



THE LITTLE WORLD OF PRS

A Field Tour
of

The Philosophical Research Society

by
Manly P. Hall

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.
Los Angeles, California 90027
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"In the beginning. . . ."

THE LITTLE WORLD OF PRS A Field Tour of the Philosophical Research Society

In the Beginning

In 1934 the Philosophical Research Society was incorporated as a nonprofit educational institution with charitable, religious, and educational privileges. Shortly thereafter the corporation was able to secure the valuable property on which its buildings now stand. Although the nation was in the midst of a disastrous depression, the first unit of our construction was possible because of the low building costs.

In the early morning of October 17, 1935, nearly one hundred persons assembled in a field of wild mustard on

the corner of Griffith Park and Los Feliz Boulevards in Los Angeles for the purpose of breaking ground for the headquarters of the Philosophical Research Society. There was a threat of rain in the air, but at the significant moment the stars were shining brightly. The first unit was of reinforced concrete and included a front office, print shop, bindery, and library. In 1950 the need for larger facilities resulted in the building of a second unit as provided in the original plan. This provided us with a classroom, the library vault, and two offices.

Through a donation that came our way, we were able to retain the services of the Judkins brothers to install the bookcases in our library. It took considerable time, but they were excellent workmen and very much interested in helping our activities. It was now possible to give our library a permanent home.

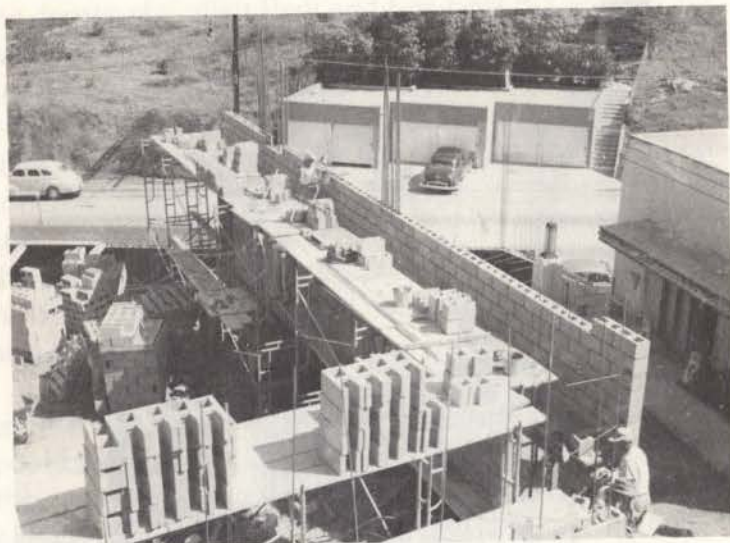
Shortly after we had completed the library shelving, we received our first important inheritance of books. This collection, the Edward Parker library, included a number of very scarce publications and journals, and many classical texts on comparative religion. One of the most recent acquisitions was the library of Oliver Reiser, an outstanding American scholar. This included many recent standard texts on psychology and idealistic philosophy.

It has always seemed to me that religious and symbolical art should be included in a collection representing mankind's heritage of wisdom and beauty. Over the years, many art objects which I accumulated over a period of nearly fifty years are being turned over to the Society. While there is considerable folk art, there are also a number of important pieces which are on permanent display in our buildings.



The Judkins brothers at work on the Mayan style arch over the entrance of the PRS Library.

Throughout the period 1934-59, public lectures were given in club houses or theaters. It became possible to begin the building of the planned auditorium, and in 1959 the auditorium of the Society was completed. On May 16 at high noon the cornerstone was put in place and enclosed the records of the Society and a list of all contributors to the project. With the completion of the auditorium, the official address of the Society was changed from 3341 Griffith Park Boulevard, to 3910 Los Feliz Boulevard.



The PRS Auditorium under construction.

The dedication ceremony for the auditorium began with greetings and acknowledgments of those who had made the project possible. On this occasion, Dr. Drake, our Vice-President, read a letter accompanying a donation to our work given in the name of Islam, which is also dedicated to the practice of the brotherhood of man. During the placing of the cornerstone, it was my privilege to unite the group in prayer in part as follows: "Eternal Father, Master of all builders, Grandmaster of architects and of all who would construct for man the living temple of an eternal life, we ask the blessing of Thy love and understanding upon this frail effort of our hands. We ask Thy presence in this work which we are seeking to do for the greater glory of Thy name. Eternal Father, bring everlasting peace and blessing to this house. We are Thy servants awaiting the works that Thou wouldst have us do."

In 1968, it became expedient to provide all possible space for the expansion of our activities. We were informed that according to the Los Angeles building code the enlargements we contemplated were possible, but no further building could be constructed on the premises. We added a room on the north side of the building which allowed parking below. We extended the library, nearly doubling its capacity, and built a storage facility on the rear of the property. The library extension was two stories and the upstairs provided additional secretarial space and space for the preservation of necessary records.

All of our buildings have strong steel reinforcing and are earthquake resistant. We feel that we have been as



In 1968 additional library space was added for the better protection of literary and artistic acquisitions.

tions. They provide an opportunity to combine written material, manuscripts, and early printed works with examples of related artifacts and objects of art. Displays are held in the library throughout the year and are well attended.

For nearly fifty years the Society has loaned exhibits to museums, universities, colleges, and libraries. Among the most popular exhibits are Japanese wood-block prints, original wood-block prints of Albrecht Durer, historical examples of early printing, alchemical manuscripts, and early printed works. In addition there are Oriental fabrics, bookplates, Egyptian manuscripts and artifacts, and the ceramics of various culture groups. The facilities of the library are available to the public without charge.

We are also engaged in the reprinting of valuable texts in our fields of interest that have long been unavailable. A few years ago there was no market for such books and publishers were not interested in the reprinting of scholarly works. Things have changed considerably however. I remember that at the time of the publication of my large book on symbolism, a generous friend bought twenty copies and asked us to distribute them among the most prominent libraries of the world. Nineteen institutions including the Vatican, the Bibliotheque Nationale, and the British Museum acknowledged these gifts with gratitude. One of the largest libraries in the United States—not the Congressional library—sent back the volume with a curt note saying that they did not accept material dealing with these subjects. For nearly twenty years various donors tried to get books into this particular library, going so far as to make personal requests to the head librarian. All was in vain. In the last few years, however, a new policy took over and the same library is asking for this type of book.

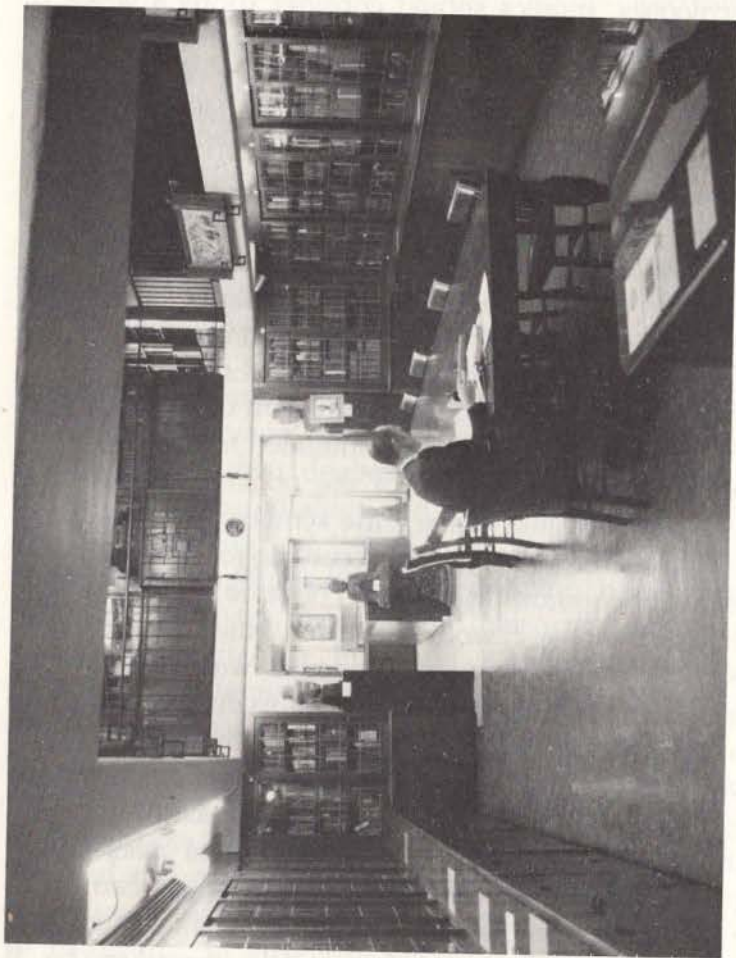


Two hundred rare books and manuscripts from the PRS collection were exhibited at Robinson's Department Store under the title of "Rare and Original Writings Covering 4000 Years." Photo courtesy of J. W. Robinson's Department Store.

A Center of Practical Idealism

I have lived to see the PRS fulfill some of my earlier hopes. We have done what we could to create a living memorial to honor the wisdom of antiquity and to preserve for the modern world some part of mankind's heritage of dreams, hopes, and aspirations. The Society has never been able to afford the acquisition of world-famous literary treasures, but this restriction is not as serious as might first be feared. Those mystical, philosophical works which are most meaningful to us have never fetched extravagant prices. For many years they were texts for specialized students and of little or no general interest to scholars in other fields. This has all changed now. Most antiquarian book dealers are selling sumptuous, modern printings of familiar works which have been available for centuries in cheap editions. A collection such as that in the library of our Society would be almost impossible to duplicate at the present time. Not only is the demand too great, but war has destroyed many valuable collections and the ravages of time are taking a heavy toll on old and fragile manuscripts. It is our hope to gradually reproduce in facsimile form many important texts for which there is sincere need and demand.

There is another aspect of this subject which invites consideration. It is my opinion that the intense specialization which disfigures modern learning has produced too many specialists. Of specialists in general, it has been said that a specialist is a person who knows more and more about less and less until he knows all about nothing. Even in the fields of mysticism and spiritual studies, there is a tendency to sacrifice breadth in favor of depth. It is assumed that one-pointedness is both a secular and a sacred



Reading room of the PRS Library.

virtue. One should not divide attention but consider that which is outside the field of his personal interest as irrelevant and immaterial. Philosophers are not supposed to be musicologists, mystics should consider sports a waste of time, and scientists should free their minds from addiction to the graphic arts. We have forgotten, or perhaps have never known, the importance of balanced living and thinking. It is for this reason that we have placed so much emphasis upon diversified activity. I learned that it was unwise and impractical to assume that the average person reacts favorably to profound scholarly abstractions. He wants help on the level of his own problems. He may already have learned that the higher intellectualism has brought him very little spiritual consolation.

