

Albigen-Papers-5-Obstacles

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FIFTH PAPER

Obstacles to Transcendental Efforts

ARGUMENT FOR TRANSCENDENTAL RESEARCH

Transcendentalism not only provokes more negative argument than positive argument, but it also provokes more ridicule. The ridicule is inspired by the comic or pathetic appearance of some transcendental poseurs, fanatics, and psychic ripple-makers who make up some of the motley classes of transcendental effort. We can never be sure, except perhaps in certain individual cases, whether occultism and transcendentalism causes or worsens the mental conditions which we are likely to describe as "sick" or "crazy". And it may be true that some sincere people may have submitted themselves to deprivations, ascetism, or some painful experimentation which may have left them in worse shape than they were before they became transcendentalists. In any event, we should not criticize this latter group, until we have walked a mile in their moccasins.

As for argument ... it is not hard to find arguments against spiritual or transcendental prospecting. The arguments come in from all sides, and especially from those well-organized groups whose concepts might be jeopardized. Religion evidently wants no amateurs adding to its enlightenment. Religion is content to bed down with the politician and sociologist, and make any sort of compromise to protect its slumber. Psychology is alarmed by various transcendental findings which might upset the entire psychological pretence.

We can dispense with the arguments from religious sources, because we should know by now that transcendentalism is actually religious research, and most of the criticism from religion is recognizable as sectarian or political -- meaning that some sects embody in their religious practices, things which other sects persecute.

That which diverts more minds from psychic research than anything else is the persistent scientific argumentation. It might be said that material science, and those esoteric groups which specialize in mind-science or states of being, are the most polarized. The material scientist claims that the transcendentalist cannot prove anything, and makes no sense. The transcendentalist, on the other hand, often does not try to make sense, because he feels his development to be superior to logical processes. And he in turn also accuses the material-scientist of being only a sort of animated slide-rule without the necessary feeling-ability to actually do research work in other dimensions than the apparent one.

However, both work from the same base. Neither denies the existence of Man, and their sciences or meta-sciences are the results of and concern for understanding of man's relation to environment, whether that environment be the visible world, the invisible and molecular men, or the still more invisible and seemingly remote God-spark of which man may be only a reflection.

We must abridge all such argument and admit that man is a fact, and in being a fact, immediately is assured of the immortality and indestructibility of the fact-state. Whatever his limits are as regards his immortality or mortality, or as regards his degree of consciousness, his fact-status is permanent. Of course, the concept of the

nature of, or the exactness of, that fact-status is interpreted differently by the two polar groups, and therein lays the root of misunderstanding.

Man is a physical fact in that he (particularly the material-scientist) recognizes as man, only that man-being, or man-object, which is witnessable by the physical senses. And it is true that man is such a fact for such an observer. However the transcendentalist may go as far as to say that the physical body, and the senses themselves are both illusions and the results of illusions. Yet the transcendentalist (as in the case of a Zen Student or aspirant to Satori) still views man as a fact. The amazing thing is that this latter group (of transcendentalists) view its concept of man's fact-status to be more concrete and real than any other. Its fact-man is indestructible and complete. The fact-man of the material-scientist is a transitory creature, an a limited one.

Another argument against transcendental work consists of indications of the supposedly infinite and insurmountable difficulties involved in such research. This argument bears some truth, but is not valid in the long run. An equivalent argument might have been handed to the cave-men, to discourage them for embarking upon their primitive and seemingly hopeless research which must have ultimately led to our present technology. In other words, it is better to look back upon the successes of past programs, if we need assurances for future efforts, regardless of the field.

It is true that we are working with abstractions, but is also true that even in abstractions, patterns have been discovered. These patterns in turn lead to either a better understanding of the phenomena involved, or to new angles from which the phenomena can be studied. The sad evidence remains that such patterns had been discovered decades and centuries ago, but the material-scientists, ever on the alert for things apparent, failed to see these apparent patterns. Such a pattern is expressed in ancient occult books with the words, "As above, so below." This ancient allusion to the relation of the Microcosm to the Macrocosm is still missed by many physicists who are aware of the orbital systems of atoms and solar systems.

Hypnosis was practiced by primitive humanity, but it was many centuries later that either the scientist or the medical practitioner of our quasi-civilized society admitted the validity of the phenomena of hypnosis. And it was probably a half-century after that admission that it was used as a therapeutic instrument, as well as a parlor pastime.

If it is possible for primitive peoples to come up with such an instrument long before Galileo demonstrated his lenses, (he was belabored by the Church of Rome because he was unable to prove, as in a court of law, beyond all cavil and doubt, that the pope was not the center of the universe), then there must surely be hope for the modern researcher. All the latter needs is the courage and basic intelligence of an aboriginal shaman.

We find another argument which claims that all occult phenomena are the results of fraudulent manipulations, and that all transcendental cults result from the hunger of needy layman, and the greed of the dispensers of nostrums and gimmicks. And I must admit that this argument has a true bearing on ninety percent of the occult-movements, for if I did not recognize considerable and manifest fraudulence, I would have omitted much of this work.

Yet even in some of the movements that have been proven to have fraudulent directors, we find some material borrowed from other sources which in their own right were not money-motivated. And often, if we submit to dig through this type of re-digested material, we will eventually come across evidence of historical research and note-taking, so that even the charlatan hacks of such evidence may have some value.

Above all, no man should enter transcendental work with fear expectations. He should attack it with the same energy that he would apply to mastering calculus, and with the knowledge or conviction that he can study either calculus or esoteric philosophy and still be a man. There is no reason for any man to anticipate any metamorphosis of his physical body or deterioration of his mental processes because of such a search. It is possible that preconceptions of angelic development for men of the cloth and of saffron robes alike have resulted in their acting the part of a point of affectation of strange poses and states of mind.

If we are male, we should advance upon the battlements of ignorance with the tool of the male, with aggressiveness. The female may find the mark better with passiveness. In any event, there is no danger of her becoming less feminine by being passive, and less danger of losing her femininity. Both parties should never lose sight of human exigencies, right up to day of final victory or cosmic-consciousness. Until that final day our role can only be that of the fact-man as is knowable.

THE CURSE OF INTELLECTUALISM

We are continually subjected to the fallacy that an intellectual is a wise man. Let us ask ourselves about the nature of our real objectives in pursuing the study that leads to being an intellectual. And then after this self-scrutiny, let us ask our neighbor-intellectuals, our colleagues, about their motives for becoming scholars or experts in an intellectual field.

The human being gives into higher education because of primitive drives. The main factor in a young man's decision to fight his way through college is competition. To strive with greater facility for the material things of life ... which is the same as saying that he is putting a bit more effort into satisfying his physical senses, his appetites, or his fears.

An engineer will have twice the earning potential of a shoe salesman, and perhaps three times the earning ability of a farmer. With that proportion of earnings he is better able to afford the type of fear or desire that might stimulate him. He does not specifically enter into the study of calculus to find the Truth. And too often, once he has become a "qualified" engineer, he is apt to scorn anyone who overlooks his importance, or who might question the infallibility of science as the engineer sees it.

In days gone by there was a tremendous reverence for even a school teacher. Anyone who showed a love for learning was automatically presumed to be wise. A school teacher is little more than a memory bank for the community. They are the custodians of information. They memorize, but the nature of their work causes them to fall into the habit of acceptance of authority, which does not make for philosophers or thinkers. They drill and teach by rote, which has a hypnotic effect upon themselves as well as their students.

The college student who takes up a more scientific course and avoids the teaching profession may well become an efficient slide-rule or computer to enhance the environment, or to aid the interminable scientific pursuits of society. But once the engineer has mastered the slide-rule and become an extension of it, he has little time left to look into the nature of life and reality. The difference between the intellectual and the farmer (besides their earnings) is that the farmer sells his physical energy while the engineer sells his mind. And for this simple reason, the mind of the engineer is of less value to his Self, or to that part of him that depends upon the mind to evaluate itself.

Go among your colleagues, if you associate with intellectuals, and ask them for the reasons for their pursuit of education. And ask them for their opinions about the scientific investigations of phenomena as yet unexplained by our sciences ... such as are approached by transcendentalism. Ask them to define themselves, or to give reasons why they have not bothered to define themselves.

You will find that nearly all intellectuals and scientists see no urgency in defining themselves before they define the material world about them.

The appalling thing in the world of religion, and up or down to the world of psychology, is the manifest confusion. We have a painful weakness in regards to authority. Even the most absurd concepts will, by some twist of statistics or intuition, appear to be valid. And on the other hand, those concepts born out of reason, or legalized by pseudo-authority, will be constantly attacked by unexplained phenomena or contrary evidence. Of course, the main weakness of both categories is that they are both mostly concepts rather than discoveries.

Frustration besets us at every starting point and at every attempt at definition. We start off proclaiming nobly that we are in search of the Truth and are determined to find it. Immediately there are authorities that will rise up and denounce us for fools, saying that the finite mind will never perceive the infinite. Yet, the same theologians who utter this also attest to the teaching of Christ Who advised us to seek in order to find, and Who also declared that the Truth would make us free. I am not eager at any point to ridicule the honest theologian, nor to belittle any effort toward genuine understanding. We may justly lament the fact that there are people who stand in the pulpit of authority whose only cause is their own, and whose words are geared to manifest their cleverness in argument, and whose arguments are oriented toward profit. These people are not always itinerant, back-woods preachers or curbstome orators. Some of them have dictated the policy of major Religions, and others have dominated entire nations.

