic





Ra

representations (Ra-Horakhty and Khepri) which had become associated with Ra, and chose one aspect only, the Aten solar-disc, ascribing to it all of Ra's attributes. His god, the Aten, was ONE, and of course it was obvious that the solar-disc was one alone without any counterpart or equal. By adding hands and arms to the solar-disc, which reached towards the earth, he had made this symbol more accessible and personal.

Yet Akhenaten's title for his god was still "*The Living One, Ra-Horakhty, Ruler of the Two Horizons, who rejoices in the Horizon in his name of Shu (Light) who has come in the Aten*" and, "*The words of Ra are before thee, my august father who taught me their essence*". Breasted makes a good point here: "*Under the name of Aten, Amenhotep IV introduced the worship of the Supreme God, but he made no attempt to conceal the identity of his new deity (that is, Aten) with the old sun god, Ra.*" Ra was still the source it appears..., only the name had changed. Why?

Ra was a national god. Egypt was an empire, not just a country; a new universal god was required to embrace and unify all peoples. The sun-disc, visible in all countries, was therefore a potent, universal symbol, which could be readily acceptable by all! To quote Breasted again: "*It can be no accident that the concept of a universal god arose in Egypt when he, the pharaoh, was receiving universal tribute from the known world of the day.*" So Akhenaten's 'reform' seemed to be really the culmination of

the move begun by his grandfather Thutmose IV, then continued and extended by his father, Amunhotep III, with both pharaohs' swing towards the Heliopolitan solar worship of Ra and the sun-disc.

One may sense the psychological tension that Akhenaten would have experienced when he named his first four children after Aten, (Merit-aten, Mekhit-aten, Ankhesenpa-aten, Neferneferu-aten), the last two children and his own assumed name (Nefer-neferu-ra, Setepen-ra and Nefer-kepheru-ra Wa-en-ra), as the enclitic. However, Akhenaten's concept of the Aten was not as the sole god, but the idea of universal monotheism had been expressed, although at this stage the other gods had not been excluded!

Advances in Akhenaten's Reforms

What was still more revolutionary about Akhenaten's religious reforms was the total banning of the worship of Amun, the closing of that God's temples and the expulsion of the Amun priesthood. This was unprecedented. Never before had the worship of one of the gods been banned nor a temple closed. Even the name Amun was systematically chiselled out from temple walls, tombs and monuments, even to the defacement of this own father's name!

The enormous wealth and revenues of Amun's treasury were directed towards the worship of the Temple of the Aten. His early tolerance had ceased and religious persecution had begun. Later still, this edict was extended to the names of the other gods; away with Ptah, Osiris, Isis, Horus and all the other familiar traditional gods, although apparently their temples and cult centres were not all closed.

The Third Phase

The third phase culminated in a total religious revolution..., the banishing of all other gods, with the Aten alone remaining as the only God, not just the Supreme God. This is the first occurrence of absolute monotheism, the total exclusion of all other gods.

Incongruously however, Akhenaten made three exceptions: Ma'at, goddess of truth and cosmic order, was not banned because he claimed he was 'Living in the Truth'; Thoth, god of knowledge and wisdom, was also tolerated; and thirdly the priests of Ra at Heliopolis continued their functions, for Atenism had after all evolved from this ancient solar cult.



Akhenaten and his wife Nefertiti praying to the Aten who provided his rays to the Pharaoh and his queen.



The Assessments of Egyptologists over Time

It would be interesting to survey the assessments of Akhenaten over the last 100 years. Egyptologists, writing in the early 1900s, e.g. Arthur Weigall and the famed James Breasted, were full of praise and admiration for Akhenaten as a religious visionary and the world's first monotheist. Breasted calls him "the first prophet" and "the first individual in human history", but even he criticised Akhenaten's methods as being too harsh when he said "The persecution of Amun was especially severe".

One of the greatest authorities on Egyptian Religion, Wallis Budge, writing in the same period, was however less enthusiastic. He once again raised Akhenaten's ideals, calling him "...precocious and clever with a mind that worked quickly, possessing a determined will, very definite religious convictions and a fearless nature; earnest and sincere in his beliefs", but accuses him of "...spiritual arrogance and self-sufficiency, which made him oblivious to everything except his own feelings and emotions."

Yet another highly respected Egyptologist, Sir Alan Gardiner, admired Akhenaten's ideals and courage but deplored the methods he used to implement his religious reforms. Later scholars, with access to much more information, namely Cyril Aldred, Donald Redford and Nicholas Reeves, have also given mixed opinions about Akhenaten, some more condemnatory than others.

The Debate on Akhenaten

Let us first look at some of these less than adulatory comments made about Akhenaten.

- 1. The Negative Position:** Far from his monotheism being new, it looked more like an attempt to substitute one solar god for another. As Pharaoh, he was the only one in complete union with the supreme Deity, to the extent of limiting the access of all others to the Deity, except through himself as intermediary.

This is as it had been with all past pharaohs. But Akhenaten differed from them in that he wanted all other doctrines abolished. There was to be no mention of the age-old Egyptian myths and creation stories, no afterlife scenes at Akhetaten, no sacred animals, no cult statues, no anthropomorphic gods, not even personal amulets.



*Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their three daughters
(ca. 1350 BCE) Neues Museum, Berlin.*

This demonstrates extreme religious intolerance. There was an absence of concern for the age-old problems of evil and suffering, for wrong it seems, no longer existed. There was no doctrine of opposites in nature and their reconciliation. There were no injunctions towards living a moral and virtuous life, and no petitions for spiritual enlightenment, understanding or wisdom. Atenism contained no eschatological hope of resurrection after death, and Osiris, the god of the underworld, was removed and nothing else put in its place.

This, above all else, must have caused great uncertainty and anxiety, and destroyed the hopes of ordinary people in any form of afterlife. In state policy Akhenaten has been accused of neglecting the national interest and of using religion to break the political dominance of the Theban priesthood. Finally, it has been alleged that the new religion introduced distortion and ugliness in art and sculpture, stressing instead, freedom, indolence and sensuality.

- 2. Positive Aspects of Akhenaten's Theology:** Akhenaten attempted to drive home the point that the sun-disc was not just the abode of the god, but was the god itself "...who by means of the heat and light which emanates from his body gave life to everything". And, as stated by Budge in Akhenaten's cult "...defied the heat of the sun and worshipped it as the one eternal, creative, fructifying and life-sustaining force."





The ruins of the Great Temple of Aten.

The heat of Aten gave Akhenaten life, and maintained it in him. And while life was in him, Aten was in him. The life of Aten was his life and his life was Aten's life. Akhenaten therefore was the Aten, the living incarnation of the Aten, not a mere god or one of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon. It was therefore not necessary to go to the temple of Amun to receive spiritual nourishment, wisdom or understanding.

He placed great stress on life and loving relationships within his family and among the people. By elevating the status of Nefertiti to that of co-ruler, he recognised the feminine side of his godly status. For him, a balanced relationship was the way of Ma'at! Egyptologists acknowledge Nefertiti's status as co-ruler, and more depictions of Nefertiti have in fact been found than those of Akhenaten.

His new religion was democratic and universal, good for human relations within and outside his Kingdom. The Aten was for all the peoples. Far from being ugly, the new Amarna art-form brought the most beautiful and realistic depictions of the natural world ever seen in Egypt, and breaking with tradition, showed scenes of familial affection and freedom within the royal family for the first time.

On the problem of evil and the reconciliation of opposites, it can be argued that he was trying to make people focus not on the dualities of creation but on apprehending the reality of the One, namely heaven and earth as one reality. On the criticism of his 'hubris', one can argue that he was presenting the idea or fact of a mystic's experience; he saw himself as one with God, and there was no need for mediation through a priesthood, for his experience was direct.

Final Analysis

Akhenaten has been judged by posterity as both pharaoh and religious reformer. This is perhaps the tragedy: the dichotomy between his duty as pharaoh to ensure the well-being of his country and people, and his desire to pursue his personal religious beliefs.

Viewed as a pharaoh, he was indeed a failure! He had inherited an Empire at peace with its neighbours, wealthier than ever before, and supremely confident. But by the end of this 17-year reign, the Empire was in severe decline, its vassal states had been conquered by intruders, or were in open revolt, and Egypt itself was teetering on the brink of social and economic collapse, its people confused and the country in turmoil. This explains much of the criticism directed by Egyptologists



towards Akhenaten, and it is fully justified if we judge him only on his lack of political acumen and neglect of the affairs of state.

But this is unduly harsh, as of course there is the other aspect of his life, and it is this which has been recognised by his admirers who see Akhenaten as a visionary and a mystic. However, his dream of one, universal God, and his bold and single-minded attempt to change the religious beliefs of the Egyptian people ultimately failed when he died.

Why did he fail? His views were too far in advance of his time, too sudden, too exclusive, and far too philosophical and abstract for a people devoted to their long-revered, traditional gods. His methods to extend his reforms were ultimately intolerant and harsh, and must have caused great distress, confusion and resentment. The Amun priesthood, although officially disbanded, were almost certainly working secretly against him, together with the army, disaffected by the troubles in the empire, which had been totally ignored by Akhenaten. His death meant a return to the old ways, to the familiar, loved gods and their traditional worship.

What was the motive behind his reforms? Was it a desire to curb the power of the hostile Amun priesthood as a continuation to the move made by Thutmosis IV and Amunhotep III? Or was he impelled by an experience of mystical revelation in accord with the desire to "Live in the Truth"? It was probably both, as ancient civilisations did not differentiate between the sacred and the secular. Although at first his reforms may appear to have been simply a continuation of elevating the Aten as a means of uniting the Egyptian empire, it cannot be doubted that there was a strong ideological motive and that his sincerity and belief in

Egypt itself was teetering on the brink of social and economic collapse.

his one god was the driving force throughout his life. Even his severest critics admit this.

Was he the first monotheist? An underlying monotheism had existed in ancient Egypt for well over fifteen hundred years, since the Old Kingdom and even before. Passages in the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* suggest that the Egyptian priests and the learned elite were monotheists. But Akhenaten was the first person to openly express that the great, creative cosmic power is one and universal, bringing light, warmth and sustenance to all living things. Breasted extols him in these words:

"Akhenaten saw in him [the Aten] the beneficent father of all mankind. It was the first time



Stela of the Great temple of Aten at Akhetaten.

in history that a discerning eye had caught the great universal truth."

This concept of god was not expressed again until fifteen hundred years later with the coming of the great master, Jesus of Nazareth. Akhenaten therefore stands as a complex, but remarkable and memorable figure in the spiritual evolution of humankind in its search for Truth.

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As Within, So Without

by Mary Ann Fowler

AS STUDENTS of mysticism, we know that the mind within has a profound effect on our circumstances without. Whatever the outward circumstances, the material expression is only a reflection of some belief or concept that was first within the mind. The kind of body you have, the kind of home you live in, the type of work you do, the kind of people you meet, are all conditioned by and correspond to the images you hold in your mind.

As the plant springs from the seed, so the circumstances in your life spring from the hidden seeds of thought. Our actions are always preceded by thought, and action then, is the blossom of thought while joy and suffering are its fruits. So, in choosing the fruits of your life, such as a healthy body, a satisfactory job, friends and opportunities, you must first plant the seed of thought. You need to supply yourself with the proper image in your mind before it can manifest in



your material world. Without first forming the mental image within, you are unlikely to acquire the material expression without: as within, so without!

There are probably some things you would like to change or eliminate in your life; perhaps physical difficulties or faults of character, habits of thought and action. If you rid your mind of the mental image of an unwanted condition, namely stop thinking about it obsessively, or even thinking of it at all, the condition is likely to leave your life with far greater ease. The secret of successful living is to build up or visualise mental images of the things you want, and rid yourself of mental images of the things you don't want. So how is this accomplished? Simply by exercising greater care in choosing the thoughts that you allow to dwell in your mind and thereby form mental images that last.