In the years following the completion of my book *Lectures on Ancient Philosophy*, I intended to prepare an in-depth text on theogony, or the origin of the gods. It would be fascinating to trace the symbols and legends of the principal religious systems according to the earliest and most reliable sources. It gradually became apparent, however, that the project would have very little practical value. What was more immediately needed was self-help material which could be applied directly to daily human relationships. Many troubled persons in their search for truth have virtually retired from the human race, convinced that they must avoid the contaminating influence of unregenerate humankind. Actually, to spend several years exploring universal abstractions tires the mind which can go no further into the depths of the unknown. Mental exertion in this direction usually ends in fatigue if it is carried too far. A school child must study a variety of subjects in order to exercise the different combinations of faculties with which he has been endowed. It should also be remembered that

many of the deepest secrets of life are reserved for those who take all knowledge as their province.

It should also be remembered that each of us brings into his present embodiment the aptitudes and interests developed in previous lives. We cannot agree with the idea that the mind of the newborn babe is like a blank sheet of paper upon which relatives, friends, and schoolteachers can scribble their own notions. A few can come into this life to make religion their journey, but others must follow another drummer. In whatever field the thoughtful person establishes his career, the great truths of life will be available to him. Human beings are capable of diversified thinking and often develop a variety of valuable interests.

To a degree, at least, I have tried to combine mystical studies with appropriate avocational outlets. Symbolism is a universal language and nearly all cultural systems have communicated their deepest and most precious secrets through religious ritualism and emblematic devices. The robes of the clergy are important to those who have the proper insight. Sculpturing and painting have exerted powerful influences upon devout persons to whom sermons are less effective. In all arts or avocational pursuits, three levels or degrees are involved. There is first the observer who becomes aware and enjoys the genius or ingenuity of others. He probably occasionally attends an art exhibit or a concert and experiences a mild form of aesthetic satisfaction. On the second level, the viewer becomes involved and may in time gain a reputation as a critic or connoisseur. At least some of his friends are skilled in similar fields and, in the most advanced cases, the admirer becomes a collector in his own right. He feels distinct attachment to the treasures he has accumulated and spends many happy hours exploring the labors of artistic genius

and seeks to understand the true meaning of significant art and artifacts. The third step is participation. The art lover studies in an accredited school or with a recognized artist and produces original works of his own. These may not be outstanding, but they bestow a dimension of insight that is only possible through participation.

In my personal living, I was determined to participate in some form of aesthetic endeavor. I inherited my mother's violin, took some lessons, and later studied piano. My lecturing commitments made a great deal of practicing almost impossible, but I was able to study sculpturing with a distinguished teacher of the Rodin school. I modeled three portrait busts, of which the one of General Albert Pike was probably the most successful. Perhaps if I have leisure time in the future, I will be able to continue to work in this medium.



Portrait bust of General Albert Pike, world-famous Masonic scholar, by Manly P. Hall.

The Library of the Society

Because of extensive travel, it was possible for me to browse in bookshops and antique galleries. Most of my lecturing was in the evening, and I usually found items to expand my collection. In those days dealers were friendly and well-informed. The desperate effort to make a quick profit from the unwary customer was not obvious. In London the senior Mr. Watkins had a pleasant back room with a kerosene stove on the top of which stood an ever-steaming tea kettle. After wandering about his store and gathering up a number of significant volumes, we would chat away the greater part of the afternoon. There were few interruptions and much to learn from this expert bookman. Most dealers had comparatively small shops, and much of their stock was stored in warehouses. If you were in search of an elusive work, you were invited to return the next day. If the proprietor failed to find the needed book in his own warehouse, he might well borrow a copy from another dealer. A general atmosphere of leisure prevailed and, if you spent more than sixpence, you automatically became a valued customer.

One kindly old gentleman had a basement which could only be reached by a stepladder. If you could win his confidence, he might roll up the rug, raise the trapdoor, and take a ladder that was hanging on the wall. He would then disappear with a pocket flashlight and, after some time, books would appear along the edge of the opening. A number of treasures from this shop are now in our library. He was careful to explain that he had no idea about the contents of the books, but would intimate that they had a look about them that a purchaser might like.

There was also an incredible literary establishment in lower New York City. It was well staffed, but they all admitted that if you wanted anything unusual you would have to find it yourself. Nothing was arranged by subject, author, or title. Volumes by Scott stood sedately beside works by Eleanor Glynn. Rummaging around, I came upon a large old scrapbook, shaken at the joints and bumped at the corners. However, it happened to contain nearly a dozen original prints by Albrecht Durer. Those were the golden days of the collector.

The library of the Society is now serving a variety of readers. We have assembled an outstanding collection of books and manuscripts dealing with idealistic philosophy and those sciences most cherished by the wisest and best of mortals. There is also a small but carefully selected group of artistic material, mostly with religious emphasis. It has always seemed to me that art and music contribute much to human well-being and are valuable avocational outlets. The Greeks and Egyptians believed that music and other inspiring examples of human creativity fed the soul and brought quiet joy to gentle hearts. We have been engaged for some time in classifying and cataloging our books and manuscripts. These lists will be available to the public in due course. We have frequently loaned items from our collection to museums and educational institutions, and hope to expand this public service.

The Sacred Books of the World

Our Egyptian reference collection includes much valuable material useful for scholars. Possibly the outstanding item is the papyrus of the Lady Ta-Er-Pet written about



Original woodblock print of Crucifixion scene by Albrecht Durer signed AD and dated 1504. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

600 B.C. The manuscript is over 20 feet in length and is mounted in nine sections. Like most important Egyptian papyri our example has passed through a number of collections. In 1909 it was in the MacGregor collection and was described in part by Jean Capart in *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, Leipzig: 1908-09, pp. 14-21. When the MacGregor collection was sold in 1922 at the auction galleries of Sotheby and Company, London, it became part of the collection of William Randolph Hearst.

When Mr. Hearst disposed of a large part of his holdings in 1942, we were able to acquire it with the assistance of Mr. Ernest Dawson. This papyrus is unique in one important particular. On the reverse of a section is a panel of writing and figures consisting of seventy-four amulets arranged in columns. We also have an interesting panel of Egyptian hieratic writing on papyrus, probably dating from the first or second century A.D., featuring a well executed drawing of the ritual of the weighing of the soul. Our set of Belzoni's *Narrative* includes the large folio volume of engravings believed to have been hand colored by Madame Belzoni and is dated London: 1821. Giovanni Belzoni (1778-1823) opened the tomb of the Pharaoh Seti I and opened the second pyramid at Giza.

Jean Francois Champollion (1790-1832) working with the Rosetta stone is credited with the first comprehensive effort to translate the hieroglyphics of the Egyptian written language. He published his *Primer of the Hieroglyphic System* in 1824, and we have a copy of the first edition. We might mention *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus* published in facsimile and hieroglyphical transliterations by Professor James Henry Breasted, University of Chicago Press: 1930. I spent an afternoon with Dr. Breasted and



Detail from the papyrus of the Lady Ta-Er-Pet, approximately 600 B.C.



Panel of Egyptian hieratic writing on papyrus, first or second century A.D.

he generously presented me with an autographed copy of this work.

Also available in our library are several volumes on Egyptian religious texts sponsored by and published for the Bollingen Foundation. One very handsome volume, *The Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, was translated by Alexandre Piankoff and edited by N. Rambova. Madame Rambova edited a number of volumes of this series and was a very good friend of our Society. She presented us with a valuable group of ancient Greek and Roman silver and gold coinage. We have an excellent collection of early editions of the writings and translations of Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge, curator of Egyptian and Assyrian antiquities at the British Museum. Among early works of Egyptian interest, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* by Athanasius Kircher which appeared in four volumes issued in Rome in 1652 is an outstanding example of Egyptian researches based upon Greek and Roman sources. It is a rare work with extraordinary engravings. Most familiar texts in general usage are also available to our readers.

The library of our Society contains several unusual items bearing upon the Amerindian culture. Serious students will be happy to know that we have a complete photographic copy of the great *Florentine Sahagun Codex* now in the Laurenzian Library in Florence. To meet the increasing demand for source material dealing with Aztec culture in the Pre-Columbian Period, a limited number (probably twelve) of complete photostatic copies were made available to the great universities of America. One of these institutions failed to take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity and the work is now in the vault of our library.

Sahagun's writings were among the sources of Lord Kingsborough's massive production *Antiquities of Mexico* in seven volumes, elephant folio. With it is combined the two-volume work *The Monuments of New Spain* by M. Dupaix. I secured the nine volumes in Mexico City nearly fifty years ago. It had formerly belonged to Porfirio Diaz, President of Mexico. It is magnificently bound and all the plates are hand colored. We also have two original Mexican Indian manuscripts of unknown provenance. One was published by the University of New Mexico Press in 1947 under the title *Codex Hall*.

Between the years 1935 and 1940, the Libreria Anticuaria of Mexico issued limited printings, some of them hand colored, of rare Aztec codices. According to the publisher, a Mr. C. M. Echaniz issued most of the facsimiles in edition of twenty-five copies, in a few cases fifty copies were distributed. These combined with other material can provide students with faithful reproductions of most of the known Aztec picture writing.

We are fortunate in having a considerable collection of original photographic plates and prints therefrom taken by the pioneer Americanist, Augustus Le Plongeon, who centered his labors principally in the Mayan area. We also have books from his library and his manuscript *The Origin of the Egyptians* which will probably be published in book form in the near future.

Schoolcraft's massive work, *History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, Philadelphia: 1854, is still a definitive text on the aborigines of North America. This large set of books is supported by extensive runs of the older Smithsonian Reports and other Bureau of Ethnology publications. These were present-



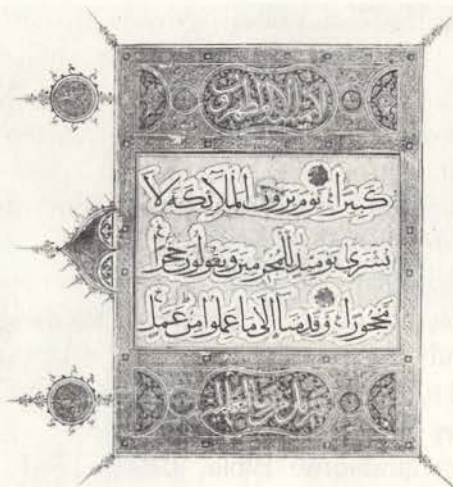
Antiquities of Mexico and The Monuments of New Spain. Nine-volume set in elephant folio in the special case prepared for them in our library. In the preparation of this set, Lord Kingsborough expended his entire fortune. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

ed to us by the well-known American naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton. Of unique interest is a set of eighteen permanent sandpaintings by the venerable Navajo Indian medicine priest, Hasteen Klah, who for several weeks was a guest in my home.