Which bring us to another facet of terrestrial thinking. We are inclined to think that that which everyone believes in must be true. We have carried our gregariousness over into a massive respect for mob-opinion. Eminent theologians will proudly chant in tones acceptable that there is immortality because everyone believes it; while the truth that they hide is that everyone desires it. Of course, we are immediately open to confusion, even with that criticism, because it is possible that if everyone really believed in immortality, that belief might create some form of immortality, if it were not otherwise a fact. However, we immediately come back to the factual statistics of the number of people who sincerely and unwaveringly believe that we will survive death. Many honest theologians feel that the only immortality-hope lies in keeping the masses reassured, so that their faith will be mountainous and creative to the point where the post-mortem status of their own particular religious group will be assured.

I am inclined to believe that about ninety-five percent of the people desire immortality. There is a small percentage who do not even think about it, or who desire the eternal rest of oblivion. I doubt that a majority of the human race actually believes in a life after death. I think that even the zealot has a moment of uncertainty or light, whichever it might be, when he senses his own gullibility and gains a bit of insight into the complexities of his own rationalizations.

I ask nearly everyone I meet to give me their beliefs on immortality and their reasons for thinking as they do. I am always looking for an account that will manifest conviction, and I am aware that perhaps I am seeking for some sort of magic that will give me a pattern of the Truth that I had not previously contemplated. Regardless of motives, the answers that people gave me, although possessing little of the magical or the illuminating, betrayed the trend of the thoughts and aspirations of the masses. It can be summed up best by the expression, "Me too." They do not presume to know that which is going to happen to them, and they do not presume to be big enough to find out. The layman points out that billions of people have gone on before him, and he expects to go to the same place with them. He might even remind me that he is paying his minister a salary to insure his celestuality. If we approach the professional man, or those who might be labeled the intelligentsia, we will obtain some really complex rationalizations or indications of very brave futilism. The layman is often more honest than the well-educated man, because he is conscious of his lack of learning. His intuitional doubts are equally as valuable as those of the pedant or philosopher. The layman is lazier because he allows another man to do his theorizing for him, but his laziness may be also intuitively inspired, since for some it is just as well to begin with frustration as to end with it. And it is human to clutch at straws.

We are reminded of the force called Kal, which in Radha Soami literature is mentioned more frequently than the name of God. And I think that the one-sided amount of emphasis is appropriate. Kal is the force that keeps men in darkness, and when we start to recognize him, we see him all about us. God is not so apparent. I have always been conscious of the existence of opposition to spiritual growth, and I prefer to label this negative force as "The Forces of Adversity." I prefer this label over such limited words as Kal or Satan. These items also imply personal opposition or the conspiracy of a particular being against humanity, and when all the evidence is in, we have no foundation for such a belief. In the search for reliable translations of the bible, we find that Satan should really read as "adversary."

I am opposed to advocates of "positive thinking", and by disciples of the omnipotence of belief. I maintain that we are relative creatures. We have not yet merged with unity and lost our identity. We look at all thing with two eyes, a bicameral brain, a mind that appraises with alternate logic and intuition, and we wallow in the misery of the paradox and the confusion of the polarity in our thinking. We attempt to utter our anguished message and we find that we must use a relative language, and we are snowed under by heaps of words that can only express the difficulty of trying to say any thing accurately before we have lost the thought that fathered the effort.

There are those who deny negative powers. Yet, if a man can conceive of positive powers, he must admit the negative. All is not sweetness and light, unless somewhere there is bitterness and darkness. I cannot visualize a time when all will be wise simultaneously, for wisdom depends upon ignorance. Nor can I visualize an era when all men will share alike in a great economic brotherhood, because wealth depends upon poverty.

If positive thinking means negating of negative forces, then I can concur. I cannot place my head in such optimistic sands that promise for my leaving my unfeathered rear exposed, that no harm will come to me. Nature has a way of gleefully awakening the ostrich-type. Those who have too great a faith seem to encounter disastrous opportunities to test that faith. One great Christian controversy centers around the despairing words of Christ upon the cross, since some feel that even Christ had a loss or weakening of faith. The type of "positive thinking" that has been offered to us as salutary in spiritual endeavors is better adapted to salesmen and persons who wish to free themselves psychologically from some mania or habit with help of autosuggestion. "Positive thinking" does not bear the characteristics of a law, but rather identifies a technique or psychological lever.

Kal is supposed to permeate all human thinking. Of course this may leave us a bit confused. But, when we first begin to read philosophically we get a hint that much of the world in which we live is an illusion. Kal says that religions themselves were invented and diversified to dismay the sincere and persistent seekers. We have the biblical tower of Babel. There is a story of a sort of Maya that resulted from the eating of the paradisiacal apple. (The desire to be like God.) These little legends seem to indicate that for a long time man has had a whispering feeling that the game is fixed.

We generally go through several states of dismay that might be interpreted as education. We align ourselves with a religion or are aligned with one at birth. Then we notice discrepancies of dogma and the hypocrisy of the clergy. We become disgusted with yesterday's beliefs, and we are attracted to another and often opposite system of thinking. Then we find the second system equally as transparent as the first, and we increase our despair. But our attitude is broadened. We start looking for the good points of various movements, and from such an optimistic endeavor, plunge into a way of life that may reward us temporarily with a great feeling -- one of bliss or illumination. However, it must be emphasized that such exaltation is temporary. We cannot understand this bliss, and when we try to analyze or prolong it while living the vegetative life, it leaves us. And when it goes, we stand and wonder if we have not been the victim of self-hypnosis or hysteria of a sort caused by the chemical change in the blood or glands wrought by the spiritual practice engendered. And then, suspiciously once again, we look over our shoulder to see if Kal is standing with his feet in our hip-pockets, laughing.

In the early stages of enlightenment we look with pity on the old lady who takes her pennies to church for the padre to buy beer. We think we are smarter because we can analyze her blindness, or because we have been lucky enough to catch the pastor tipling, or overhear the preacher confessing to be only an oratorical emollient. Yet, while we are convinced that the cult to which we are paying tribute is beyond suspicion, and often think ourselves fortunate to be picked by one that makes master out of muttonheads ... it will be good to pause and remember that it may be the same with the semi-exalted as with the lowly lady supplicant. As above, so below.

It is often the case -- when a seeker is dismayed at the lack of truth in his native religion -- that he is very easily satisfied with a foreign creed that he understands even less. A new hypnosis is established, and the person who smugly thought he was above being hypnotized, again is entranced. The Christian religion generally pictures a benevolent God who has scattered us like seeds, some among the cockles and stones, and some on warm manure where we will prosper. In the Christian religions we do not feel very important, so when we hear of a system of thinking that endows us with a godhood of sorts, we lift our ears readily. It is not the ignorant layman

alone who is responsible for oriental leanings. Some of our eminent lodges borrow from Indian literature and pass it on to their applicants an arcane knowledge. Many serious philosophers founded schools based on systems studied in the orient. And sitting in the chair of the Western hierophant, we again see Kal waving his wand and laughing. The lodges employ secrecy, even as the quasi-gurus of Indian. The secrecy is treasured with the same zeal as the horseplay at the initiations.

Those who decide to join an Indian cult may agree to an even more blind servitude to a teacher who speaks in a jargon more confusing than Latin. And while the candidate may have previously bought beer for one teacher, he will possibly now be buying hashish for another teacher. And after paying years of his life into a cult or lodge that promises everything in the line of secret revelations, he may discover that Freud was a greater revelator than any of the high-priests of modern psychology.

I have labored through some very dense writing in which the wisdom pretended therein was certainly circular, and like the symbolical serpent, managed to continually bite its own tail. And yet, most of them stand abashed in the presence of a simple story like the Bhagavad Gita or the Rubaiyat. We attempt to analyze the worth of a theory qualitatively and quantitatively, and in the process invent a storm of complex words, each bearing a dozen facets of meaning. Although the writers, too, must become confused, those abstruse, scholarly writers on esoteric matters surely must enjoy the confusion that they know the reader undergoes in attempting to first, understand them, and then to seek the loose raveling that will enable the reader to pull the whole cloth apart. I think Kal invented all the big words ... and maybe is responsible for inventing all words.

The inquirer goes out to seek understanding of these creeds or movements that promise immortality. He is often awed by the first books that he picks up, or the first "authority" he meets on the subject. I wonder at his point how many people would have pursued the study of yoga and kindred subjects if certain words of the original Indian language were omitted, and instead were replaced by simple synonymous English terms.

For instance, let us take some of their words and place them alongside an English equivalent. We have a juvenile abhorrence of the word "teacher", but we will climb the Himalayas in search of a guru. And by uttering the word "guru" we manage to add another point of argument to our dictionary.

Cultists talk glibly of Nirvana, Devachan, Brahm Lok, and Sat Desh, as though the use of the words took them there, magically. Heaven has lost its magical sound. Another term used with much abuse is the word "chakra". Cult-students will use them with a glibness that would hint that they had actually seen one. If the word chakra means a nerve-ganglion or gland, then we might as well call it that. On the other hand if the word signifies a luminous focal point in the astral body, then, of course we must presume that the speaker is quite sure of the mechanics of astral bodies, and we must be convinced that there is such a body with such points.

The cultist is hard to retrieve. He embarks upon the path of cultism because of disappointment with conventional faiths, or because of a particular intuitive appeal of a cult. He is taken in because the cult has a pretty composite blueprint that explains much that his old religion did not explain to him. Let us note here that explanation is not a system of proving. There are many concepts which are structurally symmetrical and congruous, but which bear no more value than a pretty picture.