For Rosicrucians, thoughts really are 'things'; they are energy and only tenuously different from physical reality. According to the Rosicrucian *Law of the Triangle*, everything in existence is the result of two (not one) causes. Two things come together and manifest as a third [thing]. And as each thought is a 'thing', it too must be composed of two other 'things'. Two components of thought are clarity (the negative, passive quality) and interest (the positive, active quality). And if you want to bring something of value into your life, begin with your own thought processes. First, you need a clear mental picture of what you want. Second, you need enough interest to cause your own inner creative forces to respond to the desires of your outer self.

The Thought Seed - A Creative Idea

Thoughts by nature externalise. We tend to attract to ourselves and become attracted to people, circumstances and situations that are like the images we hold in our thoughts. If you think about and identify yourself with happiness, you will attract happiness in your life. But it is impossible to be successful and happy while your thoughts are focussed on failure, anger or sadness. Whatever you hold in your mind will in the end reproduce itself in your outer world. As within, so without!

Most people join the Rosicrucian Order in order to find happiness, health and success. But do we hold that image in our minds, or do we occasionally read an inspirational article and then wonder why we are not more successful in reaching our goal? One of the reasons we do not see the manifestation of our desires is because



As the plant springs from the seed, so the circumstances in your life spring from the hidden seeds of thought.

we do not think quietly, constantly and persistently about the kind of things we want. We do not act on the guidance from within. If we at the very least don't take the time to form a *mental picture* of what we want, we will almost certainly lose the second cause needed for our success, namely our *interest*. Doubt causes the image to become distorted or destroyed long before time has permitted the creation to express itself in physical form. The thought seed, the creative idea, must be nourished and kept alive through its gestation period just as with any other life form.

An hen's egg for instance has within it a tiny seed capable of becoming a chicken. But before you can see the material manifestation, the mother hen must have enough interest during the three-week gestation period to nourish the egg by keeping it warm with her body. She needs to nurture it, turning it in various positions with the expectation of seeing a baby chick. If the hen loses interest and fails to sit on the egg, the chick will be still-born. The manifestation then is a rotten egg. So too it is with your thought ideas. Lose interest and fail to act when needed,

If you think about and identify yourself with happiness, you will attract happiness in your life.

and your idea becomes the equivalent of a rotten egg.

Successful people concentrate their thoughts on such divine attributes as love, wisdom, joy and beauty, and use affirmations to maintain their interest while nourishing their thought-ideas throughout the gestation periods. The mind is open and receptive, and intuitively such people are directed toward their highest good by the Cosmic energy within. Just as the hen acts intuitively in changing an egg into a chicken, you too





If you think about and identify yourself with happiness, you will attract happiness to your life.

must act intuitively to change your idea into its material manifestation.

Rosicrucians emphasise the crucial value of effective concentration; it truly is the key to a happy life. Through concentration you build an image within that will, when properly formed, manifest in your life. Many people fail to concentrate successfully because they think that concentration requires the use of will power, demands too much effort, and really would rather skip this unwelcome requirement. If they concentrate at all, it is usually a tensing of the muscles around the face and they grit their teeth, frown and clench their hands like an unwitting application of the principle of an engineer's

If you want a photo of an object, you aim your camera quietly, steadily, almost effortlessly on the object.

drill. They believe the more pressure they apply, the faster they will get through. But all this is quite wrong.

Forget the drill and think of a digital camera or the camera application on a mobile phone instead. There is of course no question of pressure, only of proper coordination and timing. And this is the great secret: correct aim, clear focus, proper coordination and good timing. If you want a photo of an object, you aim your camera quietly, steadily, almost effortlessly on the object. You don't press violently on the button and you don't move the camera from one item to another before the image has been recorded. If you do, the photo becomes a crazy blur.

The same is true of the picture you are developing in your mind. When you don't keep your thoughts

concentrated for any length of time, you accomplish precisely..., nothing! Some people, in attempting to concentrate, think health for a few minutes and then they think sickness or fear for the rest of the time. They think prosperity, and then they worry about their debts and how they are going to pay their bills. They think about bodily perfection and then they think about old age creeping up on them, their aches and pains, and how much health insurance they need to pay for their illnesses. Is it any wonder they are so apt to demonstrate a hazy, blurred image?

Note that I do not advocate taking one thought and trying to hold it by brute force. That is the sledgehammer approach and seldom if ever works. You must allow a train of relevant thoughts to have free play in your mind, one leading naturally to the next. There has to be an intellectual context to the main thought you wish to focus on, and that context, those supporting background thoughts must all be positive, constructive, harmonious, and all pertaining to your desire. By thinking quietly and without effort you will easily form a mental image of all-round success in your endeavour. When you have an image of success in your mind, success will follow in your outer experiences in the form of a healthier physical body, happier relationships, more productive work, and fuller spiritual development. Remember..., as within, so without!

Power of Affirmations

How are you using the power of affirmations? Do you tell your friends about your problems, and then explain that you are using affirmations to rid yourself of the



problem? If so, you are strongly affirming the existence of the problem which is the very thing you are trying to get rid of. If you tell your friends you are going to work on your rheumatism or on your lack of finances, or your undesirable relationships, you are making these things very real in your subconscious mind.

So, what to do? Change your mind concerning the problem and forget the problem for a period of time, say for a month. Truly you'll be astonished at the results. To keep looking for any improvement in the condition is like constantly reinforcing the problem. The secret is to forget the problem and have your thoughts focused instead on the new condition you wish to introduce. Believe what you are thinking and act as though the new condition were already in existence in the world 'out there'. If you do this, the new condition will soon enough appear in the outer world, for your outer world is but a projection of your inner world.

Our true thoughts and beliefs are projected in our daily experiences, and correspond with the circumstances of our lives. True activity always comes from within and is manifested outward. False activity tries to work from without inward. As with the seed and the egg I mentioned earlier, growth comes from within. The seed and the egg contain everything necessary to bring forth life in a visible form. The mustard seed is so small you can hardly see it when you put it in the soil. But it will burst forth from within and produce a plant a metre tall. If you undertake some project because you have been inspired from within, remember to follow that inner urge, for it will lead you to success.

The Infinite Mind

You know that if you are to be successful in business, you must love your work and be inspired from within to take positive action. The same is true in your mystical development. If you insincerely pray and meditate from the outside, maybe in an effort to impress others, your efforts will be in vain. But if you turn your consciousness within, so as to attune with and accept the guidance from the Infinite Mind already within you, your spiritual growth will be apparent and will be reflected in the circumstances of your life.

The Master Jesus said: *"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."* I concur with that, for thoughts rapidly crystallise into habits, and habits solidify into circumstances. The real you then, is reflected in the circumstances of your life, and those circumstances ultimately stem from your thoughts. Thoughts of fear, doubt and indecision crystallise into weak and irresolute

habits, which create circumstances of failure. Impure thoughts of every kind, thoughts of an envious, jealous, revengeful, critical or destructive nature, crystallise into unwanted disturbing habits.

On the other hand, beautiful thoughts crystallise into habits of grace, refinement and kindness, which

You know that if you are to be successful in business, you must love your work and be inspired from within to take positive action.

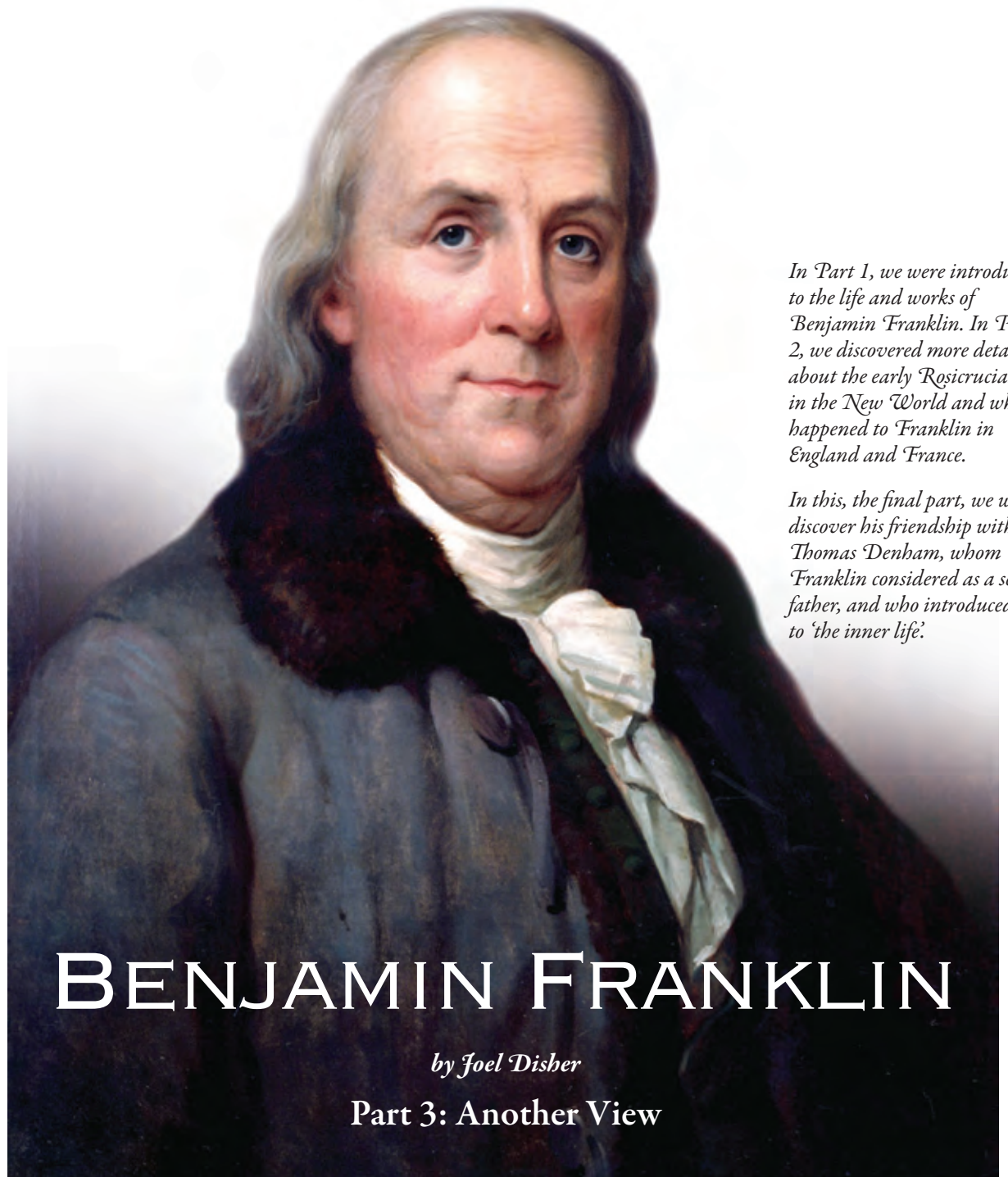
solidify into genial, cheerful and pleasant circumstances. Pure thoughts of love, health and happiness develop into habits of temperance, self-control and peace. Just as lovely, pleasing, enjoyable thoughts produce a sweet and sunny disposition, so do sour, disagreeable and offensive thoughts result in a sour and unattractive face. A particular train of thought persisted in, be it good or bad, cannot fail to produce its results in your character and in your world.

So look at yourself and your circumstances. Are you pleased with what you see? If you wish to improve your circumstances you must improve yourself. Begin then by changing your thoughts. The suffering you encounter in your circumstances is a result at least partially of your own inharmonious thoughts. And the peace and harmony you can attain in your life is a result of your own mental harmony within.

You are meant to be a happy, healthy and successful person. Happiness, health and success are the result of a harmonious adjustment of the inner with the outer. Remember..., as within, so without!

Forget the drill and think instead of a digital camera or the camera app on your mobile phone.





In Part 1, we were introduced to the life and works of Benjamin Franklin. In Part 2, we discovered more details about the early Rosicrucians in the New World and what happened to Franklin in England and France.

In this, the final part, we will discover his friendship with Thomas Denham, whom Franklin considered as a second father, and who introduced him to 'the inner life.'

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

by Joel Disher

Part 3: Another View

DURING THE early months of 1726, Franklin's thoughts had been turning more and more toward Philadelphia. He was obviously becoming dissatisfied with the trend of his experience in London and had adjusted his living and begun to save money for the passage home. Wygate, a young printing-house friend, and Sir William Wyndham almost persuaded him to another course of action. His Quaker merchant friend, Thomas Denham, however, came forward in this crisis as he had done earlier.

