

Some Philosophical Fragments

Supplement to Students Monthly Letter

Dangers of New Thought -- Metaphysics and Psychology

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF SUPERSCIENCE

BY MANLY HALL

(Continued from Feb. Letter Supplement)

This is not written in the spirit of criticism but is a plain expression of facts as they are. Every day they come to us groping in spirit and body, floating like broken hulks on the sea of life. We are sorry for them and ask that those who are truly trying to help will join with us to help these people back to their feet again, not filling their heads with more opinions but standing them upon their feet and aiding them to think for themselves again. When man loses his conceit and becomes human again he will realize that because he is able to think is no proof that he is able to think WELL.

WHERE OUR MODERN TEACHERS COME FROM. Our modern celebrities can be generally divided into two groups when we come to the problem of source. One group are inspired. In the majority experience proves that their inspiration was a personal opinion strengthened by encouragement and conceit on the part of the individual himself. The other group are those who have taken lessons themselves from some other teacher. In the majority of cases this just proves to be the passing of opinions and acceptance of these opinions as facts by the student. How many of you would want to be operated on by a man who had only studied surgery for two weeks, and that only from someone who claimed to know. Yet we will trust our souls to one who claimed to have a vision, or who goes into trances.

Many metaphysicians are sincerely trying to help, but the ground is so fertile that there has been a great influx of spiritual carpet-baggers and metaphysical patent medicine venders who are in for all they can get out of it. One of them told me that there was a fool born every minute and if he did not get it, someone else would. The "it" of course referring to the contents of your pocketbook. THE MASS OF OCCULT STUDENTS TODAY ARE NOT ON THE PATH. They think they are but it is again only someone's opinion. Even those who are looked up to as most advanced, and "old souls" are advancing into blind alleys. Either the students did not get what the teacher said or else they did and the teacher said nothing. It is of course an open problem as to which that is. The worst part is that they go out of life with less than they came in with for they came in with an opportunity and wasted that.

THE SECOND GREAT DANGER—PSYCHOLOGY

The greatest danger of psychology is that it is true. The mind of man, groping in the darkness of limitation, found the touchstone, or at least some did, that the gods had concealed since the days of Atlantis. A science whereby man may demand of the Infinite, and the Infinite must obey, has been founded upon that discovery. But the new blessing that man grasped at was a deadly thing, BEARING UPON IT A CURSE, THE CURSE OF THE GODS. These powers belong to the gods and they bestow them upon those who are found worthy. But when man steals them from the Infinite, their new found power destroys them. Only the God man prepared after the manner of the law is fitted to grasp in his fingers those subtle forces that are now in the hands of fools. Instead then of a blessing to help us on our way, it only gives us another and more terrible way of expressing the beast within our own souls.

For ages the beast has been bound to earth by his own limitations and ignorance but now he rises armed with the powers of the gods. HEAVEN ALONE KNOWS WHAT THE END WILL BE.

This mighty power, that our forefathers never dreamed of, sank Atlantis, has destroyed all the races that have so far peopled the earth, and now like a plague it is descended upon our race to confront it with the great temptation. It is the demon at the shoulder of the master, it is the power of God himself, and how does selfish man know how to wield it. Crimes that once he hung for can now be done silently and unsuspected, things that he once labored for as an honest man he now seeks to secure through his subtle force; he strikes where those who do not know cannot retaliate. To the egotism and brutality of the beast is added now the sceptre of a demi-god. But of course in time things will right themselves and the plan go on. But if the present attitude is continued the race will dissolve itself in the swirl of occult, called by those who cannot manage them, and left like plagues upon nature's face.

The modern teachers of Psychology are unconsciously damning the race by teaching man to use the forces but not teaching how to use them wisely. They have but one legitimate use, but no one would bother them if that use was explained and the present application made impossible. These forces are to be used only as directed by the masters for the unfoldment of man himself and the development of the earth. How many of the students of Psychology are using them that way? Not enough to discuss. ALL PERSONAL USES OF SUPERPHYSICAL OR MENTAL POWER FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF PERSONAL ENDS IS CRIMINAL. And all who make use of it in such ways secure with it the curse of the gods. The curse is this, that they will destroy themselves with their attempts to satisfy their own egotism. The curse is sure, they have already hypnotized themselves with the powers they sought to exert over others, and while millions will suffer with them, they will suffer most of all.