It is not enough to create a creed that fits together like a jigsaw puzzle. It must also try to prove its point, and be beyond being simply desirable. Let us divest ourselves of the deluding dignity we assume at the instance of uttering a string of alien words. It only adds to our confusion, and to the increment of the forces of adversity.

Not only does a concept need to be structurally perfect to be acceptable, but it must be more all-inclusive and explanatory than any other concept.

As long as there can be no philosophies that are proven beyond uncertainty, then we can only keep replacing new ones for old ones, and the new ones being those that by their propositions explain the most unexplained phenomena and satisfactorily answer the most questions.

It is not enough to exclaim that the finite mind will never pierce the infinite, we must prove that the finite mind can or cannot ever be less finite. We must keep on looking.

We know not where Truth resides. There can be no paths to Truth, only paths away from untruth. There is nothing proven for us in advance. We must experience for ourselves, and at best can only begin with a "working hypothesis". And we cannot spend too much time developing yardsticks to measure all the hypotheses for workability. We must find a yardstick that can be applied to all situations, and that yardstick must be very reliable.

This book does not profess to solve the riddle, not to be orderly in the presentation of a philosophy. I doubt that you could call it a philosophy, nor would I want it called that, because a philosophy, in attempting to be orderly and systematic, tires to build words upon words, and syllogisms upon syllogisms. And I fear that such building involves sophistry. Being clever is commendable perhaps for survival, but being clever for the sake of ego or for the entertainment of others will not help the cause of Truth. And although I may try to get my point across with some skill, or with an accent of humor, rest assured that my main motive is to hold the attention, not to entertain. I hold that these things which I say are those which I have come to believe, and I consider any medium or expression inadequate to the serious compulsion I have to communicate them.

In this careful attempt at honesty, there shall be no attempt to prove, absolutely. And truth (with a small "t") if it is to have a definition, would be that which is the most consistent, and that which is the most inclusive, of all human findings. For no matter who consistent our thinking may appear to us, as long as there remains a single phenomena unexplained by it or there remains another system in which there are no more flaws than our own, but which may have alternate or opposite claims of to ours -- then we must continue to search.

OUR SELF AS AN OBSTACLE

Most obstacles that inhibit the research or search for Truth find their roots in the discrepancies in our evaluations described in previous writings. The greatest difficulty for man lies in his imperfect vision. We need to see things more clearly. The philosophy of the past has been beset with confusion by taking a positive approach to this business. It is impossible to state our aims beforehand. It is foolish to assess the utility-value of religion or philosophy. We are dealing with the essence of this, not their effects. "By their fruits you shall know them" does not belong here, regardless of its piety as a quotation.

We are not interested in greasing the axle of the wheel of nature with utilitarian platitudes. We must not tremble that our search and our discoveries cause unhappy ripples in another man's religion, or in the fashionable thinking of any particular era. We are beset with too many obstacles to bargain with anyone, or to gamble away verities or the possibility of arriving at verities out of tender solicitude for venal and transient religions or mores.

The first obstacle is ourselves. We are limited. Our limitation is demonstrated, not by our cosmic insignificance alone, but by mental uncertainties, by the extremely qualified aspects of human comprehension, and by the emotional apparatus with its inclination to wear the respectable mask of intuition.

We are inclined to seek out that which makes us happy. And as a result, some of the "happy boys" with scholastic knighthood and title get things mixed up with their own adolescent unhappiness and decide that happiness is the goal, the god, and the way. Momentarily, because they have studied about aberration, they imagine that knowledge of the disease of "rationalization makes them immune to rationalization.

Physically, man imagines himself to be the supreme animal, but his sensory efficiency is often inferior to lesser animals. The dog seems to be able to hear sounds that the human misses. At least the dog reacts to such sounds. Let us take into consideration the powers of lesser animals and contemplate our status if we had them.

In rooms where poltergeist-phenomena or spirit-like manifestations occur, dogs have shown by their attitude and bristling hair that the manifestation to them was something real. These dogs incidentally, had not been previously brainwashed by books or theories. Their reactions were spontaneous. Perhaps if we could see with their eyes, we could evolve better spiritual concepts.

It has been demonstrated that many animals have telepathy. Stranger still is the homing instinct of pigeons, and the habits of birds and animals that are generally labeled "instinctive." These abilities are fairly accurate mechanisms similar to radar. Some of these talents are most noticeable in fish. The animal also has a direct and quick understanding with other animals. The herbivorous animal knows the propitious moment for eating and for running at the approach of the predator. Specialization of our skill has lost these abilities of humans.

On the other hand, our senses are often deceiving, besides being weak and inadequate. Vibrations and rays must surely have a wide range of meaning for different animals because of diverse sensory apparatus in different specie. Which means that the human appreciation of what he sees and hears is not by any certainty a real understanding of the projection or projector.

We do not know if having animal intuition would help us in any great way. But we can lose a little of our stuffiness if we observe the animal. We may sit in a church or lecture hall for twenty years listening to the same preacher and never know the most elementary thing which we need to know -- namely, the veracity of the speaker. Whether or not he is a liar. The twenty years would be spent in evaluating, arguing, and weighing one elusive sermon against another ... when it may have been possible to have gone directly to the mind of the man. I did not mention that the man may have been misguided. However, if we cannot determine if that man is a liar or not, what other evaluation has any validity?

But let us look at word-evaluation. This is necessary because we might spend our twenty years taking correspondence courses in salvation, or we may be obsessed with fundamentalism or the intrinsic value of some manuscript. Words are like refractions and bear to the perception or perceiver a variation of refraction in proportion and to the position and capacity, and to the conductivity of the environment that stands between the meaning to be projected and the perceiver.

When the idea of this language barrier comes into view, I immediately think of the tower of Babel. I find it easier to believe that this story is an allegory of early theological frustrations brought on by language-barriers of the era, rather than an account of a petty God dispersing His supplicants. Christ advised us to seek. But the Old Testament execrates the seeker and almost infers that God was alarmed by the height of the tower of Babel. Since there has been no celestial reaction to the sending of rockets to the moon, we must reappraise the significance of God's anger at a pile of rocks.

There is another explanation to the story of the tower of Babel. It may be that the early Hebrews or inhabitants of that region were being directed by an entity that posed as a deity, which or who, being desirous of maintaining its power over the tribe, resorted to noisy manifestations to keep the people in line. Thus we have a hint that the "Lord" of The Old Testament was human, which would account for the descriptions of personal appearances, instructions given vocally and heard by the multitudes, besides other phenomena attributed to God.

The physical body also places limitations upon the mind of man. William James makes quite an issue out of this aspect of man. He calls "medical materialism" that school of thought that looks into the human body for disturbances that limit the mind and religion of each man. He infers that it might be possible to diagnose a man's physical disease by listening to his philosophical or religious protestations. Medical materialism may well have a point, but we in turn may diagnose it as emanating from minds diseased by egotism and laziness. While it is true that a persons religious zeal may suddenly increase in old age, it is also true that we can find many religious zealots in healthy individuals under twenty.

We cannot trace the zeal of man to a disease, unless we admit that disease to be common to all protoplasm, if we wish to call it a disease. Such diseases would be curiosity, and our inability to overcome the obstacles listed in this book. The amoeba manifests curiosity. Curiosity is found in all forms of life where any degree of individual consciousness is found.

If we presume ourselves to be of divine origin, then curiosity is a divine mandate. If we are considered to be evolutionary products of lesser beings of accidental origins, then that curiosity is as normal as any animal function, and is of tantamount importance to any animal's survival. And a goat need not have a diseased liver or mind to have the compulsion to climb to the top of the barn roof, just to look around. The medical materialist fails to take into consideration the ramifications of curiosity. And he implies that a man is sick if he is neither eating, working, or being happy according to the restricted pleasure-code of society.

Still, we must not miss a good point. There are people who are quite a bit off base, and some of them gravitate toward transcendentalism. Yet, I still cannot see a clear line drawn that would make all seekers out to be sick, any more than to presume all sick people are transcendentalists. Not long ago, a seemingly healthy ex-marine shot and killed about a dozen people from the tower of a Texas university. Despite his previously normal behavior, a post-mortem examination showed that he suffered from a brain tumor or lesion. On the other side of the fence, I knew a man who lived outside of San Antonio who was respected as a psychic healer. He was just an ordinary fellow, until a kick by a horse caused a brain tumor. The accident happened when the man was young, but he lived beyond the sixty-year mark before the tumor killed him. He ascribed his healing ability to the kick in the head. If we are to judge him from a functional viewpoint, this second man helped thousands of people and had visions as a result of mind or brain impairment. He was not irrational, unless we wish to define the whole healing system as being irrational. He maintained that diseases were caused by demons or entities, and he had the ability to banish the entities. It was that simple, and it evidently worked to the satisfaction of thousands.

We find that some sects candidly admit that a spiritual break-through is often coincidental to a mental breakdown, or follows on the heels of somatic suffering or disaster. In the history of the Zen masters, we find that one fellow applied to the monastery and was rejected. He tried to pry his way into the gate. The attendant slammed the gate and out off his leg. "Whereupon he received enlightenment." Evidently.

Our smile may not be justified. I have been acquainted with quite a number of people who were striving for Satori. Some of them were taken right to the door of death by some cause, and after operations or a damaging siege of illness, they came out with the claim that they had reached the state beyond concern. One man had colitis that nearly killed him, and I presumed at the time that his stay in the hospital was for a colostomy. I think I have mentioned elsewhere in a previous writing, the case of the woman student of Zen who attempted suicide. There may have been such attempts that were successful. However, all movements have their share of suicides. There is no prophetic pattern, and Zen does not require colitis, ulcers, or amputations.