There are many items in our collection of practical use to Bible students. We have the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures in the 1611-13 printing, and the great London Polyglot of 1655-57 complete in eight giant folio volumes with the parallel text in nine languages printed with special type cut by permission of Oliver Cromwell and later Charles II.

Another handsome Bible, dated 1581, has a royal binding of embossed vellum on wood. Bibles printed in foreign languages are well represented and over a hundred versions are available for study. The fifty volume edition of the *Sacred Books of the East*, edited by Professor Max Muller, is still the standard text in its field. Editions of the *Koran*, some handwritten and beautifully illuminated are worthy of admiration. There are special editions of the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, the *Institutes of Manu*, and the *Vishnu Purana*. Among scarce religious texts are the *Mesnevi* of Jalal-ud-din Rumi, the *Codex Nasaraeus*, and the Bible of the Yezidis. A first edition of the *Book of Mormon* is an outstanding rarity.

Modern research books dealing with gnosticism are in considerable demand and earlier publications on the subject are frequently consulted. Taoism, Confucianism, and the teachings of Zen include editions seldom available to the public. The cabala is not slighted. One of the most sought after volumes in this area is *Kabbala Denudata* by Knorr von Rosenroth. It contains the first Latin version of the *Zohar*, or *Book of Splendors*. One of the rarities in our



Leaf from an illuminated manuscript of the *Koran*, probably eighteenth century.

collection is a scroll of the cabala on parchment, sections of which are held together by thongs. This scroll includes many diagrams describing the creation of the universe and the place of humanity in the Divine Plan. This is not yet translated into English. There are several manuscripts on the cabala, ciphers, and various types of mathematical cryptograms.

Manuscripts and early printed works of the sacred texts of Japanese, Chinese, Hindu, Sinhalese, Siamese, and Burmese can be consulted in the original. An interesting example of a little known type of manuscript on vellum is a work in Armenian, with initials and ornaments in color, written in 1684 in Silesia at the Monastery of the Holy Mother of God.

The wisdom of the ancient Greeks is well represented in our library. One of the most extraordinary works is the four volume set of *Collection of Etruscan, Greek, and*



The Gospels in Armenian with portraits of the Evangelists in full colors and gold. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

Roman Antiquities from the Cabinet of the Honorable William Hamilton, His Britannick Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of Naples, Naples: 1766. The publication is in elephant folio profusely illustrated with reproductions of ancient pottery in full color. There are black and white line drawings of details in shape and magnificent title pages in each volume, and beautifully designed initial letters, headpieces, and vignettes. The work was produced under the supervision of D'Hancarville and the preface is dated Naples, April 30, 1766. A large part of the text is in both English and French. These books are important to our collection because they relate to the philosophy, theology, and mythology of the Greeks and Romans. They interpret the ritualistic designs and symbols on Grecian and Etruscan pottery which Sir William



Engraved title page from one volume of a set describing Etruscan, Greek, and Roman antiquities. From the collection of Sir William Hamilton. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

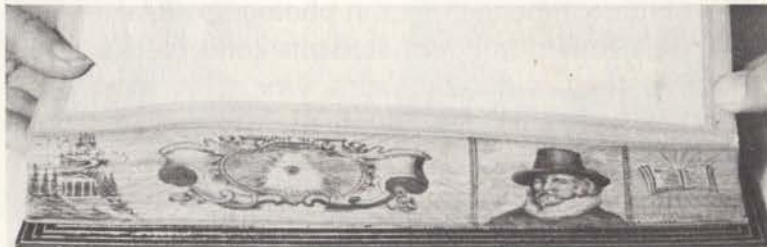
Hamilton had assembled in his world-famous collection.

Most of this was given to the British Museum where it fulfills Sir William's hope that it would be made available to the public and contribute to the advancement of knowledge. Our set was originally in the library of the British Museum and bears a stamp on the reverse of the title pages consisting of "Museum Britannicum" in a double line oval. Beneath is a second stamp reading "Duplicate, 1804" in a double line black lozenge. The volumes are bound in full leather with the initials M. B. in gold on the front of each cover. In my fifty years of book collecting, I have never seen another copy offered for sale.

Another item of considerable interest is a work in German by Eduard Gerhard entitled *Griechische Mysterienbilder zum Erstenmale Bekannt Gemacht*. This consists of a number of large sheets with brief texts, but is devoted largely to line drawings derived from Greek pottery and illustrating Greek legends and myths. We have also an almost complete set of the original writings and translations of Mr. Thomas Taylor. His books were published in very small editions and are now rare. We are reprinting some of these important texts in photographic facsimile to meet the needs of modern students concerned with the wisdom of the Greeks and Latins. One of the most useful books in this section is *The History of Philosophy* by Thomas Stanley. We have several editions of this work and from the printing of 1687 we published a photographic facsimile of the part devoted to the life and teachings of Pythagoras.

As a labor of love we have assembled a number of English works of the seventeenth century dealing with the advancement of learning. These include the first edition of Bacon's *Advancement and Proficiency of Learning* in two books, London: 1605. We also have the greatly

augmented first complete edition in English, which Bacon translated from his own Latin version. This was issued in 1640, a number of years after Bacon's death. In our collection also is a handsome 1620 edition of Bacon's *Novum Organum* with a beautiful fore-edge painting including a portrait of Bacon and appropriate symbols. We have many other first editions of his Lordship's publications including the first issue of his *New Atlantis*. *The History of the World* by Sir Walter Raleigh, written while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London awaiting execution, reveals an unsuspected scholastic insight and literary skill. A much sought after volume is *The French Academie*, which marks the beginning of scientific humanism on the European continent. *The History of the Royal Society of London* by Thomas Sprat, London: 1667, pays a tribute to Bacon's concept of a universal reformation of knowledge. A first edition of this is also in our collection. Speaking of Bacon, we have a substantial section dealing with the various aspects of the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy and its association with the rise of secret societies in England and Germany. In this same sec-



Fore-edge painting in the 1620 edition of Bacon's *Novum Organum*. In preparing a fore-edge painting the pages of a book must be clamped together as shown in the picture. After the painting is finished and the clamps removed, the edge of the book is gilded. The picture is then invisible but can be seen by fanning the leaves. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

tion is a nice group of emblem books which have gradually become extremely difficult to find. Most emblem books consist of morality pictures extolling virtue, inspiring piety, and stimulating imagination. In a sense these are often pictorial cipher books, and we should note that we have available an excellent copy of Selenus's *Cryptomenytices et Cryptographiae*, 1624, attributed to Augustus, Duke of Brunswick. This book was used extensively to decode military ciphers during World War I.

Oriental Books and Manuscripts

While in New York in the early 1930s I spent many pleasant hours in Orientalia Inc. This was a bookstore featuring Asiatic cultures with emphasis upon arts. It was there that I found the three large Tibetan wood-block prints from the Golden Pagoda of Jehol. We made copies of these for distribution to students and they appeared as illustrations in my monograph on *The Western Paradise of Amitabha*. The proprietors of this shop specialized in making available separate leaves of rare Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Persian manuscripts. The leaves themselves were taken from damaged books and incomplete manuscripts. As a result of this contact, we have in our library a section devoted to separate mounted leaves of rare Eastern and Western texts dating back to the fifth century A.D., and engraved title pages.

In displaying rare books, only two pages are visible at a time. Leaving books open for extended periods is detrimental to the bindings and hastens deterioration. The separate leaves attractively mounted meet all the needs of casual viewing. We have leaves from old manuscripts in

Coptic and Greek on vellum, fragments of Latin papyrus, and writing on palm leaves and cloth. We have the rarest of all foliophile items—an original leaf of the Gutenberg Bible of 1450 A.D.

We have gradually expanded the collection to include leaves from Hindu and Persian manuscripts and examples of Chinese and Japanese wood-block printings dating from the eighth century A.D. The rarest printed work we have showing samples of early writings from all parts of the world is *Universal Paleography* in two massive folio volumes by M.J.B. Silvestre, and issued as part of the Bohn Library. The plates are in full color and the set includes two small volumes describing ancient writings and alphabets. It was published in London in 1850.

Of first importance in our Japanese section is *Nippon, Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und Dessen Neben*, etc. by Philipp Franz Von Siebold, which was published in Leyden in 1852. The set consists of two massive folio volumes of engravings including specimens from almost every phase of Japanese life, and six smaller volumes of text and supplementary plates. Our library contains also a smaller set in three volumes with some illustrations.

Another outstanding set is entitled *Japan Described and Illustrated by the Japanese* written by eminent Japanese authorities and scholars, published in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1898. The volumes are bound in Japanese brocades and in the first printing hundreds of hand colored photographs were inserted into the text. The first edition is the only one containing commentaries by Kakuzo Okakura, who is well remembered for his delightful little essay, *The Book of Tea*.

Our collection is especially strong in Japanese texts. Outstanding is *Dai Nippon Bukkyo Zensho*, the complete

collection of Japanese Buddhist works, compiled by Takakusu Junjiro and Mochizuki Shinko, in 151 volumes plus ten scrolls published by the Dai-Nippon Bukkyo Zensho Kanko-kai, Tokyo: 1951. The ten facsimilized rolls of esoteric Buddhism according to the Shingon teaching are illustrated with miniature pictures of the Buddhist divinities.

Examples of prayer writings of the Heian Period, found within the bodies of sacred images, date from the twelfth century A.D. Our *Dharani* of the Empress Shotoku, believed to be the earliest example of wood-block printing, dates from 750 A.D. Japanese texts on science, medicine, and astronomy have many interesting illustrations and include early texts on acupuncture and judo. Manuscripts on flower arrangement were prepared by teachers and presented to gifted students. There is early material on Shintoism and Japanese forms of Tantric disciplines.

