

honoring obligations. That of Mercury: "Faithfulness to self."³ On the 8th cusp of attitude toward debts: "Thoroughness."⁴ The M.C.: "Spiritualized self-discipline."⁵ Is there a nobler talent than that?

At the chart's top we find Venus and Uranus in Aquarius, the latter the only orb in its own sign and dominating the map, all the more because Aquarius also is on the M.C., the Ascendant's decan, and that of the vital 6th cusp. It is freedom's sign, and Finland's people have striven for freedom even when under Swedish and Russian control, able to achieve a higher degree of autonomy than other subject people.

Aquarius is also the sign of progressiveness, which most aptly describes these people. During the dark Middle Ages, they were said to be Europe's most literate people. Why? They required literacy as a requisite for a marriage license!

When Finland achieved independence in 1917, its struggle for freedom was not over. Its "birth" had occurred four weeks after that of its neighbor to the east, the Soviet Union. Thus the four outermost planets, malefics, of the two nations were closely conjunct, making for future friction. In 1939, the Soviet Union had reason to fear the country then most strongly dominating Europe, Nazi Germany. So, the Soviet Union requested parts of Finland in order to provide it with a wide protective buffer in the Karelian Isthmus immediately to the west of its second biggest city, then called Leningrad and presently once more Petrograd, or St. Petersburg. The liberty-loving Finns refused, even though they were offered in return a much bigger slice of land in the far less strategic north.

On November 30, 1939, the Soviets attacked. On that day the strongest transit over Finland's map was Pluto over its I.C.: Truly, being attacked by a nation with 45 times as many people as itself was for Finland a traumatic shaking of the foundations. But also that day, Mercury was retrograde, not a good time to launch a war. The world watched with awe and admiration as Finland's defense line held almost to the end; at times the Finns actually advanced! But fearing that huge casualties would spell eventual genocide, the Finns reluctantly made "peace" on March 12, 1940. Again Mercury was retrograde! When documents

are signed under this configuration, this tends to produce a change of mind on the part of at least one of signatories.

It did so with the Finns, who had lost territory. As World War II progressed, Hitler seized Denmark, Norway, France, Yugoslavia, Greece; he seemed invincible. So when he turned his armed might against the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the Finns felt by joining him they might win back what they had lost 15 and 1/3 months before.⁶

Again Mercury was retrograde! The reader may ask, was not Hitler said to have had an astrologer and so should have known better than to attack under Mercury retrograde? Indeed, at one time he had had as many as five, none of them knowing about the other four. Hitler was suspicious of a plot, so he kept them separated on purpose. But they were in jail in June 1941, because the month before, when his deputy Rudolf Hess had taken a plane to Scotland, this embarrassed him greatly and he suspected the astrologers were responsible, which was not the case. This was Hitler's first military move without astrological advice; it was the one that sealed his fate!

Also that of his "allies." Accordingly, on September 19, 1944, the Soviets forced an extremely harsh treaty on the defeated Finns. Finland had to cede more land than it did in 1940; Mercury was direct this time, so the 1944 Russo-Finnish border is still in effect. And again after World War II the U.S. extended financial aid to the Finns; again they paid it all despite huge reparations forced to pay the Russians.

Wouldn't our world be a better place if there were more individuals and nations as faithful as the Finns in meeting their obligations? □

—A probationer

1 *The Sabian Symbols*, Marc Edmund Jones, page 272.

2 *Op. cit.*, page 312.

3 *The Astrology of Personality*, Dane Rudhyar, page 370.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Marc Edmund Jones, *op. cit.*, page 273.

6 This should not be taken to mean that Finland embraced Hitler's brand of National Socialism; it only intended to use what it thought was a good opportunity to regain lost territory. A somewhat similar thing occurred during the birth of America. When the colonists launched their effort to free themselves from British rule in 1776, they eventually allied themselves with France, Spain and Morocco—all extremely autocratic regimes, the very opposite of what the colonists espoused. But they willingly accepted help from whomever offered it.