The sedentary life of a clergyman is liable to produce an occupational peculiarity or ailment. A trend toward effeminacy may be a corollary of clerical occupations. Even as a coal-miner may develop silicosis, so a priest, whether he preaches ascetism or pollyanna, may come up with ulcers, thyroid trouble, or prostatitis. It does not follow that all priests became priests because they had prostatitis.

There are hazards in any profession. The metaphysician has his share. And I do not intend to brush aside either the motives for becoming a seeker, or the illnesses that result from the work as a seeker. We can be too careful of being guilty of some complex or other, and inhibit our drive down to zero. On the other hand we must be able to recognize the signposts given us by the medical materialists.

We must neither work too hard, nor sit too long. With the former come calluses of the mind and body. With the latter come sleep and fatalism. Education produces a similar dilemma. With excessive preoccupation with the words of others, or with scholastic success comes an intellectual conceit that is a web as effective as a concrete

wall. And with those also come the confusions of words. On the other hand, abstinence from books and teachers results in a lack of source-material that might save us years and health. We cannot do it all with our intuition alone.

We must know ourselves in order to find the obstacles that find their roots within ourselves. Too often, our decisions are influenced by emotions. When this happens we will pick a teacher for his personality and pick a system that harmonizes with our appetites.

Another obstacle within us is fatigue. The mind goes to sleep after so many hours on a subject. The mind retreats from problems that hold no hope of immediate solution. Our attention goes tumbling off, accelerated by desires and nationalization.

Some physical and mental obstacles can be surmounted by observing and correcting chemical conditions and glandular secretions. When we take into account the enormous amount and weight of factors that influence our thinking, and hence affect any spiritual drive, we are apt to throw up our hands in despair. We might, in fact, decide to throw the entire world's library into the flames, presuming that everything could be discounted by virtue of possible chicanery of the authors, or by virtue of our susceptibility to hypnosis, manias, and body chemistry.

The coffins of Poe, Coleridge and Oscar Wilde may contain nothing but empty dope capsules or alcohol bottles, but their writings give me the feeling that they experienced something that the ordinary "normal" citizen does not find. Their occupations had its hazards.

Naturally, the experience (of permanent physical disease) is not desirable, to that it is surely not necessary for spiritual enlightenment. We find that alcohol can immediately change the convictions of the user. And the same is true about the use of narcotics. An alcoholic sometimes develops two or more attitudes or personalities. When the great thirst is upon him, he will be vindictive and full of praise for the grape. When the great thirst is softened by a few drinks he develops a second personality, which may be the dramatization of a personality, in which physical conditions render the alcoholic despondent and remorseful. He now hates the grape and himself for the alliance.

Strangely enough, out of all of this conflict of attitudes have occasionally emerged men of great spiritual stature. I would not advise anyone to take the alcoholic path in order to find spiritual amazement, for the simple reason that the gods seem to desert alcoholics in great numbers. The percentage of alcoholics that free themselves from the depths of addiction is very small in comparison to the number of alcoholics that die in the addiction or commit suicide.

OBLIQUE DOGMATIC SYSTEMS

Various authors and systems, whose works fall short of being valuable in relation to the pursuit of Truth, are generally not aware of their particular tangential direction, which removes them from the functional position which they covet. These sources digress along recognizable lines, and can be identified by their chief feature or style.

These are, first of all, the Utilitarians, of which we have heard. To them, religion has a value if it serves as a social lubricant, if it heals, if it aids in business ventures, or if it comforts the troubled.

Healing itself may often be recognized as a vain implement for the healer's glory or monetary gain, in exchange for a health-gift to those who do not even seem to be grateful. If, as some believe, the energy for healing actually comes from the combined energies of the minister and the congregation, then healing may well be a prostitution of valuable energy on a lost cause, or upon a person who will in turn only spend it again with poor spiritual thrift.

To this group (utilitarians) we must consign the pollyanna of Unity, which labels its periodical, "Better Business". To it also we must consign almost every organized religion that boasts of its value to society by keeping its members in line, and those which seek survival and acceptance by virtue of their social usefulness.

A second category of thinkers are the Pseudo-Practical Critics. They are scientists who have momentarily invaded the field of transcendentalism, or are the various tumid reporters who exude the attitude that they are able to look at all things objectively. They tackle every concept with a sort of conservative attitude. They might excuse ESP or other phenomena as not being illogical, but they would be careful not to associate their own beliefs with the issue, and they employ a detached literary style to give the impression that they are a popular and irrefutable medium of common sense.

They who manifest this attitude are the literary barristers who would rather settle out of court, than admit a position that would require a vigorous defense. They are not barristers of hope or principle, but men who glory in a show of intellectual cleverness. They go into the court of human reason half-heartedly and are very careful not to establish a position that might indicate that their thinking is on trial. They are careful not to endorse anything that might at a later date undergo a qualifying change. If they endorse the field of mysticism, they will do so timidly.

A third category of pseudo-authorities are the Piddlers. These treat mysticism as a hobby, or as an excuse for social gatherings. They are often part-time mystics, or those who indulge in the solemn-faced mummery of lodge-work. A few will be extremely well read on many different philosophies, but will treat the whole field with little more respect than they would bestow on fiction. They may become engrossed in a cult or ism whose main substance is the endless juggling of symbols with questionable results. They may become so engrossed in the juggling that the pleasure of juggling becomes an intellectual titillation and conceit rather than a potential means of finding Truth. And yet, the juggling of symbols, under control, may well bring us results in both the scientific field, and in the sharpening of the faculties that aid direct experience.

Thus we have astrologers who only tell fortunes, and numerologists who would predict our political or amorous compatibilities. These are the augurs who examine the flight of birds and the entrails in the slaughterhouse for a hint from heaven. They are the strangely inspired, who allow superstition to overbalance reason and intuition. They will write books filled with symbols and invocations that do not work. They will compound secret codes that will consume years of the reader's time before their meaninglessness is exposed. To compound the mystery, these authors will assume pseudonyms, or may even remain anonymous.

The Concept-Mechanics are piddlers of a more complicated type. They build new concepts by borrowing choice tid-bits from the old ones. They observe the dying of current religions, and fancy themselves to be phoenixes that will sprout from the ashes of the dying religions. Their inability to supplant current religions or theories lies in their inability to think with their intuition, or to realize that another, the reader might penetrate their processes and reject such concept-building. For the former are fabricators, not believers. They speak with cleverness rather than sincerity, and they are rewarded with our admission of their cleverness and little more. They note the discrepancies of other concepts, and their limitations. Then they go about dreaming up a celestial science that will answer all our hopes and desires, and will explain some previously unexplained phenomena.

The writings of Concept-Mechanics are generally very complex. But in the last analysis are no more than presumptive formulae with utopian air-castles. Their concepts are built upon accepted axioms, which we are more eager to accept than to deny. Yet, the numerous Cosmo-conceptions that borrows from or pretends to borrow from Hinduism, Eleusian lore, Essene wisdom, the Kabala, from any ancient religious writings, or from combinations of any of these.

Readers of such concept-structures are often, besides being misled, titillated by suspense ... and come to expect that the Truth will come on the next page. The credulous subscriber will hold his breath waiting for a Master or for Initiation. Steiner writes profusely, describing a way of self-development, which he admits is all

meaningless unless we are initiated. Yet, there is a discreet silence about the nature of initiation, so that which might bring some element of verification to his writings, hangs like a golden plum always a little beyond grasp. Tantalizing becomes the chief-feature of the cult-vendor.

Another category is that of the Quoters. Here are the writers that shrink from standing alone, even as the critics do. In their writings they seem to be trying to tell their message indirectly. Some will use only occasional referential quotations, but others may compile entire books of copied material. Such is the style of Aldous Huxley's *Doors of Perception*. There is a subtle cleverness in this attempt to inspire conviction by summoning another author's ghost, and forcing that ghost to testify for your cause, while inhibiting and limiting the testimony so that only those things are taken out of the text that will flatter the Quoter.

The thundering fundamentalist is an example. Occasionally the sacred books of the East are quoted, and then often in an apologetic manner. The chief-feature of the Quoter is his manifest cowardice and inability to outline in his own words that which he believes. His main tool is the inference that backing by important people makes for Truth.

The Gimmick-Users are a very subtle group. These have discovered that which a scientist would call a law, and they try to gain fame or following by either demonstrating the law, or by extolling it with more significance than it deserves. Thus, some are unselfish, and devote the knowledge of the law to the betterment of mankind, but some become so enthralled with their discovery that they do not bother to progress further themselves -- to the knowledge of more laws, or to self-improvement in general.

There has existed in occult writings for centuries the explanation of the law that governs healing. It is not the sole property of Christians. The Mohammedans recently challenged Billy Graham to a healing contest, which he politely rejected. This occurred on his tour of Africa. Mr. Graham may not even profess to be a healer, but if he were he would have had difficulty practicing in a Moslem country, or in an area among people who strongly disbelieved in Christ.

The amazing thing about some healers is that they do not even understand the law, but use it instinctively.

Another of these gimmicks is the law of love. It has been found that love begets love, and hate begets hate, and that hate destroys the hater. Love may be self-destructive, if we do not have a true understanding of which types of love are to be inhibited. Somerset Maugham hints that Christ may have been destroyed because of his unqualified love. (In the *Razor's Edge*, I believe).

As a result of the knowledge of the ultimate value of love, quite a few "isms" have incorporated themselves around that law, forgetting all other endeavors. Ramakrishna was supposed to have attained a deep spiritual position because of his intense love for Kali. Some Christian mystics have employed the same process to achieve rapture.