He proposed that Franklin return to Philadelphia and be the clerk in a store which he was opening.

Little is known of Thomas Denham beyond what Franklin reports of him, and yet he seems to have been a confidant and advisor during this critical time in Franklin's life. Their first meeting may have been altogether fortuitous; yet, their deepening friendship could only have resulted from Franklin's recognition of his need of such a mentor, and from Denham's realisation that Franklin was a young man of superlative promise.





Franklin return's to Philadelphia.

Even from the scant information available, it's plainly evident that Denham was a quiet man, successful, respected and of sound principles. I suspect also that many of the conclusions Franklin sets down as his own originally stemmed from the observations of this man he so much respected. Being in no sense a sentimentalist, Franklin would have felt, I believe, that he had given sufficient credit in adopting the ideas espoused by Denham, without saying more.

The journal Franklin worked on during the long journey home in the summer of 1726 when he was just 20 years old, bears evidence of the weighty considerations that had occupied him for months. They were not matters, it is natural to think, which took root and fruited in his own mind. They were more likely conclusions drawn from his long conversations with this trusted friend.

The journal account is as fresh and self-revealing as anything Franklin ever wrote. Life's purposes are still tangled, the outcome of that decision is uncertain, and there are suggestions of perplexity of mind and heart. Yet there is beyond this a note of something more momentous than merely a change of occupation. True, the printing trade was seemingly being abandoned, but there is no indication that Franklin regarded it as Orders whose vows he was renouncing. There was certainly nothing in the employment about to be undertaken that would suggest the necessity for soul-searching either.

A Second Father

Franklin may have suffered twinges of conscience over his 'errata', but it is unlikely he was morbid about them. No more was his practical nature likely to indulge in idle philosophising. It is more probable that his two year friendship with Thomas Denham had begun to reveal a

deeper purpose in the business of living.

The close association with this quiet man must have revealed the working of Providence in ways that momentarily set the youth back on his heels. Franklin said as much as his utterly unemotional nature permitted when he wrote that Denham had been a second father to him. Is it possible that Denham, first attracted by sympathy to an inexperienced youth put upon by a shallow-minded man of the world, came to see Franklin as one capable and deserving of age-old counsel, as a teacher might carefully observe a bright and promising student and later call to him for thorough instruction? When more is known of Denham, it may be possible to say.

The conversations between these two can hardly have been confined wholly to matters of business, for then Franklin would have regarded Denham differently. For one thing, he would have written more openly and objectively about him, setting down his limitations. That he didn't is significant. There was something in their association patently above business, something which came out progressively as their friendship advanced, especially on that memorable voyage home. Had it been religion, Franklin would have diagnosed it; and the conclusions would have left no doubt as to where he stood. Converted, he would have said so and given his reasons. Unconverted, he would

SCHEME.		
	Hours.	
MORNING.	{ 5	Rise, wash, and address
	{ 6	<i>Powerful Goodness!</i> Con-
	{ 7	trive day's business, and
NOON.	{ 8	take the resolution of the
	{ 9	day; prosecute the present
	{ 10	study, and breakfast.
	{ 11	
	{ 12 }	Read, or look over my
AFTERNOON.	{ 1 }	accounts, and dine.
	{ 2	
	{ 3	Work.
EVENING.	{ 4	
	{ 5	
	{ 6	Put things in their
	{ 7	places. Supper. Music
	{ 8	or diversion, or conversa-
NIGHT.	{ 9	tion. Examination of the
	{ 10	day.
	{ 11	
	{ 12 }	Sleep.
	{ 1	
	{ 2	
	{ 3	
	{ 4	

The precept of Order requiring that every part of business should have its allotted time, one page in the little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.



have been equally frank in expressing his distaste for the matter. As he did neither, we need to evaluate it further. The experience was in some way fundamental and singular.

Whatever it was and however bound up with that inner side of his nature which showed itself only in his outward response to circumstances, it was crucial and marked a turning point in his view of life. From it there emerged for the first time *“a regular design as to life”*, which never before had been ‘fixed’. What Franklin calls *“a confused variety of different scenes”* was given up for one through which, to borrow Tennyson’s words, *“... one increasing purpose runs, and the thoughts of men are widened with process of the suns.”*

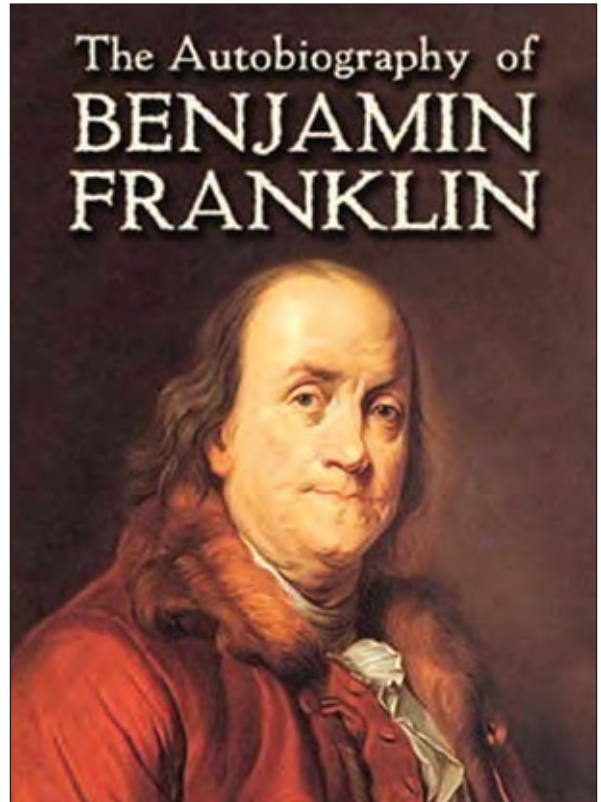
It is usually assumed that this righting of his ship and setting it on a fair and direct course was all an individual matter and that within himself and by himself, Franklin came to right conclusions and brought himself to that deserved title of sage. The *Autobiography* encourages that assumption. There however, the sage is reviewing incidents long past, incidents which reappeared in the light of memory to be evaluated by the fullness of experience. It is well-nigh impossible to give reasons for actions long past, except on the basis of wisdom acquired afterward.

Franklin’s later philosophy is all too evident in the reasons he assigns to youthful thoughts and actions. This is of course natural and to be expected; yet, it often obscures the source of his ideas, making them appear to have been part of his thought before he had contacted the sources responsible for them. This is not in any way to depreciate Franklin’s own efforts in finding his true course. It is rather to remind ourselves that he wrote of his early life out of years of experience with certain guiding principles whose source, or sources, he chose to conceal. His meeting with Denham on that first trip to London, and his later association with him, just beyond his 21st birthday, in fact when Denham’s death occurred, give the clues so far wanting as to the source of those principles upon which Franklin based his life practice. Denham, Franklin tells us, was a second father to him. Four years in a long and productive life is indeed a brief time, but certainly long enough to imbibe the fundamentals of a life philosophy.

The Initial Step

The initial step, according to time-honoured procedure, is the forming of a plan, and Franklin accomplished this on the journey home in 1726. It is unlikely that he would have kept within himself questions as to life’s purpose when Denham was at hand and had from the beginning of their acquaintance proved himself such a wise counsellor.

Franklin’s plan for giving his life a fixed design



was undertaken (so both his journal and *Autobiography* state) on his way home from England when he was approaching his majority; but not before he had put himself seriously and formally in Denham’s hands as an apprentice.

Both Franklin and Denham fell ill shortly after their return to Philadelphia. That brought death very forcibly into Franklin’s consciousness, so forcibly in fact that it left him *“regretting in some degree that [he] must now sometime or other have all that disagreeable work to go over again.”* Denham passed away and Franklin himself so nearly that he saw death as a reality, and gave it practical consideration and application in an epitaph for himself. Many times quoted, it justifies repetition here for its evidence that the concept of reincarnation entered into his consideration of death and the afterlife.

*The Body of Benjamin Franklin
Like the cover of an old book,
its contents torn out and stript
of its lettering and gilding,
lies here, food for worms.
Yet the Work itself shall not be lost,
For it will, as he believed,
appear once more in a new
and more beautiful edition,
Corrected and amended by the Author.*



Denham, near the end of his last illness, cancelled Franklin's indebtedness to him but made no further material bequest. The inference seems allowable that having made Franklin his spiritual heir, he had enriched him sufficiently. Franklin returned to the printer's trade and to an 'orphaned' status in the world, richly and securely endowed with a matured mind and a settled philosophy of life.

The Complete Tradesman

He soon concluded that marriage was "*the natural state of man.*" "*An unmarried man,*" he wrote, "*is not a complete human being: he resembles one-half of a pair of scissors without its other half, and consequently, is not even half as useful as if the two were put together.*" He put his sentiment into practice and married Deborah Read, thus correcting one more 'erratum' of his early years.

In this too, Franklin's conduct is like that of a true Rosicrucian: His errors are self-corrected without abjection or public apology since "*...man confesses his faults not to man but to God.*" This suggests an admirable judgment by another Rosicrucian authority: "*A real Rosicrucian does not try to imitate a spotless being, or rise above his fellow man in a false attitude of righteousness and superiority.*" [R. M. Lewis]

It is well-nigh impossible to give reasons for actions long past, except on the basis of wisdom acquired afterward.

Franklin adopted the role of the complete tradesman. He sought means of widening the circle of his influence and providing a practical outlet for his maturing philosophical principles. This was the Junto Club. Here he recalled Dr Mather's neighbourhood religious gatherings in Boston and saw in the good doctor's questions on those occasions a means whereby discussion in the Junto Club could be directed to a purpose. A neglected side of the matter is the idea of it. To those familiar with the story of C.R.C. [*Christian Rosenkreuz*] in the 1614 *Fama Fraternitatis*, a basis for it will occur. Certainly, knowledge of C.R.C. and his founding group may well have inspired Franklin's efforts, and this is proposed on the grounds of similarity in several essential points.

What has often been called Franklin's first connection with the Rosicrucians was his meeting with Conrad Beissel and Michael Wohlfahrt. Ostensibly their meeting was concerned with business, namely some printing they wanted done. With these men, as well



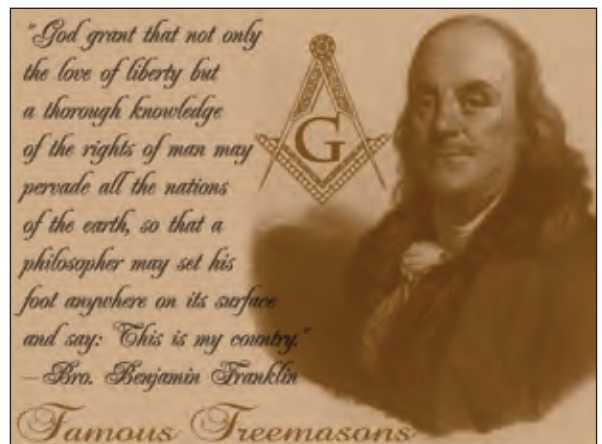
Deborah Read

as with Peter Miller, also of the Ephrata Rosicrucians, Franklin retained contact for many years. Their semi-monastic views were foreign to his own, but there is nothing inconsistent in the same principles being brought to bear upon very different conditions. The respect these men held for one another could easily have been that of associates working in separate fields to bring about the same end, the glorification of God by the bettering of man's condition.

Another means to the same end was the establishment of Freemasonry in Philadelphia in 1730. Although Franklin had early doubts about the fraternity, they were quickly dissolved, and he embraced it wholeheartedly as a stabilising moral force. Since Freemasonry had emerged in England

less than 100 years earlier under Rosicrucian sponsorship, it is possible that it was necessary only that Franklin be informed of this to obtain his endorsement.

Seeing Freemasonry as a more effective way of working than perhaps either the Ephrata method or his Junto Club, at least so far as the dissemination of charity





The Junto Club

and benevolence were concerned, he became immediately active. He was initiated in February 1731, the same year becoming Junior Warden. The next year he was elected Worshipful Master. On 24 June 1734, he was installed Grand Master, and in 1749 he was made Provincial Grand Master. Franklin was now entering more definitely into that public life with which he has always been associated.