THE ANSWER

There is but one solution to the problem and it has nothing to do with creeds or clans. It is too

late to conceal the knowledge. It is already on the lips of children. MAN MUST BE TAUGHT TO ACCEPT WITH THIS DIVINE POWER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GODS. It is only in this way that he can prevent his own destruction. If he will only mold his life into the pattern of the Masters he may yet learn to wield this awful force as they do, that it bring forth good and not evil, a feast and not a famine. But will man think? Will he sacrifice himself now in order to save himself later? We hope, but we are sorely afraid that he will not bend to the will of the Masters until he has destroyed all. Man does not know how to use these finer forces, he is playing with destruction but will allow naught to guide him or direct him. He wants what he wants and turns all the powers that he has to the attainment of his own desires. The things he wants will kill him, for they are all of the earth, earthy. He listens to none but, happy with the new found toy which he believes will make him happy, he shakes off the hand of prudence and dashes blindly over the cliff to his death.

What good does it do to warn, they only laugh. What if the handwriting is upon the wall, they will not heed until the walls begin to fall. And then they turn and pray for mercy, those who would not listen to the guidance of understanding. So Psychology will everyday become more popular, teaching man to gain what he wants, but failing to teach him that only God knows what he truly needs. If he gains what he wants it will kill him and he never seeks for what he needs. So the curse of the gods is upon him for stealing their power and not accepting their understanding.

END

STUDENTS LETTER

(Continued from A Monthly Letter)

Esthetics as theory infers a creative impulse supported by technical knowledge. Of course only a few highly evolved mortals possess the soul power to achieve greatly in the arts. Nevertheless beauty is necessary to every human being. If we cannot perform, we must at least appreciate. No one can be truly normal unless he has some esthetic appreciation. The love of the beautiful and the expression

of beauty through some art enriches the life and protects the spiritual values of man from the corroding influences of this present commercial era.

It seems in order at this point to make a few practical suggestions concerning the application of esthetic principles to the life of the average individual. Every serious student of the spiritual sciences should realize the full import of beauty as a ministering force in life. The ancient Egyptians cultivated esthetics in all of its branches as part of the state religion. The Greeks passed laws prohibiting the construction of asymmetrical buildings or the exhibition or performance of art, drama or music which did not conform to certain esthetic standards. The Greeks punished with exile and disgrace anyone who wilfully perverted any standard of beauty. The Spartans destroyed at birth all deformed infants lest deformity exhibited to the populace in their later years should corrupt the state. These various measures were dictated by a profound understanding and contributed largely to the excellence of these empires and states. We all admire the nobility and beauty which distinguished the classical systems of philosophy and religion. If we would share the wisdom of the ancients, we must rise to their esthetic standards.

The absence of art or esthetic consciousness in the average home is a greater tragedy than may at first appear. This general indifference to beauty is an important factor in the widespread decadence of culture and integrity throughout the so-called civilized world. People who are content to live in a home filled with gaudy cheapness and evidences of bad taste will find that their personal standards of life and thought are infected and corrupted by this unfitting and unlovely atmosphere. Every student of philosophy and mysticism should realize the necessity of including beauty in his budget. He should realize that art is a living force and should place it above material luxury.

As a homely but literal illustration of this point, study the average home. The rooms are filled with cheap chromos in over-gilded frames, and inexpensive trifles accumulated at holidays and bridge parties. Ten dollars would be a high price for the total collection. Few fine books ever invade the premises. Cheap editions, if any, badly printed and in

gaudy covers fill the library "shelf." Practically no good sculpture ever reaches the private home in America.

Is this condition really necessary in a country which, even during the present depression, has the highest per capita wealth of any country in the world? The excuse is that, by the time the rent is paid, the installments on the frigidaire, radio, automobile, furniture, et cetera are met, and the pressing bills of the month taken care of, there are no funds left with which to indulge an esthetic urge. The truth, however, is that there is no urge. If a true urge existed it would take precedence over creature comforts, conveniences and luxuries.

While it is undoubtedly true that many people cannot afford anything beyond the bare necessities of life, there are a great number who can afford good cars, good clothes, entertainment, a radio, and various social expenditures. All these can afford beauty. We should cease to think of art as a luxury of the rich and realize that it is also a necessity of the poor. The strength of the nation is its middle class and it is this great middle class that needs the refining, purifying influence of fine art. Beauty is a constant inspiration and an ever present help in time of trouble.