Another gimmick is "positive thinking". There can be no denying the power of positive thinking, but we can really run into error if we do not know its limitations. Partisans, who try to gauge their lives by N. V. Peale's handbook, find that they still clash with society and other obstacles. "Positive thinking" can mean only "conventional thinking" and is limited as to effectiveness, regardless of the nobility of a purpose, if that purpose is not popular.

Mary Baker Eddy discovered the illusory nature of the material world. However, things get complicated when a person attempts to heal an illusory body of an illusory disease. It would seem that the real project would be to first find reality.

Centuries ago theologians discovered another law but continued to misunderstand and misuse it. This is the Law of Proportional Returns, or that which the Indians call Karma. We borrow from physics and state that any object being struck manages to afflict the striking object with the same force. That which you sow, you will reap. Hate

begets hate, and if you hurl negative thoughts you will in turn be visited by others with negative attitudes.

All of these things seem possible, but to affix to this law the idea of personal guilt, may be the needless weaving of a whip for the already belabored mind of man. There is a considerable amount of friction over ideas of guilt, or degrees of guilt. The fact that there are two schools of thought on Will -- Determination and Libertarianism -- means that man cannot quite make up his mind whether he should accept guilt or not. The proponents of guilt claim that guilt is the sense of responsibility that man must accept if he, man, wishes to have any right to function as an individual in charge of his own destiny.

Thus we have sin, catalogued and categorized. We have analysts who have examined sin qualitatively and quantitatively, and proceeded from there and prescribed to the gram and grain how much pain or money must be paid to take the vigor out of the inevitable repercussion.

Thus also in India we have much confusion among believers in Karma. Some Hindus breathe with apprehension lest a microscopic retaliator gets caught in their intake.

The Over-Simplifiers. These are not to be confused with men who honestly try to avoid complexity and verbosity. We get the idea from the Over-Simplifiers that the mystic and the transcendentalist take themselves too seriously. The former would have us believe that there is a very simple explanation for all phenomena. They would say that a man did not see an apparition; he merely thought he saw one. And the man who was healed, to judge by them, was not sick in the first place. Precognition to them is coincidence. The man who performed a miracle simply hypnotized his audience. Spirit-manifestations are merely mental extrusions, etc.

Now the Over-Simplifiers may be right in some instances, even though they are looking for an easy explanation. They are not idiots, but they are uninspired, even though they sense that others tend to confuse inspiration with superstition. Their chief error comes from being unacquainted with the field which they criticize. To criticize a mystic one has to be a mystic -- one cannot view mysticism objectively and do it justice.

The tired thinker is apt to rationalize with the over-simplification. From his inability or fatigue comes a weird sort of bravery. After a prolonged contemplation about life-after-death, he will announce that since there is nothing that can be done about death -- it is foolish to give death a second thought. Eat, drink and be merry.

Let me summarize a bit on the above categories. We cannot speak without quoting to some degree; we cannot simplify without running the risk of over-simplifying; we may all be unconscious concept-mechanics, since we may be so impelled by our gestalts; and we are all piddlers when it comes to our attitude toward the Absolute. There is not so much damage in erratic thinking as there is in the conscious employment of erratic thinking and techniques of writing that might promote confusion. And all criticism is designed to save time for the seeker.

THE TRAP OF CONDITIONING

There are many obstacles to mental clarity, but the most insidious is mental conditioning. The voice of the appetites is louder and its form wears little or no mask -- but conditioning is subtle. Conditioning probably contributes more to the spiritual inertia of man than any other factor.

Other minds have seen the adverse effects of conditioning. We can read Huxley's *Brave New World* for example. Huxley seemed concerned more with the intellectual enslavement of man and the social results but he depicts the man of the future as a conditioned zombie.

It is bad enough that we are conditioned by nature to function as well-behaved, potted plants -- in this terrestrial greenhouse. It is quite another thing when we start doing it to one another. We begin by conditioning our children to save them a few knocks in life. Teachers use about fifty percent of the classroom time in conditioning children for plasticity. This process is called "citizenship-training". Next, a good percentage of the young men will have to take military training, which process is designed to produce automations to do any

bidding, take any insult or degradation, and be convinced of individual worthlessness and individual inability. They are also trained to be proud of this treatment. Of course, men who are conditioned for the axe should not be burdened with too much thinking, but this is as tyrannical as expecting a rabbit that you are eating for dinner to provide napkins and gratitude.

Lodge-members condition other members with asinine initiations. Mankind is basically afraid of individualistic men. We do not like to face a brave, independent man nearly as well as a harmless, inoffensive one. We elect to office mostly people who avoid positive attitudes, and consequently rarely get men of principle. Businesses set up schools to brainwash candidates for sales and executive positions, in order to have a minimum of trouble with the business organization. They are taught to "handle" people. What this actually means is that a sort of professional behavior pattern is adopted, to which they would want all people to conform, including both workers and clients.

We cast into a state of awe by the choice of words used by mere mechanics who are conniving for some justification, for public support and for livelihood. One such word was the title "doctor". But let us read the history of the Mayo brothers. A century ago a doctor was revered almost the same as a priest. But now, we find that they knew very little, took only a short course in medical training, and robbed graves by night to get cadavers. Yet they held their heads high by day, and literally commanded respect.

We have conditioned ourselves to accept excesses in government. We are stunned into silence by "authority" in uniform, in gown and gavel, and by the ruthless glint in the barrister eye.

And all this happens for the benefit of Nature, which scarcely needs any help in running the greenhouse. We are not becoming, as human beings, more compassionate and loving, or more filled with understanding for our fellow man. We are only becoming more docile and faceless, out of compulsion.

Everything possible is employed to grease the slopping path to the slaughterhouse, including theology. Thus is the callused efficiency of those who feel themselves called to take charge of the propaganda and literature of conditioning. Modern drama now depicts the mother betraying her son, or the daughter betraying a parent for the meaningless codes of the state. At the turn of the century this betrayal would have been considered an act so base as to invite the hate of all humanity. Now it is noble!

No matter how well it is welded together, the social entity is no better than its individual parts. The expansion of the individual is, in the long run, the betterment of the state. The shrinking of the individual has already, in our time, begun to show signs that lead to social chaos.

STATES OF PERCEPTION

I have noticed that all (or most) psychologists or claimants to authority on matters psychic, carefully minimize the difference in states of perception, or else write or speak as though every reader should be compelled to interpret their words in one inconvertible way.

And all the while, most of the difficulties in the social world are the result of differences of mental states, and the complete failure to understand the other fellow's state. Marital incompatibilities, both mental and the mentally inspired physical ones, come as a result of different mental states. Factional conflicts likewise have the same roots, whether they be of a religious, political or ethnic nature.

Let us look at the different states of perception. I am sure that when a person understands the wide range of perception-states and mental states, he will begin to wonder if the human mind will ever be able to discern, among these many states, that singular state that might be called sanity.

States of Perception in turn, affect states of mind. They are not the same. The former involve qualified means of seeing or perceiving. The latter involve periods of conviction marked by related attitudes, among these many states, that singular state that might be called sanity.

Anyone who has gone through the alcoholic experience will know that a few ounces of alcohol will change the world's aspect for the user. That which is perceived is a new state of perceiving. The new aspect may be so different that it shakes the validity of prior states, which we identified with convention and sanity. The drinker may find the new, ensuring state of mind, and not be aware that it is caused by an abrupt change in his perceiving apparatus. States of Perception are generally of short duration, and while they may trigger or reawaken states of mind, they are more factors of coloration than lasting states of conviction.

Subliminal states of consciousness are perceptions of longer duration and of greater intensity, and they have the ability to dominate the entire perspective, or perception-field. More will be said of them later.

To give a further explanation of this mental vacillation, (inaccurate states of perception), let us look through the romantic eyes of younger days, when a particular mood descended upon us at sunset or sunrise, upon the observation of a young animal, or a beautiful flower, upon entering a cave, or upon watching lightning. Now these are outstanding incidents which may have changed our mood, if not our mind, momentarily -- and which left strong memories behind. Examining the possible causes of these States of Perception may help us to be more aware of their influence.

The sunrise seems to fill us with awe and vigor; even though our training tells us that we are probably only experiencing a combination of the quiet hush, and slowly changing light and color patterns. It may be that that which occurs is the remembering of a primordial urge to go forth in search of food. Also, dawn usually comes when a person is rested, and when there are no pressing worries on the mind. The mind has rubbed out the worries in the forgetfulness of sleep. So now the mind and the eye have time to dawdle, as the mind of a child, upon such things that are momentarily "new". We now have a combination of vigor, a carefree mind, and an infantile pleasantness, along with the hypnotically changing panorama or dawn. And even after reading and believing this paragraph, if we walked in the meadow at dawn, we would still feel the awe and the mystery would momentarily put our philosophic attitude to the test.

Our daily life is a concatenation of changing moods, some diametrically opposite to the predecessor of an hour. We are hypnotized by objects and by other people. Some of the spells are short-lived, harmless little excursions into a fragrant flower or a poem. But the concatenation literally becomes a chain, and our years are bound in chains that resulted from the hypnosis of a few moments that caused us to make decisions that tied up our direction for decades of our short life. Some of the results of such hypnoses, or attitude-compulsions, are marriage (or mating), murder, enlistment in organizations, and the development of habits that cannot be abandoned.