He busied himself with practical affairs in his community and in the world.

He was entering it according to the well-established pattern of the past in an assumed character. In such a way, Franklin must have decided he could best keep his private self protected and his innermost convictions inviolate, free from any interference of his public character. To him such an arrangement was ideal and he made it a lifetime practice.

The Perfect Role

He busied himself with practical affairs in his community and in the world, letting his deeds attest his love of his fellow men and women, and his worship of God. This was admirable and worthy of respect and emulation. He fitted into the adopted the role to perfection. The world accepted him as the mellow sage and practical philosopher, and believed, as he himself came to, that he had always been such.

Because he chose not to reveal (as it was of his private self and not his public self) the source of the principles which motivated him from his moment of decision, the world has remained uncertain of his Rosicrucian connection. A careful review of the areas indicated however, will undoubtedly correct the world's judgment in the matter.

Franklin was foundational in defining the American ethos as a marriage of the practical values of

thrift, hard work, education, community spirit, self-governing institutions and opposition to authoritarianism, both political and religious, with the scientific and tolerant values of the Enlightenment. He was born British, became American, but remains a citizen of the world.

Through a plan of 13 virtues, which he developed in 1726 and continued to practise in some form for the rest of his life, Franklin sought to cultivate his character in a way that modern Rosicrucians easily recognise from their own private disciplines. His autobiography lists his 13 virtues in the text-box below:-

Temperance: *Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.*

Silence: *Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.*

Order: *Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.*

Resolution: *Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.*

Frugality: *Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.*

Industry: *Loose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.*

Sincerity: *Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.*

Justice: *Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.*

Moderation: *Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.*

Cleanliness: *Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.*

Tranquillity: *Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.*

Chastity: *Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.*

Humility: *Imitate Jesus and Socrates.*



A composite image showing a busy shopping mall with multiple levels, escalators, and people. In the foreground, a man in a white shirt and dark shorts sits on a wooden bench, looking out over a large, calm lake. The mall's architecture is modern with glass railings and various storefronts, including one for 'MELANIE LYNE'. The overall scene is a juxtaposition of modern, bustling commerce and a serene, natural landscape.

Life's Ideal

by Raynor Millen

OUR WORLD INCREASES in complexity day by day, almost like a continent sized brain which grows and grows and becomes ever more refined and sophisticated in its thoughts. In past times our ancestors struggled for basic raw survival, for mere existence in the tumult of battles, vendettas and political upheavals, and unfortunately that is still the case in some parts of the world. But in the quieter, more refined parts, where there is time to contemplate the deeper mysteries of the universe, the greatest and most pressing need has become to discover

the true nature of one's up till now hidden inner self. It is only from that inner alter-ego that we can learn how to see and take instruction from the guiding light of our life, and to understand and accept our true life purpose in the face of gross materialism.

To know this greatest purpose of one's life is to be in possession of knowledge of inestimable value. How many wouldn't give a king's ransom to get even a glimpse of this! So many see life as an unfortunate accident, or a roadside stop that was not 'meant' to happen. But that is because they have never discovered that they already



have within themselves a fully formed master of life just waiting to be released. That inner self, often referred to as the 'Master Within' has needs often at variance to the desires of our outer self. And those needs are the true requirements for our inner spiritual evolution.

Restlessly and randomly, many people search in multiple directions at the same time; try this, trying that, following the latest fad for a while and then abandoning it for something else, and all the time falling prey to distractions of modern life. The tail truly wags the dog for such people. Through incessant outer superficiality, such people are never able to settle down and reach the calmness needed to discover even the possibility of there existing an inner master for every person. They may make money, they may attract Facebook fans galore, and they may think they are loved by everyone; but in truth they accomplish very little of real value and do eventually find this out through a deeply distressing gnawing emptiness which becomes more and more difficult to suppress as the years pass.

People who have spent most of their years in the pursuit of wealth and social status often reach the pinnacle of what they thought their materialistic goals were, only to discover new challenges they never counted on having to face, and they are almost all very difficult to deal with. Things like an unfaithful wife or husband, spoiled children turning to drugs and theft, lies and deceit from close 'friends', and many more unsavoury yet difficult to solve little crises that have nothing to do with social status or wealth. The lives of such people are filled with 'things' and

The lives of such people are filled with 'things' and people, but they have a gnawing and steadily worsening feeling of emptiness.

people, but they have a gnawing and steadily worsening feeling of emptiness, and they certainly have no real happiness.

Who, what or where can they turn to in order to assuage that inner void? Unfortunately, because of attitudes gained through the search for possessions, such persons often tend to seek the quick, easy (and stupid) solutions to life..., and none of them really succeed. If only they would realise that this lifetime may amount to only the very first step they are going to take in their search for inner mastery, a calmness will set in and they will accept their future, their main purpose in life, with greater calmness. They will see inwardly a great vista before them, and understand that they stand only at the beginning of a very long journey. There will be no easy lunches from then on, only hard work and rewards that can only ever come from well-earned efforts.

In realising the pitfalls before us, and following an



It is hard understand and accept our true life purpose in the face of gross materialism.

inner plan for living, we have an invaluable guide already resident within us. But of course, guide or no guide, we are never fully immune to the demands and challenges of life, and we will absolutely fail in our endeavours many times over, and need to learn how to deal with failure and still get up from the ashes and rebuild our lives when needed. The stage of life is the material world, and material solutions are needed for many of the challenges we face, regardless of whatever high minded solutions we may be thinking of. But if we set ourselves ever-expanding standards to live by, and do so faster than we can assimilate them, we face challenges and tests we may not be ready for. There is no point running before being able to crawl. But unlike other people who have not consciously accepted responsibility for their own evolution, mystics and people who genuinely seek a true spiritual life, know when they have pushed themselves beyond their moral and spiritual abilities, and know when it is time take the foot off the throttle of life for a while in order to cruise rather than accelerate, so as to give the rest of their being time and space to catch up in experience, wisdom and ability.

With growing inner awareness always comes a deepening sensitivity to the countless expressions of life around us. So many simple things we formerly would never have noticed, suddenly start appearing on our inner radar and move ever closer to centre stage. But accomplishing this requires much practice in the art of inner attunement with the Cosmic Mind through meditation for example. And of course there is the practical side of engaging in strong, focused periods of planning for the future. We already have within us a near infinite pool of strength and balance of idealism with practicality that we can call upon to prevent the deep ups and downs that come from 'facing the current' of turbulent waters when we seek to change direction in life. And of course changing direction is sometimes imperative.

We have to be strong to cope with the stresses and demands of our world, though strength in the mystical sense of the word does not mean aggression, the type which



berates others of gentler character and falsely assumes superiority. Strength based upon the confidence of one's inner conviction and attunement with the Infinite is a passive sort of strength; it is not overt, not easily noticed, for it is above the daily fray at the level it manifests. Such inner strength is unfortunately often mistaken for weakness by those who rank strength with aggressiveness and forceful behaviour, but they must beware, for there is no weakness in serenity, no weakness in engaging in deep thought, no weakness in exercising compassion, forgiveness or turning the other cheek. Quite the opposite, there is strength and hardly ever a need for forceful displays in the lives of those who have achieved such a balance of their physical and psychic selves as accomplished mystics have. Their strength is like a quiet river, running deep and strong; and it is ready for use when the need is greatest.

A Pattern in Life

As we see the pattern of our life emerging, we more fully understand the goals we have set ourselves and what is involved in accomplishing them. We measure the distance between our present self-expression and the self-expression we seek to accomplish, and we may be overwhelmed with despair at knowing with certainty how far we still have to go. But the humility that comes from just knowing the great distance ahead of us is a considerable achievement in itself. Knowledge is true power, and true power yields permanent results.

Recognising our mistakes quickly, and striving to compensate for them through immediate corrective actions, is always the best. There are no exceptions to this rule, regardless of whether we are seeking a spiritual life or a material life. But if we fail to compensate now, there is no need to be too distressed; all is not lost, for there will be other opportunities, maybe not many, but at least some, where we can try again. The Cosmic educational system never fails its students, it simply introduces similar lessons at another time, in another way, in another place involving other people, and it watches and applauds as we take up the challenge.

The pressures of a material-oriented world continually seek to distract us from our mystical ideals. We may sometimes feel we are living in two worlds at once, particularly if we work in a brash business environment where values are generally measured by material wealth alone, and the quality of interaction between people is little better than mean and sordid. In such situations, when all the precious, long-evolved and painfully-won mystical values seem to be entirely absent, and no recognition of the deep soul-link between all people exists, we need to

call on the quiet inner strength of our Inner Master, that deepest recess of our spiritual being, and accept the advice and words of encouragement that await us.

Daily attunement, or seeking attunement with that highly evolved aspect of our own self is vital to help us keep our balance and stay the course so that our spiritual quest for

The Cosmic educational system never fails its students, it simply introduces similar lessons at another time, in another way, in another place.

refinement may be a constant, continuing one, functioning fully every moment we live. If we request inwardly to remain positive in all our thoughts and actions..., and accept that no matter how unpleasant a situation we may find ourselves in we have attracted that situation as a cross for inner unfoldment..., our path through life can never again be undertaken in the shadows. We traverse the thorns of pain and suffering to reach the bloom of the rose's beauty, the fragrance of the soul itself.

It has been our great privilege to be guided onto our present path, so that the practical guidance of the spiritual teachings we receive can make our journey through life a little easier as the peaks and valleys of life's pattern become less extreme. Seek spiritual guidance from others if you wish, but have your eyes wide open and never abandon your own ability to think rationally, enquiringly, inquisitively. And whatever guidance you receive, be sure to put it to the test before accepting it as gospel truth. The greatest guide will ever have is already within you; all you need is a way of coming into full, conscious communication with that Inner Master.

The Rosicrucian Order (which hosts this magazine) is an organisation which delivers as its mission precisely the sort of guidance and advice needed for you to one day find and enter into permanent and happy attunement with the highest part of your being. Deep stillness and serenity, but also great strength and the capacity to accomplish great things can be yours.



By practising the art of inner attunement with the Cosmic Mind through meditation, so many simple things we formerly would never have noticed, suddenly start appearing on our inner radar.





THE STORY OF THE NAILS

by Louise lane

that it was easier to control himself than have to run out into the garden and hammer in a nail into the fence each time he transgressed.

Eventually a day came when Rory felt no need to drive a nail into dad's fence for the entire duration of the day. Pleased with himself he eagerly went to dad with the hammer and nails and said he didn't need them any more. His father, already extremely pleased with his son's progress over the past months, was however wiser than Rory, and told his son to hang onto the hammer and nails a while longer, and from then on, in addition to hammering in a nail each time he got angry, he should use the hammer to take out one nail from the fence for every day he succeeded in controlling his temper. Weeks passed, but finally Rory thought he was finished; the fence was devoid of nails at last and life, he thought, could soon return to normal. Going to his dad he handed back the hammer and nails and his father gave him a big and passionate hug, the sort Rory loved above all else, but only when his friends weren't looking,

Taking Rory by the hand, he led him to the fence and said: *"Son, you have behaved well; I am so proud of you. But look how many holes you have left in the fence; it will never be the same. When you get angry with someone and abuse them with your harsh words, you leave them with wounds like those in the fence I made for you. You can stab a man, and then take the knife out, but you will always leave a wound. It does not matter how many times you say sorry, the scars will stay. A wound caused by words hurts just as badly as a physical wound. Therefore my dear son, always think carefully before you speak!"*

In silence the two of them sat down on the ground and with tears streaming down his face, Rory snuggled into the arms of the one he loved and respected most..., dad.

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a boy with a very difficult nature. Rory was bad tempered, rude and unkind to family, friends and strangers, and his parents despaired of what would become of him. Nothing they did changed him to the more amenable and loving person they knew he was capable of.