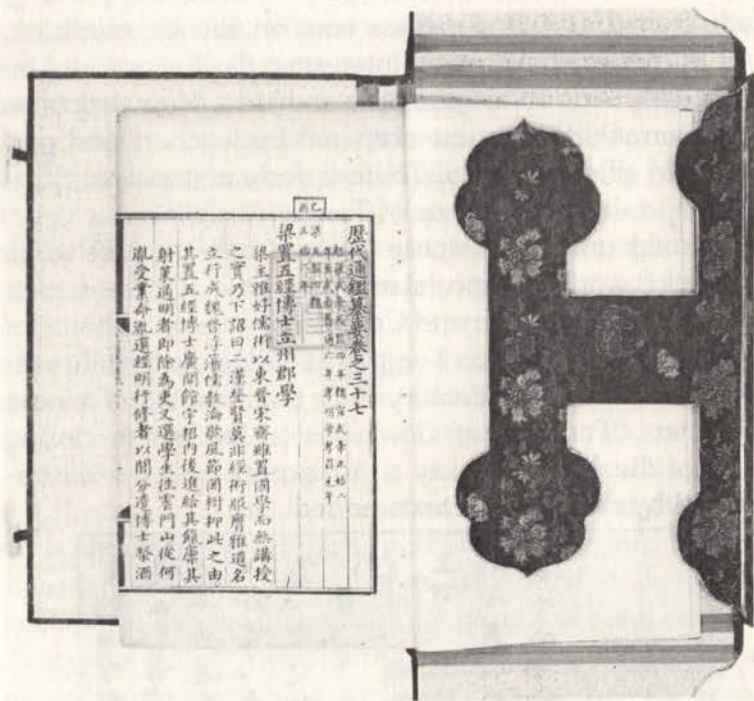
Among unusual Chinese items a collection of stone rubbings is worthy of special mention. One of these depicts the meeting of Lao-tzu and Confucius, a favorite theme of earlier times. Examples of writing of early date include oracle bones of the sixth century B.C. inscribed with Chinese characters. The *Life of Confucius* issued in the closing years of the Ming Dynasty consists principally of illustrations with brief Chinese texts added.



The earliest known examples of printing are the prayer spells of the Japanese Empress Shotoku prepared and distributed about the year 750 A.D.

We have several volumes from the personal library of the Ming Emperor Wan-li who reigned in the sixteenth century. On the first page of each of these volumes is the large imperial seal struck in red ink. All the volumes have intricate brocaded cases with ivory or jade fasteners.

We also have over one hundred volumes of old Buddhist scriptures printed from hand-carved wooden blocks. Many of these books have curious illustrations which were carved on the same blocks as the print. Years ago in San



Wood-block printed book from the library of the Chinese Emperor Wan-li (1573-1619). The first page has the emperor's seal in vermilion, and the book is in a curious brocaded case. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

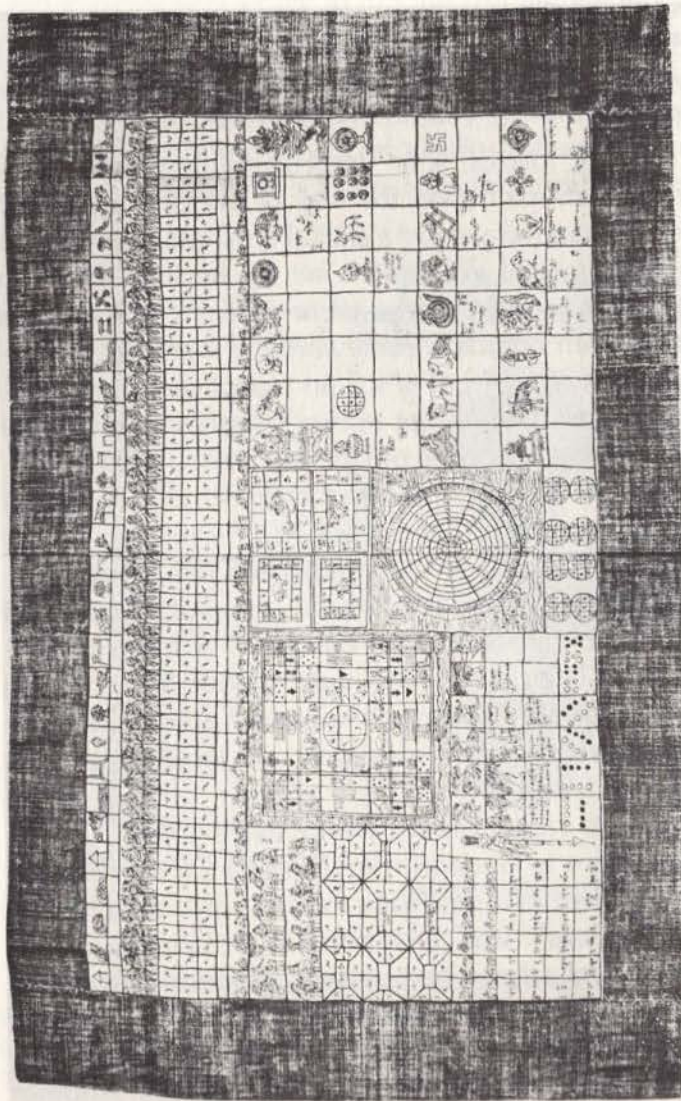
Francisco, an Oriental dealer told me of a curious circumstance. A collector of rare fabrics saw a set of early Buddhist scriptures bound with brocaded boards. Determined to have the bindings, but not interested in the text, he removed them from every volume and a few weeks later I came along and bought the texts. They are still waiting for new bindings.

Of scientific interest is an accordion volume of the astronomical instruments on the wall of the city of Peking. The work is hand drawn by a skillful brushman and shows clearly the types of equipment set up by the Jesuits to facilitate the labors of Chinese astronomers. The final book with its wooden boards is somewhat the worse for the inroads of bookworms, but is still an attractive curiosity.

A handsome manuscript in two volumes in accordion style unfolds the mysteries of Chinese astrology. It is illustrated with beautifully executed representations of the guardian kings and other immortals. As far as we can learn, the text has never been translated into English.

Specialists will enjoy an unusual group of charms and talismans which are pasted on the doors or fronts of Chinese houses. They invite every type of good luck to come in, and sternly warn misfortune to remain at a discreet distance. Chinese maps are elaborate, but locations remain somewhat indefinite.

One of the rarest literary works dealing with Tibetan religious culture is *Buddhism in Tibet* by Emil Schlagintweit. It is in two volumes—one in folio containing twenty plates. The work was first printed in Leipzig: 1863. Though recognized as a text of basic importance it should be noted that the author was never in Tibet. Among the interesting illustrations is a large folding plate of a Tibetan divination diagram for the calculation of nativities. Another



A Tibetan divination diagram from *Buddhism in Tibet* by Emil Schlagintweit. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

rare item in our collection is *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* by Giuseppe Tucci, in three volumes, published in Rome in 1949. While it is not all that could be desired of so expensive a publication, the text is useful but the illustrations are mediocre.

We are happy to be the possessor of a Tibetan wood-block printing in two volumes of *The Ten Thousand Hymns of Milarepa*. It is printed in Tibetan style on long narrow strips of thin paper held together by wooden boards, and enclosed in a Fabrikoid case. The reference to the ten thousand hymns is a simple example of Tibetan exaggeration, but the collection is complete in the Tibetan language and the work includes a biography of the great Buddhist sage. It is not dated, but was probably produced in the seventeenth century. There is a similar copy available in the Library of Congress.

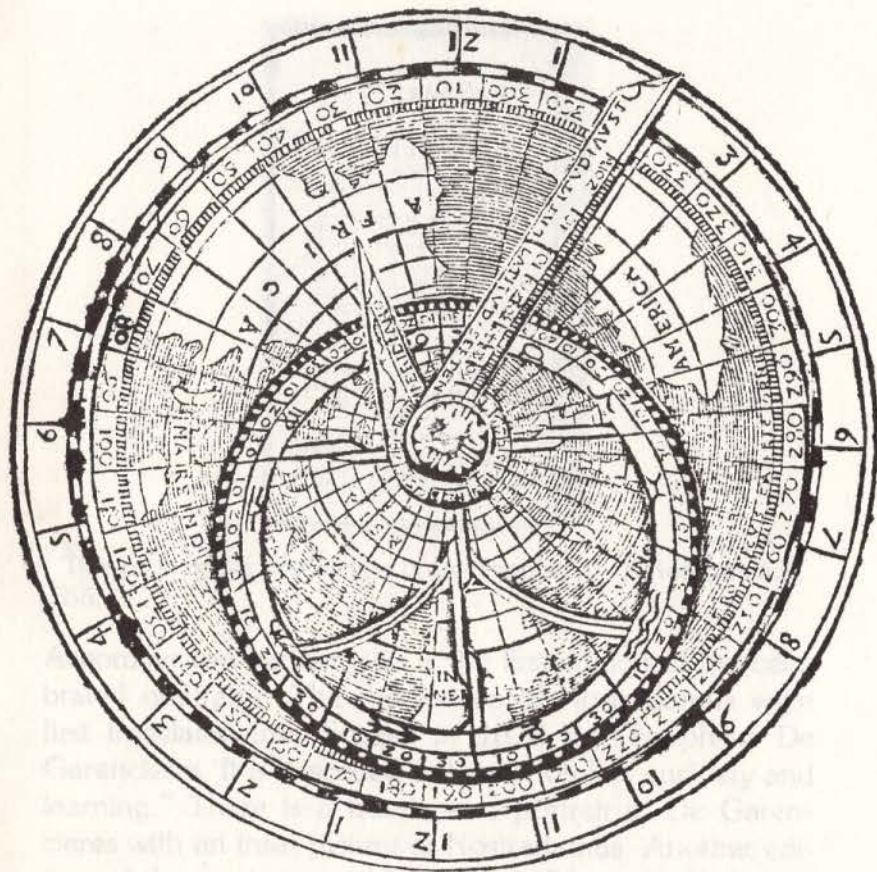
Major L. Austine Waddell, M.D., was the medical officer with the punitive expedition that entered Tibet under the leadership of Sir Francis Younghusband. Waddell later authored one of the definitive texts on Tibetan religion under the title *Buddhism in Tibet*. We have a copy of the first edition, London: 1895, formerly in the library of Rudolph Valentino. Other writings done by Waddell are little known—but we can provide *The Grand Llamas of Tibet*, 1910; *Tibetan Manuscripts and Books Etc., Collected during the Younghusband Mission to Lhasa*, 1912; *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, 1905; and *Ancient Historical Edicts of Lhasa*, 1909. We might also mention in passing that present interest justifies our listing of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* by Nicolas Notovitch, New York: 1890. Recent research by reputable scholars strongly support the text. This work contains references of Christ's travels in Asia.