You may say, "Oh yes, we know all about the traps" ... while uttering the words from the midst of several traps that have been nobly rationalized. But unless we are constantly conscious of ourselves in each reaction to the environment, we will succumb. And I doubt, in all sincerity, that even a select, dedicated group of men might free themselves completely. They could free themselves to the point of knowing their chains, and being able to resist them in incidents really critical to their spiritual growth. The evidence of their inability is observed in religious monasteries and in very active transcendental movements, that either pick out one of the traps and rationalize it into deific status -- justifying some traps as divinely imposed (such as marriage), or they carefully avoid identifying something as being a trap, if it helps their business. It is hard to find, in non-sectarian groups, any harmony or even desire to work together, because each is laboring under the rationalization of some trap or other. If we were all laboring under the same trap, then cooperation might be somewhat possible ... as in a factory. But the different degrees of addiction become at first an interminable harping point, and finally -- a mood of intolerance.

So let us stop occasionally and think of the simple and yet profound effects of color. We find that colors bring certain moods to us, and that they do not -- always, as individual colors, bring the same mood to all people. That which elates one may depress another. We are not only the unconscious victims of color, but of many other mood-impellers.

STATES OF MIND

States of mind are like massive gestalts. Psychologically, they have never been given the proper consideration. Most people are not aware of the existence of a state of mind, other than one similar to their own. When the encounter another state of mind, they may reject it as aberrated or abnormal. Normality is always that which we are, not that which the other fellow is. And because of this lack of understanding, friction and even violence results.

Psychologists try to create a sort of universal state of mind, by promoting legislation in regards to conduct and behavior. They have recently gone a step further and imposed "sensitivity sessions" upon some of the students of the country to force a precipitation of tensions, and to bring about a homogeneity of reaction-patterns.

The psychologists and psychiatrists will fail because, again, they do not know all the factors, and specifically, because they can at best be responsible for creating newer states of mind that shall conceal more deadly resentments than the possessor had before.

Some of us are aware that we have different states of mind. However, most of us are unaware of the many states of mind that exist among different people, nor are we aware of the tremendous role that these states of mind play in religion, politics and war. Some states of mind are easy to see. For instance, similar states of mind are found in close families and among people of restricted social contact, such as the inmates of monasteries and prisons. Inmates of such institutions or families have several other states of mind, besides the one which is common to all of the other members or inmates.

Let us not confuse the term "state of mind" with mood. The mood is transitory and lacking in conviction, and could be better explained as a state of perception, a clouded glass.

We are lucky if we only have two or three states of mind. We are still more lucky if we know that they are there, within us. A state of mind is invariably a fairly composite thinking pattern, which has as its chief characteristic one of the basic desires of the individual in question. A more dominant state of mind may result from the synthesis of two or more desires, and the synthesis of their corresponding philosophic rationalizations.

It is easier to describe states of mind, and the manner in which they are altered, than it is to define them. We may take the case of two men, Mr. A. and Mr. B., meeting at a bar. Mr. A. uses a perfectly harmless word, the word Penguin. Within a few moments, and with little or no explanation, Mr. B. has knocked him to the floor. Mr. A. leaves, and within the hour is robbed by Mr. C. and finally, in another hour, Mr. A. may encounter Mr. D. and kill the latter when Mr. D. places his hand in his pocket, thus reminding Mr. A. of the robbery of an hour before.

And yet, three hours before. Mr. A. may have been a benevolent extrovert. An analyst might ascribe the violent action of Mr. B. to paranoid foundations, or might say that Mr. C. was a robber because his mother tried to abort him. Paranoia is not a state of mind, but a singular example of a state of perception in which we can see the difference between the two -- a state of mind and a state of perception. With paranoia as a qualification of perception, or as a manner of looking at incoming impressions through bruised sensitivities, there is no doubt that some of our states of mind will be affected, but not all.

Any creature that has been repeatedly injured becomes paranoid. In Hubbard's Dianetics, such repeated injury leaves a mental scar, which is called an engram. This scar or engram must be reckoned with in all future experiences related in any way to the experience that caused the engram or scar.

If the being were not paranoid it could be more easily killed or crippled as an individual and eliminated as a specie. Paranoia says to the body -- people are going to hurt you as they did before. You must adjust and train your personality to either frighten them, or train yourself to be more aggressive.

States of mind are various massive concept-structures, which usually come about over a period of years of evaluation and increasing conviction. However, it is important to remember that they can be brought about very quickly as a result of an extreme physical or mental experience. The case of Mr. A. is given, to show roughly how this may happen.

We take Mr. A. and suppose that he was a young ministerial student. He has led a rather sheltered life, but there have been times when he was insulted or in some manner afflicted for this gentle ways. His gentle ways were part of a passive state of mind, and his reactions to a life of mysticism helped form his passive attitude. And he may have also developed an additional, tangential philosophy, which saw God's will in his work -- and God's protection.

The man who knocked him to the floor was a Catholic. Mr. B. thought that Mr. A. was poking ridicule at the Catholic nuns by his reference to the penguin, and Mr. B. also thought that he was doing God's will.

The violence suffered by Mr. A. caused an abrupt change of mind. And when the threat of continued violence aids the paranoid element in his thinking he feels quite justified in taking quick and violent action.

The man subject to an abrupt change of mind-state need not be timid. Strong, brave men have suddenly been reduced to tears, and bullies have suddenly become cowards under brutal treatment, or in an incident of terror. Drugs inflict a similar sort of punishment upon the addict, but the metamorphosis is so subtle and gradual that only after the victim is hopelessly addicted will there be any intense suffering.

It might be said that a traumatic experience or incident of intense suffering are about the only things that will actually bring about a change in the state of mind.

The congestion of population has brought our attention to a sharper awareness of many different states of mind in different states of mind in different people, and the need to understand such states is also felt. Of course, understanding them is better than trying to alter them before understanding them. And understanding them in ourselves is of greater priority -- even in the search to understand others.

I think that the study of states of mind is far more important than the focusing of attention on incidental reactions or behavior patterns. Such a study can come about only by direct experience, and the faculty for having direct experience can come about by particular systems of developing sensitivity, or by a change in the being or nature of the observer that will facilitate his rapport with another mind.

States of mind are not easily supplanted, and a person capable of switching quickly to an alternate or opposite state of mind could well be labeled schizophrenic. We are all schizoid to a degree, but not as obsessed as Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde. We do have such obsessions, and they do change us for a period of time. We can examine the act of sexual intercourse and note that most people (if not all) have states of mind that vary or change with the act. The person who begins is not the same person who finishes. This has baffled people for ages. It can be blamed on abrupt chemical changes brought on by intense physical activity, (endocrine influence) or it may be an automatic governor, which is part of the human structure to alter the pleasure-drive, once nature has attained it goal ... so that the potential parent will not endanger his or her health in pursuit of more pleasure, since nature is interested in the children.

It is because the sex-act has such a pronounced ability to change the state of mind, that we find so many violent and bizarre murders connected with sex. Sometimes the partner, who acts as a devastating catalyst, is resented.

Different ethnic groups have different states of mind, and there is no crime in this difference. The crime lays with the psychologist who thinks that he can banish it by denying it. The Negro is aware of this wall of difference, and protests (this is the admission of the knowledge of the difference) that the whites do not "think black." And of course, the standard reply is that the blacks do not "think white."

It would be laborious, if not impossible, to go into all the factors that trigger conflict between states of mind. Some may be genetic, and some may be acquired. For instance, the mouse has a state of mind quite different from that of the cat. And the cat's is different from that of the dog, unless the cat is a lion. The cat has no respect for the mouse. There is no rapport. The mouse is geared for terror. It is numbed or hypnotized by terror and does not utilize any proper degree of resourcefulness when confronted by the cat. Perhaps, like the Christian martyrs, the mouse is also geared to enjoy his own immolation.

The same occurs with people. Those who have been raised for generations to have a contempt for fear will also have a contempt for those whose chief feature is fear. Or an ethnic group that practices sex-control may have difficulty in having rapport with another ethnic group that believes in no sexual restraints.

The effect of those states of mind on political levels is not our concern here. We are concerned with those states of mind that stand like towers of Babel between religions, philosophical, and transcendental minds. We only need to pick up some of the books that are being printed today on psychology, sociology and theology to witness with amazement the many approaches to a common, central point. If Aldous Huxley seemed to test our flexibility in reaching out for new understanding, he could not hold a candle to such artist of confusion as Brown and Rossak. And perhaps this writing will come to many as a hodge-podge of emptiness or a sufeiture of deliberated complexity.

Let us examine the drug-state of mind ... if it is possible to find rapport with addicts without smoking from their pipe or drinking from their needle. Or let us observe the mental state of the alcoholic. Then let us begin to study religion. We may be attracted to a spiritual teacher who is "hooked" on drugs, and despise the teacher who is addicted to alcohol. We may never know that the alcoholic had as much or more to offer. And what's more, we may wind up with an aura of injected needles instead of a halo.

We can take a step further, and presume that men of the four major paths -- the fakir, the yogi, the monk and the philosopher -- have divested themselves of all obsessions such as sex, drugs, or alcohol. And we will still be confounded by their distinct states of mind.

The monk, on a lesser level, is a person who thinks he is fully evolved spiritually. His conviction marks his state of mind. He eats, works and sleeps the part of the monk. And he finds peace of mind, which he identifies as God.

The fakir works on a lower level than the monk. He feels that he will find spirituality by controlling the body and its sensations. He does not understand the monk. The monk may understand him, but will be unable to get through to him long enough to convince the fakir concerning the efficacy of a milder form of asceticism.

The yogi occupies a rung above the monk, but the monk does not always understand him. The yogi understands the monk because he has transcended the way of the monk. He sees the monk wrapped in the confusion of sublimated sex and in auto-hypnotic techniques, which seem to be crude. The monk is begging the answer, rather than seeking it. The raj-yogi is looking for the true state of consciousness, and is aware that others only think they have it.