One day while father was working on a boundary fence, he suddenly had an idea. Calling his son to his side he gave him a bag full of nails and said: *"Son, when you get angry from now on..., each time you lose your temper..., take this hammer and drive one of these nails into this lovely garden fence I have built for you."* Seeing that his father had gone to such great length to make something he was actually allowed to destroy, Rory quickly agreed. That first day he banged in 37 nails into dad's new garden fence. For whatever the reason..., perhaps because it eventually became a chore to hammer in so many nails, even when in cold, wet weather..., over the next few weeks, Rory steadily learned to control himself, and nails driven into the fence each day got fewer and fewer. He soon realised





Healing the Whole Person

by George F Buletza

THERE IS A TENDENCY in the world with its standards of good and bad, right and wrong, for many people to think that they know the only way to health and well-being. Attitudes that permit us to say, *“I’m right and you’re wrong”* have been with us a long time, and are pretty hard to lose.

Wise physicians as far back as ancient Greece and even earlier to ancient Egypt, noted that such attitudes could affect the way we perceive our world, our relationships, our hopes for the future, and ultimately our health and well-being. This attitude formed the basis for one of the three

stages of human growth and evolution portrayed in the mysteries of Isis of ancient Egypt, later on in the classical period of Greece, and much later on in the alchemical traditions of medieval Europe.

The Three Stages of Human Growth

During the course of the year, statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours that were used to represent the three stages of personal growth. To ancient priests and physicians, the first stage was the colour red and denoted vitality, energy,



new life and childlike innocence. This was a dream-like phase, partially unconscious and accepting of nature, but fully participating in her bounties and blessings. It is a stage where we are new to everything, where we need protection from many things due to our inexperience, and naïvely expect life to take care of us without giving anything in return.

The second stage of personal growth was characterised in the mysteries by the colour pair black and white. These colours represented duality, good and bad, right and wrong, likes and dislikes. In broad terms it was a phase of choice being presented and taken. Such judgmental thinking leads to expectations about how the world ought to be, how we or others need to behave. From a plethora of alternatives characterised by the colours black and white, choices are made. There is a need to focus clearly on the

realities resulting from these choices. The realities sought are of course the bountiful gifts that life creates for us if given half a chance.

The third stage represented by Gold, is the stage of wisdom, reintegration and wholeness. In the Gold stage of human growth an overwhelming compassion drives everything that we do. The Rosicrucian studies point out, that our growth and transformation does not occur by being hermits or avoiding integration with other human beings. Transmutation occurs through the tests and trials of life, through our interaction with others. The alchemist's work is with personal realities, with what he or she believes to be true about the world. This subtle shift in outlook, in attitude, in consciousness, suggests that rather than our shaping life to meet our expectations, we can choose to be transformed by life, and by the relationships and experiences we attract to us.

Developing Healing Relationships

In the ancient world, emphasis was given to the phases and cycles of life as normal processes of nature. These followed each other in ordered sequence and each contributed to the unfoldment of future phases. With regard to healing, this rule also applies.

In terms of a healing situation, the first phase represented by the colour red, the healer-patient relationship is like a parent-child relationship. In the black-and-white phase for instance, patients may begin to take personal responsibility rather than expecting a parent-figure to solve their problems. Patients begin participating in the healing process by following the advice of a qualified healer, watching diet, exercise, breathing and thinking, as well as



Statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours.

actively visualising and sincerely wishing for a positive outcome. By participating in their own healing processes, patients come to realise the awesome healing potential already within themselves.

Speaking in the present now, patients in the black/white phase start taking charge of the outcome of their health or eventual demise, and assume far greater responsibility than before. But this has the tendency of cutting out opportunities for developing healing relationships that bring them out of themselves and the many old, narrow and patently false solutions that may have been adopted in ignorance. Such people run the risk of missing opportunities to integrate with other people who may evoke new ways of doing things and a broader view of the world of healing. If their visualisations, meditations, exercises and other self-healing

techniques do not appear to work, they deem themselves unworthy failures. As former Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, Dr H Spencer Lewis called it, is a form of 'mental poisoning,' not one of self-healing.

For the healer, the black/white phase, filled with opportunity that it undoubtedly is, can also lead to unhappiness and the so-called 'dark night of the soul'. Regardless of healing style, whether medical or metaphysical, healers have a personal need to fulfil their reality, to confirm with confidence their belief in their healing abilities. When unsuccessful, they may become despondent and conclude they are poor healers, not cut out for the profession. Or they may try and bolster their belief and confidence in their abilities through one or more of the following strategies, saying to themselves:

1. *"I will master this problem, if I just try harder, read another book, attend another lecture, take another course. Next time it will turn out all right."*
2. We may decide it's the patient's fault. *"My therapy is fine; if only they followed my instructions, everything would be okay."*
3. *"This is not the kind of illness or patient we need to deal with in the future. This is not our speciality or area of expertise."*
4. We can comfort the patient and ourselves by deciding that the very best is being done and that progress is being made, even if we can't see it yet.

Whether healer or patient, we tend to think that strategies



like these help us compete in a black-and-white world. They inflate the outer personality, the ego, and encourage us to believe that we are in control of our lives and problems. Yet even if we are convinced of our control, if we still have the courage to go inward with an open, questioning mind, we may discover that we still secretly fear we are not really in control, that maybe we are not really 'good' healers. We get by, but only just. We make mistakes, and feel the guilt of failure.

Caught in the extremes of dualistic thinking, neither healer nor patient is immune from fear, superstition and ignorance; burnout, despair and degenerating health are all the legacy of dualistic thinking. The black-and-white stage represented death in the ancient mysteries; and death in turn represented putrefaction and separation in alchemy. Almost every culture uses black or white, or a combination of both, to represent death. Yet the colours of death also symbolise the potential for rebirth and transformation to the third stage of life, represented by gold.

The Stage of Wisdom, Reintegration

Gold is the stage of wisdom, reintegration, and wholeness. The idea of a separate healer and patient loses meaning in the gold phase. When, as healers, we deal with patients, we gain insights into our own lives. Friends' needs are our needs, friends' tears our tears, friends' healing our healing. In this gold stage there is no separation between patient and healer, and an overwhelming compassion drives all that one does.

In the gold stage, entering into a healing relationship is an adventure.

We are one humanity with common needs and problems, and even common transformations. Healings and transformations occur through relationships. We may decide to practice the art of healing consciously, but this is done without the compulsion to act out the role of healer or patient. Each time we enter into a healing relationship with others we do not know what the precise outcome will be. We do not know in just what way our persona can be beneficially transformed. In the gold stage, entering into a healing relationship is an adventure. It is a quest that leads to ever-greater self-discovery, deeper appreciation for the love that unites all.

When a person is ill, that person is vulnerable. Illness cracks our habitual defence mechanisms. When our unquestioned realities and beliefs are no longer effective, we can decide to replace them with realities that more accurately mirror our inner intentions. Upon discarding



Gold represented is the third stage of wisdom, reintegration and wholeness.

irrelevant defences we may also be surprised to discover that we can experience greater freedom, spontaneity, and creativity.

If we are willing to let our defences down, to look deeply within at our own nature, then we can come to realise the commonality, the unity, and the love that always existed but that we didn't notice before. We may be surprised by our own transformations made as a result of seeing what is true in this mirror of self. We may discover at an inner psychic level there are no coincidences, that we and those attracted to us are co-healers, co-creators, on an extraordinary adventure we call life.

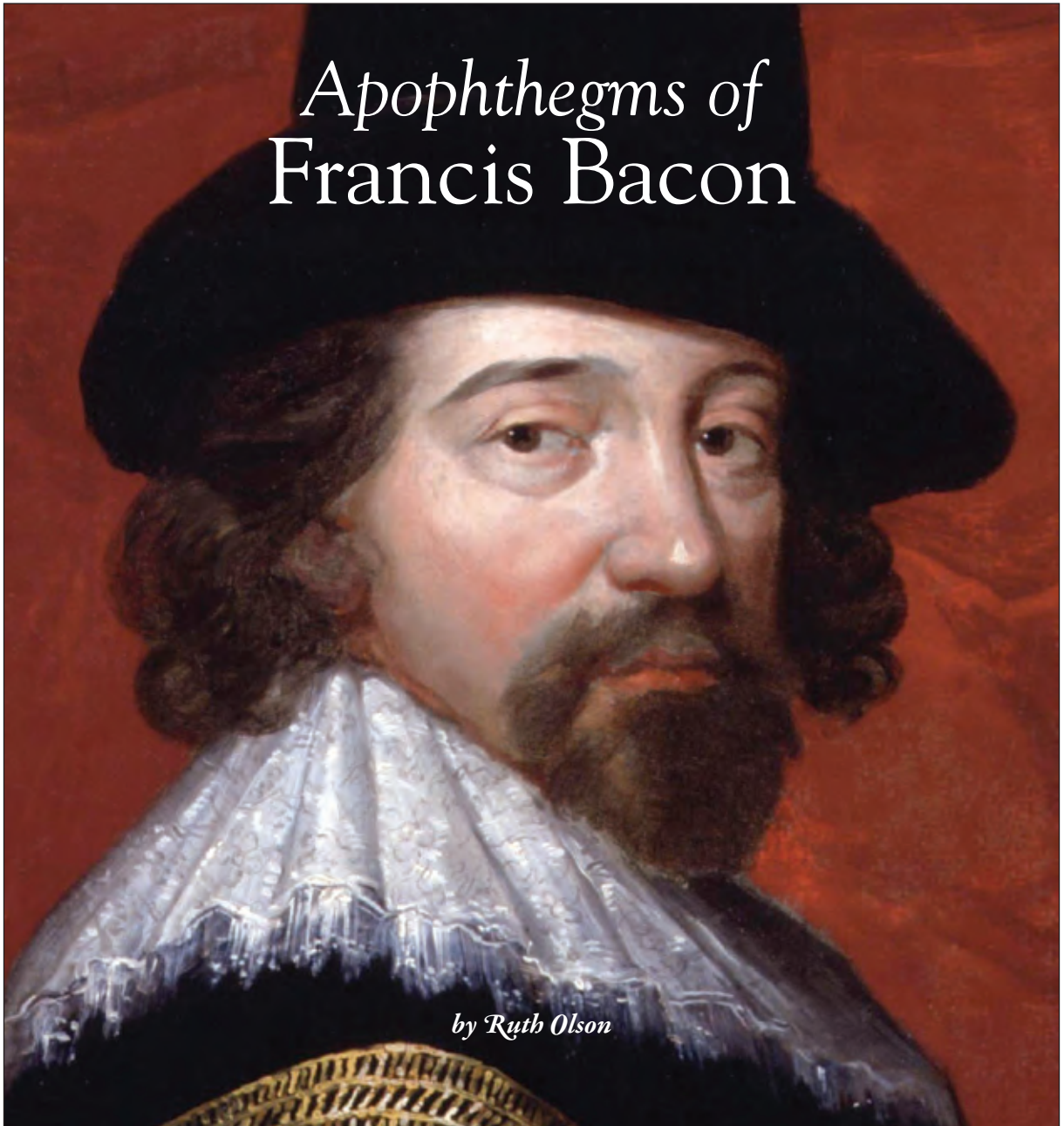
To embark on this extraordinary adventure, a trust in the inner power of healing and transformation is essential. Creative openness, integrity, firmness, and compassion follow from genuine confidence or intense trust. With genuine confidence we find that no one in a relationship is less than, or more than, he or she actually is. Instead of being lost in sympathetic responses to symptoms, we interact with compassion and integrity, creatively transforming into what we actually are.

With trust, illness can be an opportunity, a threshold to greater health; to the golden state of life we call wisdom. With experience we come to realise that genuine confidence comes only when we are willing to face our own fears. Crossing this threshold results in greater physical, emotional, and mental wholeness. Rather than being the dualistic opposite of illness, health can become a celebration and appreciation of life. Life is our friend. Life is the provider of the conditions and opportunities that evoke the evolution of the open mind.

Growth, transformation and evolution can apply and be incorporated into any therapeutic modality, whether traditional or non-traditional. We can choose to follow allopathic medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, touch, nutrition, or any of a host of other approaches to healing, and still realise that life is a shared adventure wherein we all are evolving.



Apophthegms of Francis Bacon



by Ruth Olson

DURING HIS LIFE, Francis Bacon always enjoyed making terse, witty apophthegms, what we today would call *bon mots*..., although usually more acerbic in tone. An illness gave him the opportunity to dictate from memory those he liked best, and they were published in 1624. Later editions contained deletions and additions, and even later editions had spurious entries which were probably not his.