Astronomy-Astrology

This section of the PRS Library is extensive, varied, and includes a number of unusual items. Datewise, Regiomontanus (original name Johann Mueller) was born in 1436 and died in Rome in 1476, probably poisoned by jealous rivals. Gardner, in his catalog of astrological books, states under Regiomontanus a run of calendars from 1475 to 1513. It is recorded that these calendars (more accurately ephemerides) were used by Christopher Columbus for navigational purposes during his voyages. It would indicate that Regiomontanus, one of the outstanding astronomer-mathematicians of his time, calculated the positions of the heavenly bodies for many years beyond his own lifetime. We have his calendar for 1477 and the run of his ephemerides from 1494 to 1505. These are outstanding rarities. Also in the library collection is a small volume, *Astrological Opticks*, compiled in Venice by Regiomontanus and Johannes Angelicus, translated by R. Turner with a preface by William Lilly, London: 1655.

An especially intriguing work, *Descripcion Universal Del Mundo*, by Ivan Paulo Galucio Soloense, Granada: 1617, is illustrated by a large number of wood-cut volvelles. Some of these have as many movable pieces as an astrolabe and fulfill most of the requirements of early planetariums. The separate parts have been assembled by hand and held in position by string knots. One of these is reproduced here as an example of ingenuity and patient labor. Included is a fine series of constellational figures and commentary thereon.

It would be a mistake to omit special reference to the works of Nostradamus. It is a source of gratification that we can list *Les Vrayes Centuries et Propheties de Maistre*.



Descripcion Universal Del Mundo

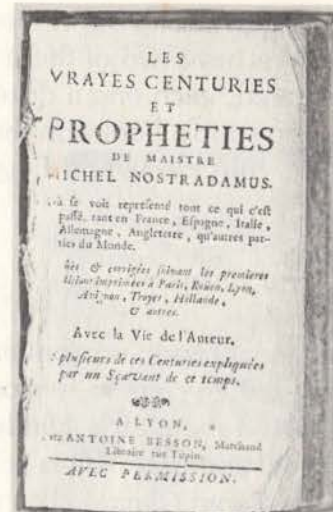
See page 38.

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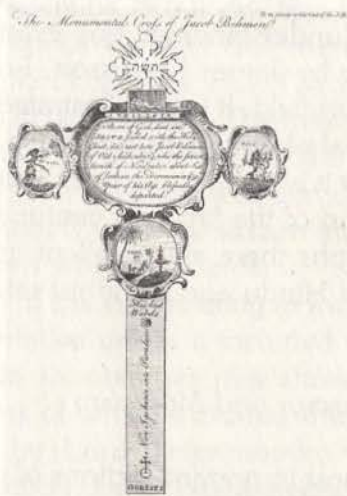
Title page of the first edition of the *Prophecies* of Nostradamus, 1555.

According to Gardner, this is the first edition of the celebrated quatrains. The predictions of Nostradamus were first translated into English in 1672 by Theophilus De Garencieres. It is described as “a work full of curiosity and learning.” There is a frontispiece portrait of De Garencieres with an inset picture of Nostradamus. Another edition of the quatrains published in 1656 in our library includes a seated portrait of Nostradamus.

We also have considerable material dealing with Oriental astrology including Japanese, Chinese, Hindu, and Persian, among which we note Abu'l-Rayhan Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Al-Biruni's *Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*, written in Ghaznah, 1029 A.D. and reproduced from the British Museum MS. Or. 8349. The translation facing the text is by R. Ramsay Wright, copy 36 of 100 numbered copies, London: 1934. Stu-

important alchemists are well represented by early printed editions of their works or handwritten and illuminated manuscripts. Robert Fludd, Michael Maier, Johann Valentin Andreas, Libavius, and Eugenius Philalethes are present in first editions. The rare William Law set of Boehme, the first separate printings with symbolic illustrations of Gichtel, and a volume of original drawings of Boehme symbolism form an important unit. The manifestos of the Rosy Cross are present in original editions, and the first translations into English.

At the present time the Society is preparing a special publication cataloging the alchemical collection with important notes and commentaries. With only two exceptions, all of this collection consists of material issued prior to the year 1800. The exceptions are General Hitchcock's *Alchemy and the Alchemists* and *A Suggestive Inquiry in-*



The symbolical cross placed over the grave of Boehme which later mysteriously disappeared. From the English edition of his works by William Law.

to the *Hermetic Mystery* by Mary A. S. Atwood. We have the rare first edition of Mrs. Atwood's work, her own copy with autograph notes.

Among the rariora should be also noted a seventeenth century edition of the complete works of Paracelsus. The great chemist Basil Valentine, monk of St. Benedict, affirmed that those who sought the secret of transmutation and the regeneration of metals must realize that the philosophical gold is compounded from the substance of man's own consciousness.

Another adept in the Hermetic mysteries was Raymond Lully who labored long in Europe, but finally met a martyr's death on the coast of Malabar in India. Available collections of alchemical material are scarce and not easily accessible to those living in the Western states. The books and manuscripts listed in the forthcoming bibliography can be consulted by qualified researchers in the library of the Philosophical Research Society. We sincerely hope that our collection will be of value and inspiration to those concerned with spiritual mysteries.

The Grounds of the Society

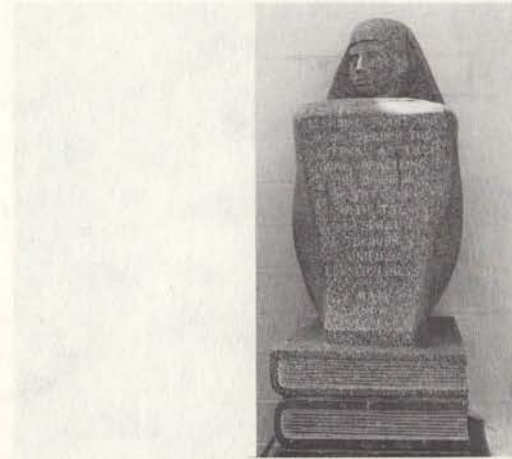
Those visiting the premises of the Philosophical Research Society will notice a number of outstanding works of art, mostly associated with religion or philosophy. On the corner of our property, where Loz Feliz Boulevard crosses Griffith Park Boulevard, is a stylized statue of an Egyptian sage or scholar. The work is more than twice life size, carved in granite, and weighs nearly 2½ tons. It is an original work by Madame Claire Pierpoint, a well-known sculptress whose studio is in Geneva, Switzerland. The



Stylized statue of an Egyptian sage or scholar, an original work by Madame Claire Pierpoint. The figure is placed on the northeastern corner of our property. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

tablet on the back of the statue bears the following inscription: "Thou sun, who has covered the truth with thy golden disc, do thou remove the veil so that I may see the truth within thee and know the meaning of the rays of glory, for the truth which is within thee is within me—and I am that."

Those entering the grounds of the Society from the Griffith Park Boulevard entrance will see a smaller piece by the same artist representing the steward who sat at the front door of the house of an Egyptian nobleman. The inscription on the front of the statue reads, "Blending heart and mind towards the eternal as thy goal, realizing the oneness of thy self with the eternal through unified consciousness—man know thyself." The figure is supported by a plinth of ancient books. Both figures are placed permanently on our property and are greatly admired. They



At the Griffith Park Boulevard entrance of our Society is another work by Madame Pierpoint representing a steward seated at the door of an Egyptian nobleman's home. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

are most suitable to represent the principles for which our organization stands.

The patio is dominated by a Chinese stela in the style of the Tang Dynasty. The carving represents a bodhisattva with attendants, the three figures constituting a Buddhistic trinity. Above the head are two Buddhas as described in the *Lotus Sutra*. The upper area of the nimbus is ornamented with flying angels. The lower panel shows Gautama Buddha preaching and scenes from his life. Since the stela has been permanently mounted, the reverse is no longer visible so we reproduce it here. It is elaborately incised. The lower register shows Buddha attended by disciples and arhats, and the upper register shows him enthroned in a pagoda attended by disciples. There is an extensive inscription which is unfortunately mutilated. Though in ancient style, the condition of the piece would



The reverse side of the Chinese Buddhist stela in the patio. The work is in the style of the Tang Dynasty, but was probably carved in the seventeenth century.

suggest that this stela was carved during the Ching Dynasty, probably late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Art Treasures in the Library

As they cross the patio toward the entrance to the Library, visitors may notice two small fragments of decorated tile inlaid among the flagstones. These should be approached with respect as they are original pieces from the floor of Glastonbury Abbey. It is within the precincts of Glastonbury that the sacred thorn bush still flourishes near to the grave of King Arthur.

While we were finishing the library, our good friend Stuart Holmes (who played the villain in the 1922 motion picture production of *The Prisoner of Zenda*), offered to create the appropriate panels for the library doors. Stuart was a Bavarian whose real name was Stuart Leibchen; he was a wood-carver of distinction. The Oriental panel is reminiscent of Confucius, and its Western complement is suggestive of Plato.

On the right as one enters the library is a large Aztec wood-carving representing Coatlicue, Mother of the Gods. She is a highly important member of the Aztec pantheon and is known as "Lady of the Serpent Skirt." The symbols which adorn her figure represent the earth principle in its two aspects—that of the generation of life and that which is the receptacle of the dead. The head of the goddess is composed of two serpents facing each other. Her necklace is made of human hands and hearts with a pendant skull. Her kilt is adorned with rattlesnakes, and her feet are the claws of a mythical monster that dwells in



The wood-carved panels set into the doors of our library carved by Stuart Holmes.

the sea. A great stone image of this deity is in the Archaeological Museum of Mexico City. It is more than 8 feet high and weighs over 30 tons. Our example, which was created by a Mexican folk artist, is a wood-carving following closely the larger stone image. The sapote wood from which our carving is made is extremely hard and heavy, and will sink if placed in water.

Above and to the left is a very unusual example of the Penitentes folk art of New Mexico. It represents St. Isadore, the Farmer (San Ysidro Labrador). The work is attributed with considerable certainty to Miguel Aragon, one of the most celebrated santeros, who was active between 1830 and 1850. It is painted on gesso over wood within a curious and crude tin decoration on the frame. I secured this piece in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1942, and we have loaned it for public exhibition on two occasions.