Still more free and advanced, is the Fourth Way Traveler. This is the sly man or the philosopher. It is apparent to those on the fourth step, that they themselves, while they were on the lower rungs, could not comprehend or tolerate those who were later discovered to be on more advanced steps. And now, viewing those who in turn cannot tolerate them, the Fourth Way Travelers are amazed that sincere, dynamic individuals dedicated to finding the Truth can have so much lack of understanding and rapport.

So that the thing to observe, (for each level) is the level upon which you stand. The pursuit of Truth necessarily involves the understanding of present states of mind, first. Then there follows the automatic shedding of non-sense-components of these states of mind, from which comes an evolution of mental purity, approaching all the while that state which is called Satori or cosmic consciousness. And by whatever name, we can be sure that it is the only true state of mind.

It follows then that this writing is not intended to be an attempt to change human conduct, except in the individual, by the individual. We must first be aware that we are the victims of our states of mind, not proud possessors of them. And we can be aware of them, (to take a page from Ouspensky) by self-observation.

Self-observation, meditation, or self-remembering generally have an automatic self-correcting result. It is almost as though we were operating on a cybernetic law. The circuit is apt to clear itself, once the trouble is located and admitted.

Strangely enough, this automatic clearing of circuits through the application of energy inward, may be the first realization for the individual of free will. This process involves the slave knowing the degree of his enslavement, and utilizing mechanical processes to put an end to his present state of mechanicalness.

When we embark upon a course of self-change in order to purify our consciousness, the first nice thing that happens to us is that we develop a new compassion for our fellow man, and a tolerance for his moody moments. We realize that he, too, if laboring beneath circumstances that are not of his making. And his states of mind have been imposed upon him by his environment and by his colored perception apparatus.

But what is more important and more wonderful, is that we realize that we are at last on our way to becoming a vector of Truth. We also learn that there are ways to change our dominant state of mind that do not involve the use of drugs. We find, if we look hard enough, that there are helpers, or teachers, even if such are only books.

There is somehow an urge within each man, that wishes for him to be whole. The designer of our computers did not program us to be totally responsive to the hypnoses of nature. It is possible that we are, in fact, programmed to periodically resist any dominant state of mind, so that we will be prevented from destroying ourselves in dissipation -- thus destroying nature's most valuable herd in the process. This concept finds more meaning if we observe the innocence and conscience of children. And all of this implies that the designer of the computer had no other choice than to let us get a glimpse of those things which obsess us.

To observe these states of mind we need only to sit quietly and observe the present troubles that we have. It is best done when we are troubled, because then we have a high incentive-impetus to use for energy.

We should also do a little remembering and go back to the days when we were able to think more clearly, when our thinking bore convictions by which we risked our lives and our fortunes. Those convictions may have changed, but it is not appropriate that we look back upon those years as being foolish just because we were young. We must remember the factors which made us think clearly then, if we wish to think clearly today. And it is in this fashion that we must become as a little child.

There can be no successful, scientific study of psychology, nor can there be any promising individual search for Truth, without a better understanding of these phases called states of mind. Any attempt at analysis by viewing behavior-causes, or environmental factors, will only bring us to a knowledge of that which causes the states of mind, and then only if we absolutely know all of the factors. These factors include all things in our transcendental environment as well as the manifest environment.

Most of us have awakened from a convincing nightmare, or have recovered from a very hypnotic love affair. Some of us have been brutalized into accepting a state of mind common to our fellows, such as is found in armies and penitentiaries. And we have shaken our heads in amazement to think that our mind could be changed

so easily. Yes, the psychologists and psychiatrists have experienced this confusion of convictions too, or else the high rate of suicide among them would not exist.

Men have had dreams that have shaken their lives. The auguries of dreams, or the dreams themselves, have caused battles or wars.

It is also true that transcendental phenomena have a great influence on states of mind. Hypnosis is no myth. And witchcraft has been used successfully against people who did not even know that a spell had been cast. We can only surmise that beings of another dimension, being strategically invisible and superior, may have profound effects upon us. If this is true, then the modern psychologists will have trouble finding compatibility with such evidence, because they have agreed to believe that man is only a body, and that transcendental experiences are really somatic maladies.

So that when St. Paul was struck down on the road to Emmaus, and enduring for the rest of his life a profoundly altered state of mind, we are told by the psychologists through the lips of Huxley that Paul did in reality fall victim to an epileptic attack ... possibly. We could go a step further into absurdity, and say that Paul had just returned from visiting the local psychiatrist, the witch of Endor, who had just succeeded in purging him of his violent homicidal syndrome. This explanation would prevent any shame for Christianity, by showing that Paul was cured of his epilepsy and violence by the local witchcraft union.

We like to think that we are logical people, living in an orderly manner. However, when we experience a change of state, all of our logic and all of the so-called professional and authoritarian attitude is of no use to us. We find that we have been changed, and it disturbs us.

Jung found it expedient to examine the Tibetan Book of the Dead. For therein is a hint that all that exist are states of mind, and unless the individual finds some stable manner to keep track of the true self in the many turbulent and often terrifying nightmares of life, --what will happen to us hence, when we can no longer flee back into the living body by simply awakening.

I have only found two systems that I would recommend for studying the mind directly. One is the Gurdjieff-Ouspensky system, and the other is Zen.

SUBLIMINAL STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THEIR EFFECT UPON DISCERNMENT

In matters of religion, a field where the guiding intuition is itself of subliminal nature (being intangible and inscrutable), we find that many deciding factors for religious judgment are related to subliminal impressions.

There is a large gap between the thinking of the scientist or materialist, and the pursuer of abstract values. There are always doubts in the minds of these two adversaries about their own individual infallibility. The hardheaded materialist may come to doubt himself, if he falls in love or has a precognitive dream. Or if he witnesses a miracle, (something not explained in his orderly book or rules on the behavior of matter.) On the other hand, the religious zealot who is convinced that the mundane or sensory world is illusory, or illusory to a great degree, will have his faith shaken (if faith happens to be for him an accepted force), when some person closely related to him becomes seriously ill or dies. He rushes out and calls a doctor, or lives to curse the beliefs or to doubt them seriously ... if he fails to call the doctor.

A subliminal state of consciousness is a state of awareness that is very strong and yet very elusive as regards scrutiny or analysis. We may be conscious of something, of a force or strange ability within ourselves, and yet not be able to identify it or describe it.

This state manifests itself to people under the influence of certain drugs, under mental shock, under prolonged mental fatigue, and sometimes in the period between wakefulness and sleep. They are not states of mind, if we are to identify states of mind with self-observation and conviction. It is almost impossible to study subliminal

states except intuitively. They are worthy of mention here, because they invariably have an ability to affect states of mind, and affect them in a drastic manner. A person on the brink of a nervous breakdown, or the physical breakdown that is so often labeled as insanity, generally is disturbed by many of these subliminal states of consciousness. A dying person, judging from deathbed testimony, has confusion of some magnitude as a result of strange consciousness-states.

We may correctly decide that subliminal states of consciousness are more dangerous in being blocks to finding our true self, than those experiences which are labeled "states of mind".

I remember the early hours of anguish that preceded the great spiritual revelation, which is described in the Three Books of the Absolute. I saw the entire population of humanity, milling upward as a heap of maggot-men ... Their pleasures were pathetic. Their pride in individual consciousness was pathetic. The whole scene, as viewed from my body-conscious state, was dismal and so filled with despair that I wrestled with my sanity, or that which we call sanity -- that which affixes to the body-processes, a pretence of reason -ableness and ultimate reality.

Only when my cherished sanity seemed to evaporate did I realize that this vision was only real as regards the perspective of the minds of men. In relation to the Absolute (which is real Reality), the whole thing was a mental tableau. It was a tableau of physical existence as opposed to ultimate Essence. The tableau is very much alive until we realize that it is mental. When we are about to step out of the mental into pure essence, we still have with us the memories of our evanescent intelligence, and the memories of relatives (particularly those of our children) who are but the sad extensions of our game playing. We are aware that these children still believe that they are real, (meaning that their self-estimate is not questioned by them), and this is momentarily torturous, since in our memory they are tied to us with love.

I might liken the situation to one in which a person might fall in love with a mannequin or robot ... or to a Galatea. In the game of life, such a Galatea has life breathed into it, but of itself it is nothing, and that which it imagines itself to be is nothing. The being that loves the Galatea is no better than the statue. When the creator of the Galatea comes into the deeper realization, it sees the Galatea as ego-born fiction. This observer still has not crossed over and seen his corporeal self-belief as fiction. The observer is also a statue, except that part of him that is Absolute. For the Absolute is forever impersonal.

A GENERAL SUMMARY OF BLOCKS

Everything cannot be verbalized. And the emphasis upon the "states" above is an attempt to show that things happen to us, and have a great influence on our essence, and cannot always be described with words. Likewise, there is no book of symptoms that covers all of the blocks that may be generated by these "states," nor is there a word-book of any sort that will list the manner of surmounting each block. Without perfected intuition we are lost.

In examining the systems that have endured in whole or in part down through the ages, we find that nearly all religions recognized that a sort of battle had to be fought to achieve anything that might be identified as a spiritual accomplishment. Now, we might say that we are not necessarily interested in religion in this writing, as much as we are in thinking and in understanding the essence of man ... all of which might well come under the heading of psychology or super psychology. And, of course, when we say that we are interested in psychology here, we are not referring to the pseudo-science that is peddled by the political hucksters of social amenities.