The following sayings can be found in *Lord Bacon's Works, Volume VII, Literary and Professional*

Works: edited by Shedding and Heath. A warning: they seem simple some are infuriatingly difficult to comprehend. But they all contain hidden truths. Let your mind wander a bit therefore, and challenge it to grasp what Bacon meant.

- Simonides, when asked by Hiero what he thought of God, asked for seven nights to consider it. At the end of seven nights he asked for a fortnight; then at the end of a fortnight, he asked for a month. When Hiero marvelled at this, Simonides answered that



the longer he thought about it, the more difficult he found it.

- Come to the point. Why? I shall not find you there.
- Solon said to Croesus when in ostentation Croesus showed him his gold: *"Sir, if anyone comes that has better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold."*
- The glory of God is to conceal a thing, and the glory of a man is to find out a thing.
- He that resolves in haste repents at leisure.
- Croesus told Cambyses that peace was better than war; because in peace the sons buried their fathers, but in wars the fathers buried their sons.
- In Chancery, the counsels of the parties set forth by plot the boundaries of the land in question. The counsel of one party said, *"We lie on this side, my Lord;"* and the counsel of the other party said, *"We [also] lie on this side."* The Lord Chancellor Hatton stood up and said, *"If you lie on both sides, whom will you have me believe?"*
- Nothing is impossible to a willing heart.
- Solon compared the people to the sea, and orators to the winds: The sea would be calm and quiet if the winds did not trouble it.
- There was a young man in Rome who looked very much like Augustus Caesar. Augustus heard of it, sent for the man, and asked him: *"Was your mother never at Rome?"* The man answered: *"No, sir, but my father was."*
- An orator of Athens said to Demosthenes: *"The Athenians will kill you if they wax mad."* Demosthenes replied: *"And they will kill you, if they be in good sense."*
- After Themistocles had been banished, he came into great favour and was honoured and sumptuously served. In his glory he said to one of his friends: *"If I had not been undone, I had been undone."*
- Bacon was wont to say of an angry man who suppressed his passion *"...that he thought worse than he spoke,"* and of an angry man that would chide, *"...that he spoke worse than he thought."*
- All is not in years, somewhat is in hours well spent.
- Sir Robert Hitcham said he cared not that men laughed at him, for he would laugh at them too. My Lord St Alban answered, that if he did so he would be the merriest man in England.
- Bishop Latimer said in a sermon at court, that he had heard the King was poor and many ways were propounded to make him rich. For his part he had thought of one way, which was that they should help the King to some good office, for all his officers were rich.
- Antisthenes, on being asked what learning was most necessary for man's life, answered: *"To unlearn that which is naught."*
- Cato Major would say that wise men learned more from fools, than fools from wise men.
- Better to be envied than pitied.
- When examined about certain scandalous words that had been spoken against the King, someone said: *"It is true that I spoke them, and if the wine had not failed I would have said much more."*
- Cosimo, Duke of Florence, was wont to say of perfidious friends: *"We read that we ought to forgive our enemies; but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends."*
- An Epicurean boasted that philosophers of various other sects turned to Epicureanism, but Epicureans never turned to the philosophies of other sects. Whereupon a philosopher of another sect said: *"The reason is plain, for cocks may be made capons, but capons can never be made cocks."*
- When a certain nimble-witted counsellor at the bar who was forward in speech, repeatedly interrupted Sir Nicholas Bacon, the latter said: *"There is a great difference between you and me; a pain to me to speak, and a pain to you to hold your tongue."*
- Thales said that life and death were all one. When asked: *"Why do not you die then?"* Thales said again: *"Because they all are one."*
- Use Maketh Mastery.



Don't Come Second in the Race Against Time

by Shirley Elsbey



PROCASTINATION has famously been dubbed the thief of time. Not only is it a thief, but also a more serious villain; a merciless vampire bloating itself on the purpose and fulfilment of a human life and leaving behind a stultifying legacy of regret and frustration.

Rosicrucians are urged early in their studies to “...defer not till the evening what the morning

may accomplish”. It is sage advice, but the demon Procrastination is expert in diverting good intentions straight down the road to living Hell..., and the realisation that it has become too late to rescue the intended outcomes..., at least in this lifetime! The English poet and dramatist Edward Young, who identified and saw off the thief during his immensely productive lifetime from 1683 to 1765, penned the following words:¹



*At thirty, man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves: then dies the same.*

Edward Young unmasked the villainous saboteur of the purposeful life and some of its dastardly tactics. Having seen that Procrastination wantonly steals our minutes and hours, bagging them into precious and irreplaceable days, months and years, we of the 21st century can now use Young's 20:20 hindsight to identify and thwart the slow bleed and set ourselves back on our rightful paths to fulfilment and purpose. Or can we?

Procrastination and I are old friends. Note that I say old friends, not good friends, because this is the kind of friend who satisfies his own need for diversionary activities at the expense of his companion's need to get things done, and creates a richly original agenda of ways and means to distract them even when they are starting to feel desperate for a positive result. And having been a long term victim of the invisible thief cum bloodsucker, I can tell you that the major symptom of its presence is faffing.

Faffing is the art of not getting done the things you want to get done while studiously accomplishing endless other things that maybe you did want to get done but didn't need to, at least not urgently. I have a friend who describes it as 'metaphorical toilet cleaning', as in cleaning the toilet when it is gleaming. Examples might be:

- Checking that all the bird feeders are full right to the very top, even though you filled them to the brim yesterday.
- Attending to the more whimsical needs of an elderly relative like shopping for brain training gadgets, trimming shrubs or emptying sheds.
- Catching up with friendship calls and correspondence to people you haven't seen in years.
- Positively welcoming unexpected requests to childmind, house sit, give lifts or accept invitations to lunch.

Faffing is a diverse activity which takes many forms depending on the person doing it. Business types may concoct new systems for dealing with email or put networking ahead of product development. Home makers may embark on ambitious culinary projects rather than tackle the decorating. Rosicrucians may find their



The English poet and dramatist Edward Young.

important work demands stop them from attending convocations or focusing on their studies.

I sometimes faff myself into a state of virtual paralysis. Like the immovable object meeting an irresistible force, my wish to do something meets my reluctance to make the effort and they cancel each other out so comprehensively that nothing happens, sometimes for months on end. The key to telling a faff from a fruitful pursuit lies in recognising that you are choosing an 'any time' task over a priority.

Here is an example of how I do it. I assign myself two priorities for the month ahead. One is to keep on with my market research interviewing job, in which I can pick my working days as long as I complete the requisite 13 interviews a week. The other is to write this article for the Beacon. Despite ring fencing ample time for both, I find I have faffed away the time with frequent visits to Mum around the premium interviewing times, for such urgent purposes as taking her shopping for orthodontics and commiserating on the death of Baroness Thatcher. When absolutely forced to confront the mission, instead of parking up and getting on with it, I have driven around the allocated area several times from each direction, checked out the irresistible shops in the locality, marvelled at the immensity of the local wind turbines and the charm of new-born lambs and found it necessary to return home for anything from coffee breaks to cat feeding duties.

Tackling the article has seen me needing to log into my email account and answer every arrival, even a questionnaire about how I like my new TV package. It is,



of course, imperative to check my horoscopes, conduct a new Tarot reading and check the most up-to-date news on 16 websites before launching Word. Procrastination then appears in the form of friends turning up with bottles of wine and cheery news, must-see documentaries on television and the startlingly unexpected appearance of sunshine..., several times..., making it imperative to make the best of it by taking leisure drives to distant towns and long walks in woodland.

Addicts of procrastination may engross themselves in re-evaluating their priorities in the form of new resolutions, whatever the time of year. My own have been studiously reworked on or around the first of each month, not to mention at the autumn equinox, Christmas, traditional New Year, Rosicrucian New Year and my birthday..., with very little progress being achieved towards any of them.

Procrastination certainly makes for pleasant company and interesting activity but he also leaves unmistakable hallmarks where he has sunk his fangs, in the form of gut wrenching feelings of despair, panic and worthlessness; and, of course, the sense of time inevitably and irretrievably running out. He is not the friend he pretends but the enemy of all who would attain self-mastery in the tradition of the Rosicrucians.



Motivational writer Paul McGee writes in his insightful volume *S.U.M.O.*² (Shut Up, Move On) that there is as yet no self-help support group such as Procrastinators Anonymous because even though many people have thought about forming one, none has yet gotten around to it. He however

offers some straightforward advice to help put the vampire back in his coffin. First is:

- Make a start. He does mean on that priority task that you have identified and not whatever pastime you have alighted on to avoid it. The act of starting something frequently does release a surge of purposefulness and maybe actual enthusiasm for the task in hand. It can be quite invigorating! McGee cautions us not to get hung up on how long the overall task might take but to make progress with it, however slender.
- Imagine vividly how it will feel to finish. The satisfaction of a job well done has few equals. Even the satisfaction of a job done at all feels pretty good to

someone who has habitually succumbed to the thief of time, as I have found. The Rosicrucian techniques of visualisation may be put to excellent use in picturing..., with movement and full colour..., the sensations of completing the allotted task and especially lingering on the positive emotions to be experienced from the achievement, no matter whether it is a magazine article, a full scale educational course or writing that best-selling book.

- Tackle the worst activities, the most frightening and difficult first. So many of us put off the tasks that feel uncomfortable, unpleasant or downright scary. The fact is, the longer we put them off, the longer we feel the horrible inner effects. Taking action to deal with those items first has the merit that at least it puts them out of the way so you can move on. Seriously, it is a no brainer.
- Reward progress. Do not reward lack of progress. In the past when Procrastination has had less of a hold on me I have thwarted him by telling myself I will not eat until I have finished such-and-such a job and cannot uncork the wine until a certain milestone has been reached. Make sure you genuinely feel you merit a reward and that the reward is proportionate. One sentence in the writing task does not earn you a trip abroad.
- Find a companion to share your experience of Procrastination and success in fighting him off. Just like Alcoholics Anonymous assigning members a 'buddy' to help combat the demon drink, an ally - perhaps from the Rosicrucian fraternity - can be a formidable asset in getting your life back on a purposeful track.

It may also be helpful to identify the factors which feed your faffing. What stops you from doing what you want to do? There are many factors which Procrastination uses as barriers, from fear of failure to the idea that there

It is a beneficial exercise for everyone to write down what they hope to achieve in their lives, and then imagine what it would feel like to reach that goal.

is plenty of time when really there isn't. Many people feel they are always too busy to do what they intend, but that is invariably a myth. If you were purposefully busy you would be meeting your priorities. Does the task feel too big? Break it down into bite-sized pieces. Do you need



new skills? Go on then, learn them! Are you worried about looking inadequate or failing to deliver what was expected? You certainly will if you don't do anything! The fact is that even if you fall short of your aspirations, if you have produced something then other people will have that something to work with, a starting point, and if you have produced nothing, they won't.

Another tip is to take responsibility for your own actions, or inactions. Recognise that you are the one and only author of your life and that whatever other people or duties appear to detract from your priorities you have the power and wherewithal to stay on purpose, if that is what you decide to do. Set aside the time and guard it against all intruders, Procrastination included. Disconnect the phone, invite visitors to call another time and clear your diary, your desk and your clutter to make way for the work about to be in progress.