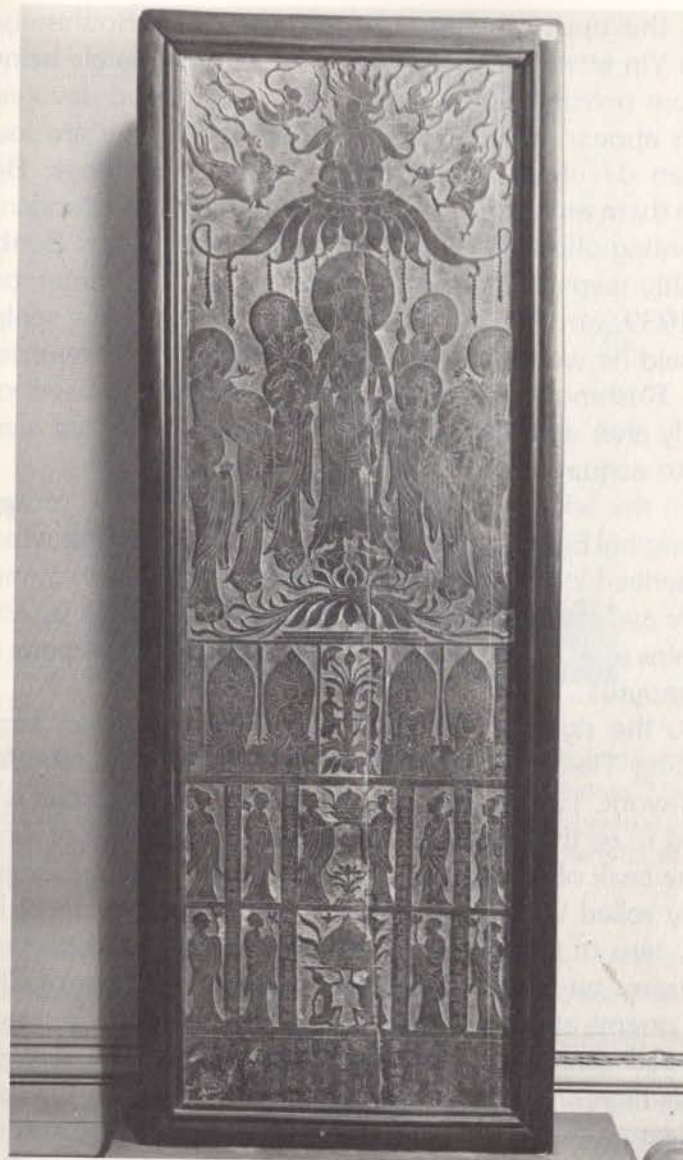


Coatlucue, Mother of the Gods, a native Mexican wood-carving based upon the gigantic stone figure in the Museo Nacional de Antropologia in Mexico City. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.



Unusual example of the Penitentes folk art of New Mexico representing San Ysidro and attributed to Miguel Aragon.

On the wall facing the front door is a finely executed memorial stela enclosed in a wooden frame. The inscription at the bottom reveals the reason for its erection and reads as follows: "In the second year of Cheng Sheng (552 A.D.) on the eighteenth day of the fourth month, (the devotees of) Tunling District, Pingyang Prefecture, in obedience to the decree of the reigning emperor and empress, went around to solicit contributions for the erection of images of Patron Buddhas of the five saintly nuns. The golden images of these Buddhas were erected on the Lotus Throne which was constructed in the newly built temple. The whole hall of worship was illumined with the light of these golden images. This is only a poor reflection of the glorious sight seen in the temple. . . ." Translation is by Dr. Shao Chang Lee, an outstanding authority on Chinese art.



Chinese memorial stela dated in the sixth century A.D. in tribute to five saintly nuns, formerly in the collection of Nathan Bentz.

In the upper register of the stela is the Bodhisattva Kuan Yin attended by celestial beings. Immediately below are four patron Buddhas and the names of two devotees which appear on the sides of the panel. Below are four women devotees with attendants bearing offerings. Beneath them are the figures of four nuns also with attendants presenting offerings. This stela was sent to Nathan Bentz, a highly respected dealer in Oriental art. On September 12, 1939, Mr. Bentz explained: "Mr. Borglum, the sculptor, said he would buy the stone panel when he returned from Rushmore this winter." Mr. Borglum passed on shortly after and through a friend of our Society we were able to acquire this unusual item.

On the left is a special cabinet constructed to protect our original Egyptian papyrus of the Lady Ta-Er-Pet which is described in the section of this article dealing with manuscripts and printed books. The top of the stand lifts up and contains a rack which preserves the other eight sections of the papyrus.

To the right of the Egyptian cabinet is a very large standing Tibetan prayer wheel supported in a wooden framework. This was originally in a temple near Ladak and is said to be the largest example ever brought out of Tibet on the back of a horse. The cylinder contains four massive tightly rolled bundles of prayers, each made of up of literally tens of thousands of wood-block printed charms or mantrams on very thin sheets of paper. A number of Chinese poems and a considerable amount of powdered sandalwood were also found in this prayer wheel. It is 63 inches high and has a Tibetan prayer formula on the top.

Next to the prayer wheel is an important Hindu stone carving formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels. It is reproduced in *Asiatic Art* by H. F. E. Visser, plate number



Antique bronze figure of the Hindu deity Ganesha. He is represented with the head of an elephant to symbolize wisdom. He is associated also with wealth, and comes to the aid of bankers, financiers, and thrifty shopkeepers. This figure was formerly in the collection of Count Stefan Colonna Walewski.

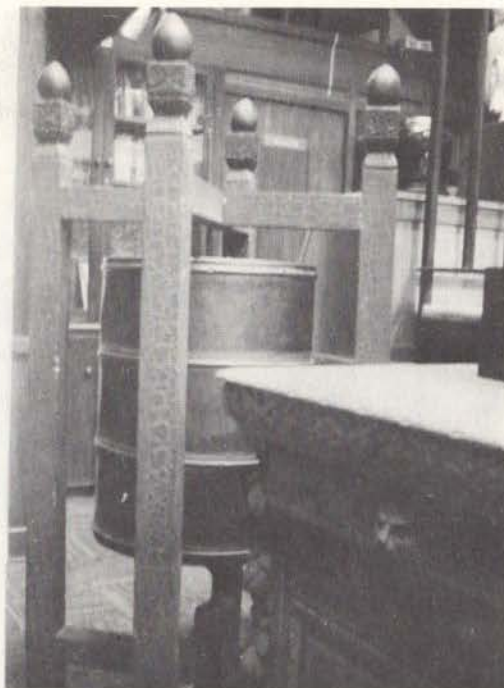
192. The description for it is "Devi as Uma," gray stone, 85 centimeters. The goddess holds a blue lotus in her left hand. She stands on a pedestal rising from a lotus, but it is missing from this figure, which is not dated but probably fourteenth to fifteenth century. It was a gift of Dr. Drake.

Adjacent to this Hindu stone carving is a large Satsuma vase in a protective plastic case, an exceptionally fine example, probably ornamented during the Meiji Period and



Fragment of a stela. The upper section of a large piece showing a conventionalized lotus leaf as a background for the head of the deity. The hand is holding what appears to be a rosary. The head is in the conventional Khmer style with the peculiar smile and full lips which distinguish this school. The headdress is cylindrical above the diadem. The fragment is skillfully mounted on a base of black marble, Cambodia, late twelfth century, height 15 inches. Believed to have been in the Imperial Museum in Tokyo for a number of years.

produced by the Kinkozan kilns. The decoration features groups of monks and lohans surrounding Amaterasu Omikami, the Shinto Goddess of the Sun. She is pictured with many of the attributes of the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, Kannon. A distinguishing feature of this example is the fine crackled surface of what is called semiporcelain. The high quality of the decorations and the elaborate diapering include the hollyhock symbol of the Tokugawa family. The



Tibetan prayer wheel. This is said to be the largest ever brought out of the Tibetan area. It was carried on the back of a horse from a temple near Ladak. It contains four massive tightly rolled cylinders of prayers, each made up of literally tens of thousands of wood-block prints on very thin sheets of paper. Overall height 63 inches. Enclosed cylinder is 25 inches high and 19 inches in diameter.

Satsuma style was brought to Japan from Korea by artisans who were settled in the Satsuma Province.

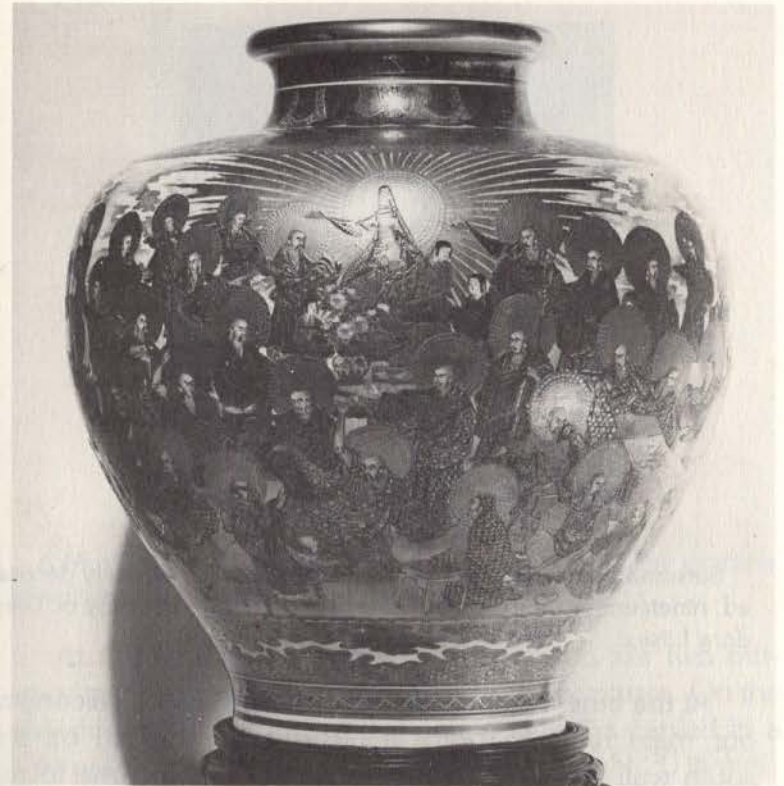
To the left of the stairway leading to the balcony is a very large and handsome Satsuma incense burner. It is also decorated with especially fine detail work and features scenes derived from Japanese history and legendry. The finial on the top of the lid is unusually well delineated. As is common with these very large castings, they have a ten-



Detail of an important Hindu stone carving described as "Devi as Uma." Gray stone.

dency to crack in the firing of the ornamental designs. There is a major kiln flaw in this example, but among collectors it is not regarded as a serious detriment. This is also a product of the Kinkozan kilns. In recent years the interest in Satsuma ceramics has increased greatly and outstanding specimens are becoming rare and much sought after. The Society has several other examples which have been selected because of the religious symbolism—usually Buddhistic, although occasionally Shinto designs also occur.