When we find ourselves dealing with mental processes, we find ourselves dealing with the same abstract plane that is the battleground of mystics and theologians. And while we may wish to pretend that we are philosophers, and above all weaknesses that might be earmarked as having religious origins -- we can only so pretend with facetiousness. We are looking for tools to probe the abstract plane, and we find that the mind is about the only

tool we have for that venture. Next, we look for yardsticks to gauge and keep a check on the mind, because we have discovered that the mind is unreliable and elusive. We are in extremely bad shape, in fact, unless we can find some way of monitoring this computer, which is continually suffering from emotional interference.

Let us look at the advice given us by the earlier prospectors of this field, and consider the things which they considered to be obstacles to progress or success in mental and spiritual achievement.

We have the seven deadly sins. They could also be called the seven obstacles to understanding. Pride, covetousness, lust, hatred, anger, envy and sloth. These were published by the church long before the science of psychology was invented. Let us look at some of the mental blocks outlined by psychology, and compare them.

What is procrastination, but another form of sloth? Exhibitionism is another tem for pride. There are many trade terms for lust, such as satyriasis and nymphomania. Anger is considered an aberration, --the result of incomplete knowledge, or frustration with diverse objectives. Paranoia in some diagnoses as such, may be nothing more than envy and fear. It can be seen that the seven deadly sins can be seven obstacles to clear thinking. But there are more.

The first and chief obstacle to the pursuit of Truth is Nature, and nature. Meaning both the nature of man, and external Nature -- which is capitalized to distinguish the two. The nature of man is such that it hinders his thinking, since he must spend a good bit of his time thinking about survival in its several forms. By that -- meaning his personal survival we may find his motives for seeking immortality, but his immediate daily survival-needs do, and must have, precedence over post-mortem survival.

So, the appetites are a block or impediment. The exigencies of living are obstacles. And bodily or physical limitations are an obstacle to the quest. We will get tired, if nothing else. The body may be in pain, and while it is in pain, we will not be able to think. And most men wait until they are in pain before they feel compelled to think about life-after-death. Our glands may not be functioning properly and all sorts of complexes and confusion may result.

We are pretty much at the mercy of our natural limitations, which can be overcome to only a very small degree at a time. Consequently, the major religions hedgehopped the issue of Nature, and their teachings concentrated upon mental obstacles. Only the priests and nuns undertook to negate the physical, animal nature implanted in us by Nature. They seemed to bargain the spiritual chances of the laity away, for a respite for themselves -- during which time they practiced celibacy, poverty and fasting.

As for mental obstacles, the word that expresses the most adverse force is called "Ego." We define Ego here, not only as egotism, but also as being that composite of voices or urges known as personality, which in the final analysis is always false. Because the Ego is such a significant negative force, we will come back to it later to give it wonder examination.

Let us examine a few more things that are obstacles. There is the laziness of the mind, which somehow must be tied up with physical incapacity or brain-limitations. There is a fugue, or flight from the strain of thinking. Our curiosity will take us occasionally to the threshold of study, but something in the mind sees the work coming, and takes the thoughts away in flight and escape. There are fears. There is a fear of social rebuff -- fear that the neighbors might find out that we are standing on our head or chanting mantras, or fear that they might discover that we have joined a group. There is the fear of hobgoblins. Brave men who have survived the battlefield cannot be dragged into a haunted house. There are fears of incubi or succubi. There are fears of spiritual contamination, and even fears of losing the soul (which we cannot intellectually isolate.)

Blind faith is an obstacle that comes in the category of rationalization. We should believe only tentatively. When we build on belief, we build cement around our mobile mental faculties. Or in other words, we stagnate.

Robert S. DeRopp recently wrote *The Master Game*, a very good book for serious researchers, and for psychologists in the true sense of the word. He lists six "catches." The think-talk syndrome; the starry-eyed syndrome; the false-Messiah syndrome; the personal salvation syndrome; the Sunday-go-to meeting syndrome; and the hunt-the-guru syndrome.

Number one and number six speak of procrastination. Number one differs from number six in that the former may never get anything done but talk. Number six wanders from guru to guru, never stopping long enough to work diligently with any. The second syndrome, the starry-eyed, refers to those who, form a combination of emotionalism and weakness, blindly follow a particular teacher of system. This is an example of blind faith, and aptly describes some of its motivation.

The false Messiah syndrome refers to those who have come to believe that they are a teacher or savior, simply because they desire to be a figure of prominence. These sometimes are psychopathic pretzels or oversized egomaniacs.

Which brings us to the business of ego. There is much confusion with the word "Ego." There is a big difference between the implied meaning of "Ego" when Jung uses it, and when Jung uses it, and when Gurdjieff uses it. The Gurdjieff system teaches that there are many "I's", which, by their multiplicity, split up the energy of men and weaken the power that might be spent upon self-development. The system further indicates that these "I's" should be developed or used in such a manner as to lead to a more coordinated being.

The system of Zen, on the other hand, leans more to the esoteric Christian view of the Ego as being the unhealthy part of the self. This Zen interpretation, in contrast to the Gurdjieff-system, says that there can be only one "I" for a perfectly functioning person. All of the rest must be discovered to be inferior and unimportant in relation to the ultimate destiny of man.

It is almost amusing to witness the attempts by the mind-mechanics to define the word Ego. I maintain that the Ego is false and has no functional value for the essence of man, anymore than an ingrown toenail would. To me the ego is the aggregate of many urges whose ultimate value is more negative or harmful than good. The modern psychologists dare not quibble with nature, and are obliged to rationalize for anything that is in that nature -- that is manifest. And so they wrongly ascribe to your being, the Ego as a faculty or important part, when in fact it is a sort of excrescence.

Let us examine Webster. Under "psychology" we find the self -- "the self, whether considered an organization or system of mental states, or as the consciousness of the individual's distinction from other selves." The dictionary cannot take up too much space with each definition, and it is difficult to incorporate all that modern psychology does not know in a few lines. However, the first line of the above definition might refer to uncertain mental states, or false states, while the second line refers to the opposite -- the final observer that is aware of the other "selves." Some psychologists see that there is an incomplete description of the evident phases of consciousness, or complex conglomerations of thought-origins and mental reactions ... and so they coin another word, "Id," From Id, Ego and Libido, are supposed to emanate.

As long as the "alienists" continue to operate as public utilities, instead of functioning as scientists looking for the Truth, they will manage to keep doors closed that might allow them to understand the mind. Having denounced most mystics as being psychoneurotic, they will hardly dare to approach the understanding of the mind through any of the formulae proposed by mystics.

The three horsemen of dark visage and apocalyptic message for mankind are not pestilence, famine, and death. They are, Authoritative Ignorance, Enforced Conditioning of the Individual, and Enforced Conditioning for the Masses. The first horseman is only ignorant. The last two are mad. They are, respectively, Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Sociology. And we are the unfortunate horses who support them.

The obstacles of nature are the most subtle opponents to Truth, and the exigencies of everyday living are the most immediate obstacles. However, the most formidable obstacles are contained in the Ego.

The sad part of this business of seeking for the Truth is the fact that man's greatest enemies in the field are his external fellow man, and his internal schizoid nature. There is no doubt that Zen attracted many great minds, because those mind saw the inescapable danger of the attempts to categorize and scientize a study before all the data was in. The most that we can do by the way of a rational study of the definition of the essence of man before all the data is in, (which means too long a wait), is to devise systems of study, or to design new tools with which to evaluate the abstract values of the mind-states. Zen, of course, goes to the heart of the matter. It is a system that works with the negation of untruth, or a retreat from error, rather than a proud, frontal assault on ignorance with such primitive wall-scaling devices as concept-building.

So that, even as the churches have become the enemy of Truth by virtue of a downward chain of attitudes, into rationalization resulting from fatigue, into concept-building or dogma, into ritual as a replacement for interior effort, and finally into a domineering and fear-inspiring mundane authoritativeness, likewise the mind-mechanics have aborted their noble cause. Those brash young men of the adolescent mind-sciences are trying to reach suddenly in a couple of decades, a line of corruption that took several hundred years for the church to accomplish.

So it cannot be advised too many times that we should beware of seeking the Truth through modern Psychology. Zen, I consider to be the greatest psychoanalysis, but I use the "psychoanalysis" only to convey the manner in which Zen functions ... to the best of my ability. Zen works by negating errors and false self-structures, with the aim of finding our essence.

LIST OF OBSTACLES

Of External Nature:

Visible, terrestrial life and planetary relationships.

Invisible, or dimensions beyond our senses.

Of Internal Nature:

The Appetites:

Sex

Security

Food

Pleasures other than sex

Curiosity

The Fears:

Fear of dying

Fear of scorn or social harm

Fear of mental or spiritual harm

The Blocks:

The seven deadly sins

The six catches

Physical limitations

Economic exigencies

Forms of Rationalization:

That we will be able to do the thing better at a latter date. (Procrastination)

That we will ride the tide of humanity into heaven.

That social services or "good works" have spiritual gain.

That the gods have ears. Salvation through prayers.

That the gods have noses and eyes. Incense and displays.

That positive thinking will make gods of us or lead us to liberation.

That the guru will save us.

That faith will save us.

That spiritual paths may be evaluated by their popularity.

That we can "feel" our way alone. (Intuition alone).

That we can do it with our omnipotent reason.

That God, (or Mr. X) will take care of everything. This is a variation of the "knight on the white horse" rationalization.

That our present belief shall be our final evaluation of Truth.

That everything else is hopeless or useless.

[End]

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