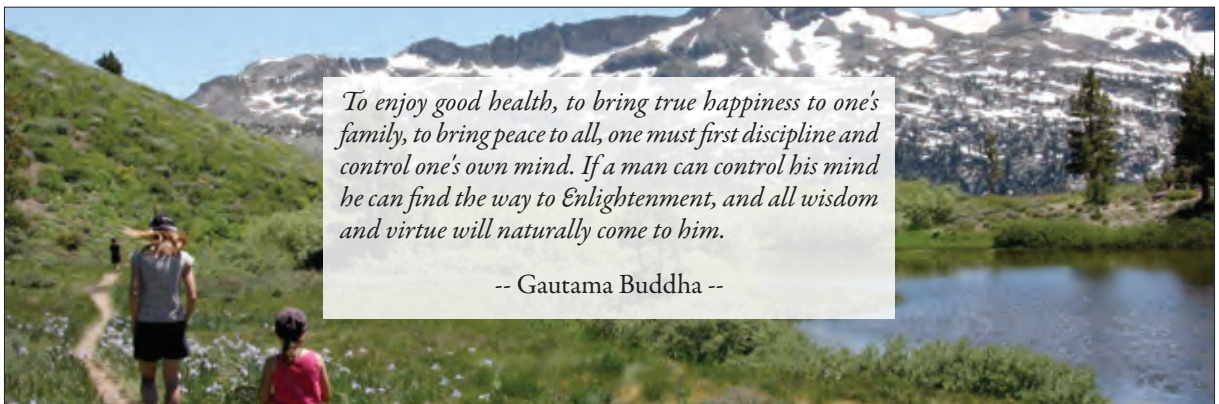
It is a beneficial exercise for everyone to write down what they hope to achieve in their lives, and then imagine what it would feel like to reach that goal. Whatever appears on the list, from experiencing enlightenment to becoming the world's richest person, if you delve deeply enough you will find that the real desire is for a feeling or set of feelings. People want money because of the feelings of freedom, choice and security that they believe it would bring them, or perhaps power and status. They want enlightenment because they want to feel close to God or to feel certainty about their purpose for living or their place in the Cosmic grid. People's real desires are for emotions, not things; for the feeling of belonging, of being loved, worthy, purposeful and at peace. Procrastination brings none of these feelings to fruition. It stands in the way of them all, beckoning us to a miserable end. Do not give in to it! Fight the villain with positive steps, even if they are baby steps and call upon the God of your Heart to recognise and overcome. And if you catch the thief Procrastination anywhere near your priority list, lock him in a cell until your next holiday.



Tackle the worst activities, the most frightening and difficult first. So many of us put off the tasks that feel uncomfortable, unpleasant or downright scary.

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To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to all, one must first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him.

-- Gautama Buddha --



A Bit of Eternity

by *Blanche Jefferson*



AS I WALK ALONG the edge of the sea, a wave moves forward and washes over my feet. I feel its cooling balm and wonder where this life-giving water has been before it came to me. How many thousands upon thousands of miles has it travelled? How many turbulences has it been a part of and why now so serene and demure?

I think about the people on other shores in faraway places and try to imagine how many generations, dynasties, through how many civilisations this water has continued the sequences planned for it..., and wonder also how lives have been affected by its coming and going. I realise how eternal this water is, changing forms, leaving its ancient and final home in the moving oceans to rise slowly, lightly, invisibly toward the Sun..., then rolling, floating there in clouds, forming small drops, masses

of them, that fall to the earth, cleansing, moistening, refreshing.

Shyly finding its way over the earth it joins small rivulets, then larger and still larger waters until finally and eagerly it rushes toward home: home to the sea from whence it came to again and yet again begin its small wispy life, again growing and returning to the sea.

Here now with me this caressing water that brushes over my tired feet is soon gone, snatched back into the deep. I watch it go, knowing full well that it will come back again in quiet patience or in turbulent storm to repeat its cycle and wear away the rocks I pass along the beach, erode the very beach itself, and carry the sands to other places, living its life, doing its work, and changing eventually the very shape of the lands themselves..., this gentle water washing over my feet.





Mystical Anguish

by *Martha Folin*

SOME EXPERIENCES are meant to be held close, and some, I think, are meant to be released and shared with others. The other night, sitting on my porch, I had such an experience, one of those sharing experiences. As I watched fireflies dodging falling leaves, I contemplated my lovely home, my children snuggled in bed, and my faithful canine friend with wagging tail, seated comfortably beside me. Here I was, surrounded by beauty, love and the glorious abundance of my Creator. Yet, I felt so sad. Little tears began to trickle softly down my cheek. What is this, I thought? I have nothing to be sad about. There is no crisis in my life, no pain, no lost loved one.

So I decided to meditate on this 'sadness'. After a moment of silence, the word 'culminate' came to me. It came so intensely that it was like a searing in my brain, an imprinting on my soul. I could almost hear a voice whispering, "*culminate..., culminate..., culmination is the key.*" I stood up, went into the house and pulled out a dictionary. I would like to share the meaning with you.

Culminate (1) Of a celestial body, to crown, to reach its highest altitude, to be directly overhead. (2a) To rise to or form a summit. (2b) To reach to the highest or a climactic or decisive point, to bring to a head or to the highest point.



As I read and re-read the dictionary definition, I began to understand both the word and the tears. I realised that I had been reviewing the past three days. In my mental meanderings, I had recalled various news broadcasts that told of increased violence throughout the world: wars and bloodshed; outrageous child abuse; rising fear and desperation over unemployment; talk of newer, more sophisticated weapons to kill each other with; starvation, crime, prejudice. I read how a fourteen-year-old boy shot his father and uncle, then hacked their bodies with an axe. I watched a television program that was supposed to be a satirical comedy but was cruel instead. I had seen a young pup dead in the street, his mother crouched beside him howling with grief as speeding motorist passed. I wish I could say I had heard lots of laughter and seen lots of loving instead..., but I hadn't. Instead, I felt inwardly sick, angry, and so, so sad.

Oneness With Creation

I have been a member of the Rosicrucian Order for a long time. But, I've been a Rosicrucian in my heart since the day I was born. Fellow Rosicrucian's will understand when I say I've been a mystic all my life. For the mystic, there is not one life; there is all life. There is not one creator; we are all creators. When life is lost, a great wrenching is felt deep in the soul, for it was not just life, it was a part of his life. It makes no difference what form that life was in..., it was life.

Pain, sorrow, hunger or fear are not felt by just one person. They are universal. No one hurts alone, hungers alone or dies alone. Somewhere there are mystics who hurt a little, hunger a little, sorrow and die a little with others. Because of their knowledge, they are aware of all things in their world, be they positive or negative. For them, all are one and the same; there is no division, no separation, from all life. That is the mystic view.

The loving mystic Jesus gave us the wisest of words to live by. Many have heard them, but not many live them or even truly understand them. True mystics know the power behind these simple words. At times they become frustrated and saddened because it is really so simple, yet for some so very difficult, to love one another.

If humankind could just grasp those simple little words and their true import, our children would not have to grow up with the fear of nuclear annihilation, and all our brilliant minds and talents could be directed towards human welfare, not warfare. There wouldn't be any starving people, unless we were all starving. Our humane societies wouldn't have to plead for the end of senseless abuse to innocent animals. Not one child would be battered and bruised by human hands, nor one woman raped. No one would ever need fear another person. No cheating, no lying, no greed, no hate. Just stop and think about it! Can

you believe it..., I mean really believe it? Can you begin to imagine what it would be like to live this way? Personally, I stand in speechless awe at the possibilities implied by such humble and simple little words: *love one another!*

The Battle With Darkness

It is my sincere belief that all true mystics, having reached a spiritual culmination, would agree that the burden is often heavy. Mystics battle constantly with 'darkness'. They are not immune to the emotions of anger and resentment towards the human species. The actions of others can cause them great depression and hopelessness. And it often takes every ounce of vitality offered them to keep the flame burning. Why some choose not to take the spiritual path or falter along the way is understandable. In this physical environment, it can sometimes seem easier to survive if we don't know and don't care.

For the mystic, there is not one life; there is all life.

Some would ask, "*If it is so painful, is it even worth it? Is it necessary? Moreover, what's my reward..., what do I get out of it?*" Mystic are aware of their 'roles in the play' and play them willingly. They know that somewhere, at some moment, they will have awakened a soul, lightened a burden, brought a smile to a sad face, encouraged the faltering, or maybe gladdened a heart. Isn't that what it's all about? Doesn't a verse in the Bible use the phrase "*on the arm of a brother*"? Doesn't that really mean to give of ourselves? If not one soul consciously chose to walk the path of mystical and spiritual unfoldment, all life would stagnate and be pointless. That makes the act of giving necessary in my book!

The rewards are numerous, the greatest being the indescribable love and unity with the Cosmic. But, seeing a big smile on a little cherub face isn't a bad reward. Or seeing a crippled body healed. Or seeing people 'walking tall' in the face of adversity. How about seeing kindness in times of sorrow, help when people are in pain? Or seeing the absolute joy that radiates from a healthy, happy animal? These are rewards to the mystic. They are the 'spirit' of God in action, channelled through our higher selves, to our physical world. The mystic's greatest desire is to see the spirit of our higher selves in action all the time, not just some of the time.

The mystic knows that through some act of kindness, an understanding word, or perhaps a show of spiritual courage, another Light will be born out of the Darkness. Each Light born brings humankind just one step closer to the ultimate culmination of loving one another..., the end of mystical anguish..., the beginning of mystical reward.





CAGLIOSTRO

by Marc Cornwall

THE SWISS CITY of Basel is only a short flight from London, and recently I went there for a long weekend with some pharmacist friends. Basel has a large and successful pharmaceutical industry, and as befits any industry proud of its heritage, it has a museum to chronicle the evolution of pharmacy.

The Pharmacy Historical Museum is run by the University of Basel, Switzerland's oldest university and the academic home of illustrious minds of the past such as Erasmus, Paracelsus and Friedrich Nietzsche. The exceptional exhibits and old setting of this museum reveals many pages from the past to us. Okay, it's not on the top-10 list of must-see venues in this already beautiful and historically interesting city, but it is a fascinating place for anyone interested in the history of the Western mystery tradition in particular to visit, for a chapter of Rosicrucian history that I found there, is, as far as I know, unknown to most people.

We completed our visit to the museum. The highlight

for me was the reconstruction of the full-sized alchemist's laboratory. Just a few steps beyond the museum, and as we were about to leave, I came upon a strange sign that startled me. There, on our left, was a simple placard over the protective railing of a steep stairway leading to the basement. The sign read in German: "*Cagliostro machte hier das Gold*" (Cagliostro made gold here!). Here was a surprisingly positive statement about the accomplishment of that mysterious mystic, Cagliostro. It wasn't a notice put up by someone with a penchant for the romantic or someone indulging their imagination to embellish facts. It was the official declaration of a scientific institute in the third largest city in Switzerland. So, here it was: official.

I peered excitedly over the railing and down the stairway into the dark shadows below. I could barely see the old, partially subterranean chamber which had been used by the famous Cagliostro during his stay in Basel. I had read about him briefly but nothing detailed, and up until my visit to the museum, I knew very little about him. I dragged the



others down to see the room where it was claimed that he had, as in France, produced transmuted gold. Scientifically, short of having discovered cold-fusion, that was nonsense, but it was apparently not disputed by the museum authorities, for they had put the sign up; so it was worth looking into. Strangely, the offspring of alchemy, modern pharmacy, had erected its museum right beside the very building in which one of its earliest predecessors had laboured away.

A lot has been written about Cagliostro's life, but to be quite honest most of it is rubbish. Making gold in Basel was by many of these accounts one of the concluding events in the life of a man whose life reads like the most fanciful fiction. Nevertheless, let's delve a bit. It is said that Alessandro di Cagliostro was born at Palermo, the capital of Sicily, in 1743. Most of the early biographers said his real name was Giuseppe Balsamo. It is worth noting though that opinions on Cagliostro were formed primarily by one Italian biographer, and he was commissioned and paid by the Vatican to produce the biography. So there is every reason to believe therefore that this central biography, upon which so many other stories about Cagliostro are based, is a fabrication intended to libel the character of a man who was born into Catholicism but was in later life considered worthy of burning at the stake.

He was, it is claimed, taught the deepest secrets of ancient Egyptians and became, even in their eyes, a sage.

A further contribution is the so-called *Memoirs of Cagliostro*, now considered spurious by many literary authorities, but have nevertheless having influenced encyclopaedias and historical references for centuries. So, in the knowledge that there exist very few works of real historical authenticity, we will use what exists and try to glean from it what is and is not plausible.