Suspended from the balcony rail is a religious cape in the form of a cross. It is made of cloth and the surface is covered with fine writing consisting of sections of the *Koran*. Stoles of this kind were worn by religious pilgrims, especially when they were journeying to some sacred shrine of their faith. As is usual in Islamic sacred writings,



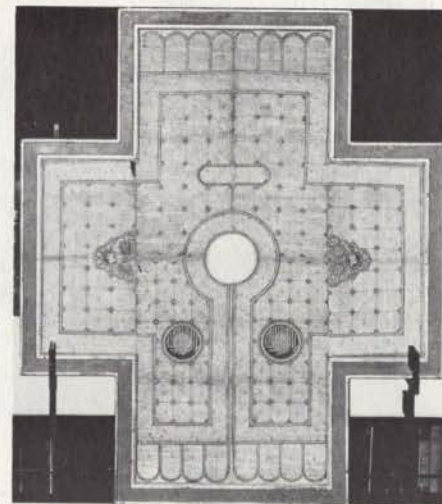
The distinguishing features of Satsuma ceramics are the hard, ivory-like surfaces covered with a network of fine crackles. The pate is so hard and close in texture that experts refer to it as a semiporcelain. The high firing temperature and the unequal contraction between body and glaze in cooling creates the network of tiny crackles.

there are several beautiful designs illuminated with various colors and gold. It is protected under glass in a cross-shaped frame. The cape probably dates from the seventeenth century. I noticed this item in the shop of an antique dealer who was interested in our activities. He was willing to exchange this remarkable religious piece for two sketches by Auguste Rodin.



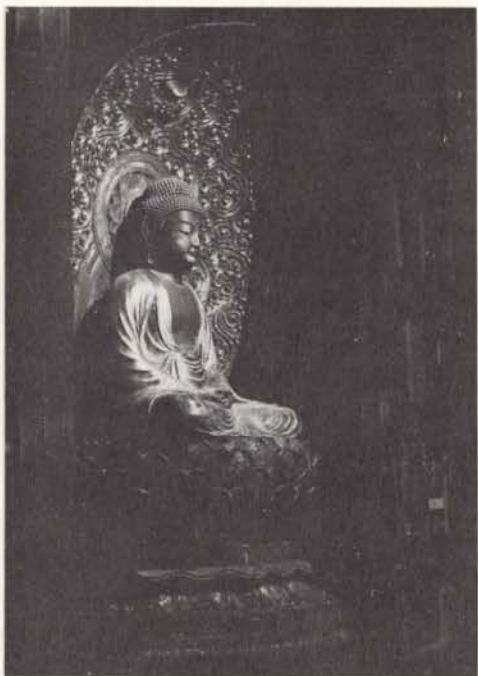
Satsuma incense burner, 36 inches high and elaborately decorated, nineteenth century, a gift to the Society. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

At the time the shelving was installed on the balcony of our main reading room, a niche was provided on the south wall for an appropriate work of art. It came to my attention that a remarkably fine Buddhist icon was available to us. It had already been consecrated, but circumstances had prevented its installation. It fitted perfectly into the allotted space and its peaceful expression is suitable to quiet scholarship. The hand posture is usually associated with the metaphysical Buddha Amida, but at the present time it is also accepted for images of the historical Buddha, Gautama. There is an elaborate base with a symbolic lotus upon which the figure is seated, and behind is an intricately decorated nimbus of swirling clouds. The statue is wood covered with gold leaf. It is dated in the Tokugawa Period, probably late seventeenth century.



A Moslem cope worn by pilgrims. An exceptionally fine example of calligraphy and varicolored illumination.

At the entrance to the library extension are two outstanding examples of Cambodian stone sculptures. On the viewer's right is a bust of the young Buddha carved in a light grayish tan sandstone, measuring in height 20 inches. The head is aristocratic, sensitive, and almost entirely lacking the Mongolian influence which distinguishes many of the Khmer sculpturing. The eyes are open showing the pupils—a most unusual detail—and the full lips curve upward in a benign smile. The hair is formally braided and is surmounted with a quatrefoil topknot. There appears to be an ornamented band supporting this chignon. The figure has been repaired at the neck and the right shoulder, and the lower lobe of the right ear is broken away. The shoulders are beautifully modeled and the composite effect is one of appealing simplicity and dignity. Provenance: Yamanaka and Company and exhibited by them in their stu-



In a niche on the south wall of the balcony of the library is a fine Japanese wood carving of the metaphysical Buddha, Amida. This lovely gilded image is approximately 4½ feet in height.

dio in New York during February, 1926. In the catalog of their exhibition, it is stated that the work was executed between the tenth and twelfth centuries. This is an exceptional example of Khmer Buddhist sculpturing.

The stone head of a deity at the viewer's left is 16 inches high and belongs to the Cambodian Khmer culture. It was fashioned in the twelfth or thirteenth century. This example combines Buddhistic and Brahmanic characteristics with Brahmanic elements predominating. The head is surrounded by an incised diadem above which rises the headdress in a cylindrical pattern. The front of the chignon



The Khmer statue at the entrance to the library extension represents the young Buddha and was formerly in the collection of Yamanaka and Company..



A stone head of a deity, probably Shiva, with cylindrical head-dress, snake motif in center, surrounded by vertical grain bands, topped by rosette. Cambodian Khmer, twelfth to thirteenth century A.D. Formerly in the Yamanaka collection.

is ornamented with the conventional form of a serpent, and this symbol suggests that Shiva may be intended even though the third eye is lacking. The large ear lobes are called "the long ears of wisdom," but were probably the result of the wearing of heavy pendant earrings. The head is probably from the area of Angkor Wat and is in exceptionally fine condition. Provenance: Yamanaka and Company.

In the library extension there are three interesting and unusual examples of Oriental bronze work. Eastern peoples always do things a little differently and their more important bells have no clappers, but are struck on the outer rim with a mallet. Very large ones like that formerly in the Tennoji at Osaka, Japan, which weighed 156 tons, were struck by a horizontal wooden beam pulled by ropes in the bell tower. Some time ago, we received a gift of a 22½ inch Japanese bell of classical type and with a splendid tone. By striking different areas of the bell, a variety of tones can be produced. Tuning is done largely by adding or subtracting projections on the outside of the bell. It is an antique and most appropriate to a collection of religious symbols.

The massive Chinese bronze urn was a gift to the Society, and is attractively decorated. On the shoulder are three recumbant goats and incised bosses. The lower part has an intricate incised Chinese design in classical style. The bronze is of good quality, but there is no inscription and the urn is probably a product of the Ching Dynasty based upon earlier artistic patterns.

The third bronze in the library extension is a figure of the Buddha, the robes of which are adorned with small images of the Buddhist arhats. The total number required by the tradition is 500, but on this casting the complete



The seated figure of the Buddha in the library annex was probably made in the early years of the Ming Dynasty, but the elaborate pedestal was commissioned by the last empress dowager of China.

number is not present. The image has the face and neck inlaid in lacquer which assists in dating the antiquity of the figure. Although traditionally believed to be very old, the casting was probably made in the early years of the Ming Dynasty, fourteenth to fifteenth century A.D. The elaborately carved wooden pedestal is of recent date and was made for the image when it became an imperial treasure. For some years this Buddha was in the summer palace of the last empress dowager of China. In estimating the importance of these Buddhistic figures the expression of the face is the first consideration. In this example, the countenance is particularly pleasing.

The handsome nineteenth century Chinese carved rosewood desk is a recent gift to the Society. It has an intricate galleried back, numerous decorated compartments, and intricately concealed carved drawers. The pattern of the elaborate top follows the temple motif of the English market. The overall height is 63 inches. With it is an early nineteenth century chair with straight back, heavily carved skirt, and fan back—all in deep relief.

The Upper Lecture Room

Our upstairs lecture room has a number of significant works of art. It is dominated by a large Japanese painting, the magnificent Monju mandara, formerly in the Yamanaka collection. Monju (Manjusri) is the Bodhisattva of Wisdom in the esoteric system. He is here depicted as enthroned in the region of universal mind, seated upon a lion and attended by his reflex forms. Around him are the guardian kings—evangelists of the doctrine and protectors of the faith. Outside are the phantom forms of mental er-



The Monju mandara, formerly in the Yamanaka collection, is dated in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century and is of exceptional size and quality. It was recently exhibited in the Los Angeles County Museum.

ror and the scene is framed by what is called the Holy Enclosure, the place of initiation with gates at the four cardinal angles. The painting was made in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century.

The cases immediately adjacent to the mandara include a number of interesting items. There are two very old and unusual Tibetan paintings of sages, also two portable shrines of Japanese origin of the Tokugawa Period. The camel belongs to the Tang Dynasty of China and is a fine example of early glazes. It was reproduced many years ago in the dominant art publication of its time, *The International Studio*. The clay horse is also old and was probably made in the Sung Dynasty. The fine marble head has been a conversation piece for a number of years. It is of Buddhist origin, probably from the Indochinese area, and may date from the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

In the glass case on the east wall is a large and important Japanese shrine of the early Edo Period. A beautifully carved figure of the Bodhisattva Kannon stands upon a lotus of many petals which is supported on a design of clouds decorated with stars. This shrine belongs to the School of the Pure Land which venerates the Buddha Amitabha. The aureole behind the Kannon is ornamented with angelic figures carrying musical instruments. They represent the sweet music of the doctrine. The doors of the shrine are ornamented with figures of arhats in various poses. The workmanship of these paintings has been influenced by the same Korean artists who were transported to Japan by Hideyoshi and were responsible for the designs on the Satsuma ceramics.

Also in the upstairs lecture room are two large vases with lightly traced designs of Buddhist saints. They were also produced by the Kinkozan kilns, and are dated 1927.



In the glass case on the east wall is a shrine of the Bodhisattva Kannon belonging to the early Tokugawa Period. The insides of the doors contain elaborate paintings of Buddhist arhats and sages. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

They were exhibited at the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939 and received a special award. The seated Buddhist image with a halo of extended rays is of the Tokugawa Period (middle eighteenth century). The figure of a seated arhat (Buddhist saint) is probably intended to represent Pindola-bharadvaja, one of the sixteen arhats and disciples of Buddha. Once Buddha ordered him to stay away from the temple because he performed miracles for selfish purposes. Because he is not a deity, he is not seated on a lotus flower. The figure is made of hollow lacquer reinforced with wood. Since he was later pardoned, some monasteries place his statue in the dining hall. As time passed, people came to believe that their own ailments could be cured by rubbing the corresponding part of his body with their fingertips. Also since many worshipers feel sorry for him, they often pat him affectionately before entering the temple.