Any person who can afford the creature comforts such as are common in the average American home can afford, by careful planning, to possess at least one fine and beautiful example of esthetic art to inspire him and to become a part of his life. If the man who has been buying a new car each year will forego this luxury for a season and buy a good painting, a fine piece of sculpture, a rare book, or some object of beauty which pleases him, he will discover that the satisfying of the esthetic sense is one of the most practical ways of spending money. Possibly one of the reasons why so few people are satisfied to stay at home is because there is so little of beauty in the home to sanctify and refine the environment.

A house that is filled with numerous bric-a-brac and maudlin sentimentalities needs a thorough going-over. The ancient Mayan ceremony should be performed, which consisted of burning all personal effects at certain intervals. It is a common fault to believe that a room must be littered with a thou-

sand eyesores in order to be furnished. The wise man never forgets the dignity of space. Blank walls are much more artistic than the things which usually cover them. In a simple, uncluttered environment one fine art object will stand out—its beauty a benediction upon the whole environment. The Oriental art connoisseur, whose taste bears witness to thousands of years of civilizing culture, seldom permits himself the luxury of more than one fine painting or beautiful ceramic to even a large room, and all of his furnishings will be consistent one with the other. He will never mix his schools of art or his periods of furnishings. To do so is to irritate the soul.

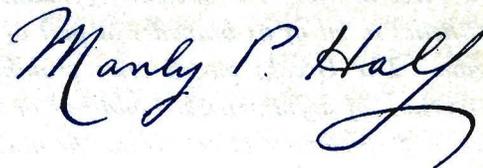
It is also painfully evident that the average person makes absolutely no effort to cultivate any of the arts in himself. The radio takes the place of music in the home. Few people are willing to train themselves in vocal or instrumental performance, or in the dance. The excuse given is that there is no financial future for such talents. No thought is given to the really important issue—the development of the esthetic nature and the personal satisfaction and improvement to be derived from the ability to perform.

The average individual does not make a constructive use of his emotional energies. The proper application of esthetic laws and principles will transmute instinct and appetite into creative impulse and artistic expression. Nearly all of the evils of human disposition arise from the repression or misapplication of emotional energy. The hates, fears, griefs and worries of mankind bear witness to undirected and untransmuted emotional energy. The disciplines of esthetics give legitimate expression to the impulsiveness of human nature. We cannot be truly dedicated to beauty and at the same time fail to develop a certain inward grace. The esthetic arts are the normal and natural channels for the manifestation of man's complicated emotional reflexes.

Nearly all human beings are in some way emotionally inhibited. These inhibitions often break out in unbeautiful action and thought. These periodic outbursts, usually attended by unfortunate consequences, can be prevented if the emotional life is allowed a beautiful and creative expression through

some one of the several esthetic arts. These arts can fill empty lives and the empty places in otherwise full lives. There are people who feel that they are alone and neglected, and view the whole existence as a more or less tragic span. These persons can enrich themselves spiritually and emotionally through the theory and practice of artistic expression.

Very truly yours,



INTERESTING NEWS ITEMS

In one of my earlier letters I called attention to my purchase of a Cabbalistic manuscript by the Comte de St.-Germain. This manuscript was from the library of Mr. Lionel Hauser which was sold at Sotheby's in London by auction last April. While in Paris I visited Mr. Hauser and discussed with him the origin of this manuscript and several other of his important papers. Mr. Hauser is the owner of an important Masonic register containing the minutes and notes of important Masonic meetings in Paris between 1775 and 1789. The Marquis de la Fayette was received into this Lodge on June 24, 1782, and among the important signatures contained in the register is the signature of Comte de St.-Germain. The date of the entry is several years later than the supposed date of the mysterious count's death. Mr. Hauser also possesses a curious Masonic token or pass-coin bearing St.-Germain's name and used by the members of his Lodge for purposes of identification. The coin is silver, about the size of a quarter dollar, and is ornamented with Masonic emblems.

We are having a complete photostatic copy made of what is probably the most important Hermetic manuscript in the Bibliotheque National. This is the celebrated Book of Abraham the Jew, magnificently illustrated with water-color miniatures on vellum, exhibiting the innermost secrets of the Hermetic art. We hope to translate and publish this work, which up to the present time has existed only in a few inaccessible manuscripts.