Cagliostro stayed for periods of his life in Greece, Egypt, Arabia (Yemen), Persia, the island of Rhodes and most countries of Europe. While in Egypt he was initiated into a remnant of the ancient Egyptian mystery schools, and underwent initiations not only in the Great Pyramid of Khufu but in several other temples along the Nile. He was, it is claimed, taught the deepest secrets of ancient Egyptians and became even in their eyes a sage. Of course as a Rosicrucian 'walking question mark', I'm a bit sceptical of such claims; they come after all from the literature mentioned above. How much of ancient Egypt still lay under the desert sands in his day? Undoubtedly virtually all of it! We know that most of these temples were in ruins at the time, but some may have been accessible through secret passageways. That Cagliostro was a scholar of great learning and possessed

the most extraordinary knowledge, even his false biographers conceded, so clearly he received his wisdom from somewhere other than a provincial little town in the south of Italy.

On the island of Rhodes he is said to have studied alchemy and the occult sciences, and was inducted into the Knights Hospitaller (Knights of St John of Jerusalem). Through his close friendship with the Grand Master, he was later introduced to many prominent families in Rome. He returned to Europe, visiting several of the capitals and his fame as an alchemist, philosopher, healer and reputedly a Rosicrucian too, became widespread. The biographers who referred to him as Giuseppe Balsamo have presented him as a contemptible rogue, charlatan and heathen. But the gulf between the two characters we find in the literature is so great that it seems obvious to me that they were either two entirely different men, or, as is also possible, a Vatican inspired attempt to sully Cagliostro's reputation.

In early life, Cagliostro, it is narrated, was a perverse and extremely immoral man. However, in describing his later years in Paris and Strasbourg, his biographers, with a few exceptions, admired his powers and seemingly miraculous acts. You can sense their secret wonder at his feats and their doubt about reports about his early years. As an example, Waite, in his short sketch of the life of Cagliostro, whom he calls Balsamo, just as those others, quotes from the Italian biographer. Then, as if suddenly conscious of the incongruity of the acts of morality and immorality attributed to Cagliostro in the stories, he says: "*The veracity of this account is not however beyond suspicion.*"

Phenomenal Demonstrations

Cagliostro reportedly entered the city of Strasbourg in triumph. Different reports agree that crowds of sick people who had heard of his healing powers, were waiting for him and hoped for treatment from him. "*The famous emperic entered and cured them all; some simply by touch, others apparently by words or by a gratuity in money, the rest by his universal panacea [specially prepared medicine].*" Going to his lodgings in Strasbourg where the ill had assembled, "*...Cagliostro issued from the hall amidst universal acclaim, and was accompanied by the immense crowd to the doors of the magnificent lodging which had been prepared against his arrival.*"

His demonstrations of occult phenomena amazed people wherever he went. It was said that he could cause objects to manifest which weren't ordinarily visible and that he was also able to make himself visible in two places simultaneously..., something I still need a lot of practise with! These displays of power weren't only for the ignorant and credulous masses. Many learned people were present



on these occasions. As one biographer almost reluctantly admitted: *“Contemporary testimony established that these manifestations as a whole were genuine and there is little doubt of the mesmeric abilities of Cagliostro....”* In other words, the biographer was attempting to make the reader believe that Cagliostro hypnotised (mesmerised) everyone he confronted and deceived them into thinking what they had been told about his powers. However, elsewhere the same biographer calls Cagliostro’s powers fraudulent.

In the heart of bustling, noisy Paris stands the solemn, attention-arresting residence of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, the famous mystic and alchemist. The building’s high stone wall and wrought iron gates shut out the world and preserve its air of mystery. On the superimposed garret balcony, the alchemist-philosopher hoisted from the cobblestone courtyard below kegs of chemicals and boxes of instruments used in his secret alchemical experiments. Cagliostro studied in the mystery schools of the Orient and later taught his knowledge to kings and potentates. Feared and hated for his wealth and power, he was libelled, persecuted and finally wrongly imprisoned for life.

We are also told that *“...he visited the sick in the hospitals, deferentially participated in the duties of the regular doctors, proposed his remarks with prudence, did not condemn the old methods but sought to unite the new science with the science which was based on experience.”* How can the above quotation be reconciled with the character of Balsamo? Would someone who was a cruel fraud and actually lacking in knowledge of healing, be capable of such acts of compassion, and even participate in the work of the doctors in the hospitals he visited?

Furthermore, he didn’t condemn the accepted scientific methods of the day but tried to integrate his own arts with those of the doctors. And he was not rejected by the doctors, for they allowed him to participate in the healing in the hospitals. These weren’t the actions then, of some sham or quack. In fact, his critics further admit: *“...unheard-of cures were cited and alchemical operations which surpassed even the supposed possibilities of the transmutatory art.”*

In 1771 Cagliostro moved to Paris. *“He assumed the role of a practical magician and astonished the city by the evocation of phantoms, which he caused to appear at the wish of the inquirer, either in a mirror or in a vase of clear water. These phantoms equally represented dead and living beings and, as occasionally, collusion appears to have been well nigh impossible, and as the theory of coincidence is preposterous, there is reason to suppose that he produced results which must sometimes have astounded himself.”* It would have been more apt for this biographer to have said that he was astounded rather than Cagliostro was. It is clear that search as he could for any suggestion of fraud, the biographer could find none and thus admits to the astounding and inexplicable phenomena



Reconstruction of the full-sized alchemist’s laboratory at The Pharmacy Historical Museum, University of Basel, Switzerland.

that Cagliostro produced. Let us remember that almost all these biographers began on the premise that Cagliostro was a charlatan, but once the biography was started, they often found themselves hard put to support such a notion.

Genius or Impostor

Louis XVI of France became infatuated with Cagliostro after having private audiences with him. He was so convinced that Cagliostro was a genius and a noted alchemical philosopher that he declared that anyone who injured him would be considered guilty of treason. This implied royal sponsorship of Cagliostro. Consequently, the crown’s acceptance was an open sesame for him to the highest social circles of France. Nevertheless, one biographer, who related this, includes tales of reported debauchery by Cagliostro in the temple erected in the splendid mansion on the Rue St. Cloud in Paris.

Cagliostro’s creation of a lodge of Egyptian Masonry in Paris, his conferring of Rosicrucian rites, his mystical ceremonies, his fabulous cures and his demonstrations of powers were causing the Catholic Church great concern. He was adored by the people, from the highest social circles down. His generosity to the poor, his apparent self-sacrifice and charity, as well as the moral esteem in which he was held by the people, were conditions of rivalry that the Roman Church could scarcely endure. Strangely enough, despite this hostility, Cagliostro became a close friend of Cardinal de Rohan, though it turned out to be one of his most fatal mistakes, for *“...in a short time he was raised to the height of a celebrity by a miraculous cure of the Prince de Soubise, the brother of Cardinal de Rohan, who was suffering from a virulent attack of scarlet fever. From then on the portrait of the adept was to be seen everywhere in Paris.”*

Cagliostro was implicated in the famous “diamond necklace affair,” in which the Cardinal was the central figure. Cardinal de Rohan, via his mistress, had been led to believe that Queen Marie Antoinette was in love with him. The Cardinal bought the fabulously priced necklace for her, but was not able to meet the payment. As the Cardinal had



formerly been expelled for improper conduct, he perhaps hoped to return to the good graces of the crown. At the trial, Cagliostro was freed from conviction. However, he was imprisoned in the Bastille “for other reasons,” as a biographer says, and without further explanation. He was later able to flee to London and, while there, wrote of the corruption prevailing in France and predicted the Revolution that was soon to come. Both Church and Royalists now hated him for this, and he finally found sanctuary in Basel.

Under Penalty of Death

It was while in Basel that some of the initiates who followed him conducted their alchemical researches in this very basement laboratory I was looking at. His followers who remained in France didn't all desert him either. His Egyptian Masonic lodges and Rosicrucian Temple continued, to the great annoyance of the Catholic prelates; for the people were anxious to learn the art that had given Cagliostro his power. Furthermore, Cardinal de Rohan, who had eventually been acquitted, had probably believed that Cagliostro had involved him in the diamond necklace affair and caused him to be exposed. The Cardinal's ecclesiastical power seems to have been brought to bear against the mystical alchemist primarily because of this.

Against all the odds stacked against him, Cagliostro returned to Rome. He was urged by former initiates of his Egyptian Masonic and Rosicrucian Lodges to establish more Lodges in the eternal city. Despite a papal penalty of death for the establishment of Freemasonic lodges in Rome, Cagliostro had always displayed absolute courage in these matters. In defiance of the papal edict, he organised his lodge and initiated eager supplicants who sought the Greater Light. He was arrested on 27 September 1789 by order of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.

The Italian biographer tried to mitigate the historical impression of the dictatorial policy of the Roman Church by declaring that the papal authorities had engaged for Cagliostro a lawyer “*Whose knowledge and probity were generally recognised.*” Cagliostro was induced through reliance upon this counsel and against his own better judgement, to confess to odious crimes, and also induced not to staunchly deny the many charges brought against him. He was assured that he would then receive leniency from the papal authorities and be permitted to leave Italy at once.

The result of the trial however was pronounced. There was some public indignation over the verdict and the sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment in the fortress prison of San Leo. Strangely enough, although Cagliostro was in comparatively good health when sentenced and during his imprisonment, he died two years

later when only 50 years old. The accounts of his death were always quite mysterious. One statement was that he had tried to strangle a priest (whom he had called for confession) in an attempt to escape, and was killed for this. Another report was that he had strangled himself.

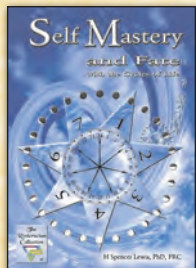
At the time of Cagliostro's arrest, the Roman Church seized all the manuscripts he had prepared from his alchemical researches. They also took his books on occult and esoteric philosophy of the East which he had carefully gathered. His Masonic and Rosicrucian records were also confiscated and may still reside in the prohibited section of the Vatican archives. It was during these two years in prison and just before his death in the prime of life, that his memoirs were said to have been written. These purported memoirs, which he never lived to confirm or deny, refuted all he had ever taught, written or demonstrated. They are so inconsistent with the acts of his life that there is little doubt they were the consequence of the inquisitorial methods that were exercised against him.

His wife was also tried and, “*under terror of the Inquisition*” was made to deny Cagliostro's eloquence and brilliance which were a known fact throughout Europe. Notwithstanding the intimidation of his wife (who was later confined to a convent), she insisted that some of his arts were inexplicable. She stated that he must have “*been assisted by the powers of magical art.*” Later, battalions of the French Revolutionists sought to rescue Cagliostro from the castle in which he was imprisoned, showing the devoted public feeling toward him in France. But they were too late, he was dead.

While gazing at the stairway, down which this adept and mystic had trudged to his labours, I reflected that all the vituperative and vilifying accounts and biographical sketches and fictional tales written about Cagliostro were mainly based on his alleged memoirs written while he was a papal prisoner. The Italian biographer who wrote about him, and who has been so widely copied, gained his principal data from these ‘memoirs’ and that information which the Roman Church reported as having been included in Cagliostro's private papers. The fruits of the man's life in most contemporary literature are thus made to appear as rotten as the roots these sources have attributed to him.

It was in this laboratory in Basel, Switzerland, that Cagliostro conducted alchemical research. The implements and devices in this laboratory date from the 15th century when alchemy flourished in Europe. This original alchemical equipment was gathered together by the Pharmaceutical Society of Switzerland. The room is a tribute to alchemy, father of chemistry, medicine and pharmacy. On an inner door is an announcement proclaiming: “*Cagliostro made gold here...*”; recognition of the greatness of this alchemist by a modern, and grateful, scientific organisation.





Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life

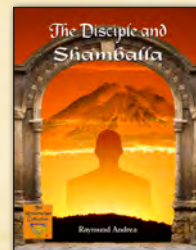
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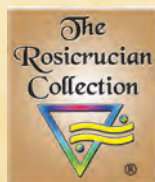
THE THOUGHTS we hold determine our mental and physical health. Irrational thoughts harm us much more than we know and the consequences are always harmful for us. The greatest thing we could do for ourselves is to banish forever all belief in malevolent supernatural causes to our various mental and physical ailments...; for what you think, that veritably you will become!



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Only that dawn breaks
to which we are awake.

-- Henry David Thoreau