Among other objects worthy of special attention in the lecture room is a temple urn for the ashes of a Buddhist priest. It is of unusually fine proportions and design, and carved from solid stone. It is incised on the four sides with Chinese characters, one of which reads "The White Cloud Monastery on the Dragon-Fountain Mountain." There are other inscriptions including the following: "On the seventh day of the ninth month in the eighth year of Kai Huang (588 A.D.) of the Great Sui Dynasty. . . ." The fine quality and importance of this urn would indicate that it was intended for the ashes of an abbot or high religious dignitary.

On the wall above the steps leading from the lecture room to the balcony of the library is a portrait of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky painted by the court artist of the king of Serbia. This was presented to the Society by our good friend, Madame Natasha Rambova.



A temple urn for the ashes of a Buddhist priest. At the top of the back of the urn is an inscription which would indicate that the urn was prepared for a great teacher. This work was previously in the collection of William Edward Colby.

The large display case on the north wall contains a variety of unusual items including several examples of Tanagra figurines; pottery from Greece, Italy, and Crete; a fine Babylonian cone; and Egyptian figures and fragments. Above the cabinet is the upper section of a canopy carved in wood, probably in Spain in the late eighteenth century. It belonged in the palace occupied by Augustin de Iturbide, who was crowned (or more literally, crowned himself) Augustin I, Emperor of Mexico. He reigned for

less than a year, abdicated, and in 1824 was executed. The canopy originally extended to the floor, but only the upper section has survived. It is of excellent workmanship with intricate inlays. For some time this canopy was in a church and, when the edifice fell into disuse, it passed to private collections.

To the right of the display case is a painting by Nagesh Yawalkar entitled *Homage Paying to Buddha after His Illumination*. The luminous figure of the Buddha is in the mudra of turning the wheel of the law. He is seated on a kind of pedestal under the bodhi tree and is receiving homage from an arhat and Sujata, a feminine disciple. The painting was presented to our Society as a deed of merit by the artist.

Auditorium

On the west wall of the lobby of the auditorium is an oil portrait painted in 1927 by the eminent English artist Mr. E. Hodgson Smart. I was twenty-six years old, and posing for it was an interminable experience as the artist insisted that my expression changed at every sitting. Mr. Smart specialized in portraiture and was commissioned to paint King Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, and the Duke of Northumberland. Later, he did three portraits each of Marshal Foch, General Pershing, and President Harding. Mr. Smart insisted that painting me was one of the most challenging commissions of his artistic career.

The Chinese pewter incense burner is of heroic size, standing approximately 8 feet. It is a double burner, the smaller one at the top serving as a finial. It was brought from a Chinese temple in Canton before the communist



The large display case on the north wall is largely devoted to a collection of Grecian, Cretan, and Egyptian material. Most of it was a gift to the Society by Mr. Henry Steigner, a personal friend of many years standing. Among the interesting items are several Tanagra figurines, Etruscan vases, Babylonian cones and cylinders, and pottery of the first and second millennium B.C. Photo courtesy of Theodora Litsios.

revolution. The sides of the burner have miniature scenes set into them. The weight of the complete ensemble could not be supported by the pewter legs and the piece had to be internally reinforced. It was presented to the Society by Mr. Karl J. Tashjian as a memorial to his brother. It is probably nineteenth century.

The two large standing vases are remarkably fine examples of Kyoto Satsuma ceramics. They are beautifully



On the west wall of the lobby of the auditorium is a portrait of Manly P. Hall painted by Mr. E. Hodgson Smart.

ornamented in gold and multicolors. These vases are a gift of a devoted friend of PRS.

Careful searching in the auditorium lobby may reveal a plaque presented to me in a Wednesday morning press conference at Los Angeles City Hall on August 5, 1970. It is a rather neat tablet with a handsome brass representation of the seal of the City of Los Angeles, below which is a brass tablet with the inscription, "To Manly P. Hall, in recognition of fifty years of distinguished service as Lecturer, Author, and Teacher.—Sam Yorty, Mayor." Mr. Yorty has been interested in the work of PRS for many years.



Chinese pewter incense burner presented by Mr. Karl J. Tashjian as a memorial to his brother.

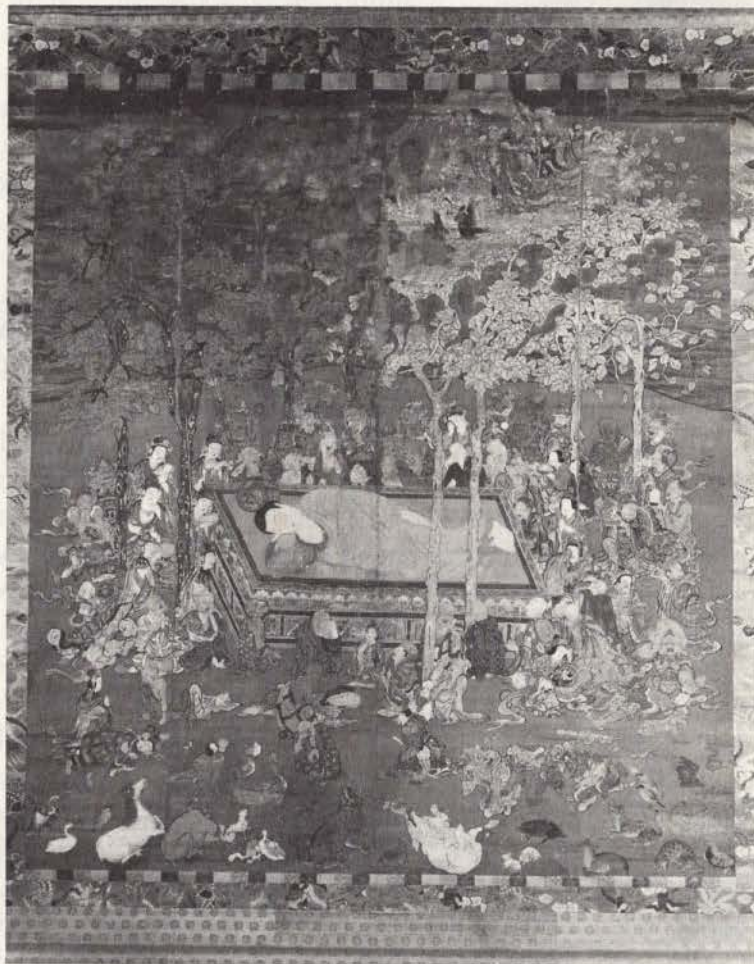
There are several items of interest in our auditorium. On the north wall are the three original oil paintings by Mihran K. Seralian, an Armenian artist of distinction. Full color reproductions of these paintings are available for interested persons. On the south wall is a beautiful Tibetan painting of the Tsong Ka-pa hierarchy. The deities are arranged on a symbolic world tree with the great priest, Tsong Ka-pa at the top. Celestial beings are arriving on clouds at the sides, and the entire painting has a handsome brocaded border. The work is modern and executed by Tibetan Lamaist monks who took refuge in Nepal to escape the Chinese-Communist invasion of their country. The symbolism is accurate and the painting is excellent for research purposes.



A detail from the Tsong Ka-pa hierarchy, an unusually handsome painting executed by Tibetan artists now working in Nepal.

Two items worth attention are on the east wall of the auditorium. One is a valuable carpet about which we have very little information. It shows strong Chinese influence and seems to represent a combination of Buddhist and Taoist symbols. In the center is the world mountain as traditionally depicted. In a kind of pagoda is a seated figure and in the foreground below is a tank or sacred pool, often found in representations of the Western Paradise. Those figures in the foreground carry the attributes of the Eight Taoist Immortals, mysterious magician sages who had discovered the elixir of eternal life. There are other symbols along the borders and the complete design is reminiscent of the insignias of rank in Chinese heraldry. The carpet is obviously hand-woven and shows considerable wear.

The other is a fine early Japanese painting of the Parinirvana of Buddha. When the Buddha was over eighty years old, he realized that he would soon depart from mortal existence. Accompanied by Ananda and an assembly of monks, he came to rest in the sal-tree grove at Kusinagara. On this occasion many animals gathered also to pay homage to the Enlightened One. Among the animals it will be noted that those associated with the twelve zodiacal signs are included. Celestial beings attended the wonderful event. Those less enlightened are weeping, but those most advanced are in quiet postures of meditation. At the upper right of the painting, Mahamaya, the Mother of Buddha, with a retinue of celestial beings descends to pay homage. After the remains of the Buddha were placed in a coffin before the ceremony of cremation, Mahamaya stood weeping beside the casket. In her honor it was opened and immediately Buddha rose with his hands joined in prayer to honor his mother. The painting is in colors and gold on silk, early seventeenth century.



In the auditorium there is also a painting of the Parinirvana of Buddha. This is probably eighteenth century and was also formerly in the Colby collection.

Exhibits

There have been numerous public exhibitions of the Society's rare books and special collections of art. To the University of Southern California went a display of Oriental art; to Pasadena City College, early Bible leaves and manuscripts. Archaeological works have been exhibited at Fuller Theological Seminary. There was also an exhibit of folk art in the Tower Room of the Los Angeles City Hall. Robinson's Department Store, one of the largest in California, displayed nearly two hundred rare books and original manuscripts from the Society under the title "Rare and Original Writings Covering 4000 Years." During the seven weeks of this display, thousands of people saw and appreciated the exhibit.

We were well represented in the display titled "The Cross and the Sword" held in the Fine Arts Gallery in San Diego in 1976. In 1977-78 a group of our religious artifacts and an extensive collection of surimono and other Japanese wood-block prints were featured in the Pacificulture-Asia Museum, Pasadena, California, under the title "One Thousand Years of Japanese Wood-block Prints." Early in 1982 the Society contributed to an exhibition of carved and painted holy images dating from 1700 to the present time in the Art Gallery of Loyola Marymount University. There have been many other occasions in which we have loaned material to educational organizations.

There are always informal exhibits in our library and these have attracted considerable public attention and are frequently listed in the press. Many of our collections can only be shown upon request or on the occasion of a special library exhibit. Our Japanese and Chinese scroll paintings and religious mandalas include many rare and unique



Exhibit of Japanese folk art paintings in the reading room of the PRS Library.

items. "The History of the Printed Word" features examples going back to the eighth century, and always attracts favorable attention. Groups of rare books reveal many aspects of the written word and cover nearly four thousand years of history, philosophy, religion, and science. At the Christmas season religious postage stamps of many nations prove beyond question that the holy season is respected by Christian and non-Christian nations alike.

The library of the Society can provide important research material on almost every subject relating to man's heritage of learning. The emphasis has always been upon those idealistic systems of knowledge which have helped to build a better world. We feel that at this time especially all sincere persons should be encouraged to have available to them the noblest thoughts of humanity.