

# humanitas



Vol. III

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# HVMANITAS

VOLUME III



**COIMBRA**

MCML - MCMLI

## Res arcanae

### SECRETS !

*A secret is only a secret when nobody else knows it.*

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*When such a secret is passed to another person, the original holder's control over it is lost and he can no longer be sure that it will not go further.*

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*A secret loses security every time it is passed on. Each recipient will, in the nature of things, treat it with less respect than the previous holder.* ^

*Tell no one a secret that he need not know: ask no one for a secret that you know you do not need.*

\*

*To tell a secret in strict confidence is to betray a confidence and spoil a secret.* #

*If you entertain your guests with news they should not know, don't expect them to think more highly of you for doing so.* \*

*Even though your sin may not find you out, the ghost of a material secret betrayed may haunt you for life.*

(Notice posted in Civil Service departments, 1940.)

*Parce tegenda loqui; nam sic modo tecta manebunt,  
si nemo omnino conscius alter erit.  
Quicquid prodideris tua signa relinquet, ut erro;  
ne serpat, timor est, proditiōnis opus.*

Note on line 2 : — For the use of the -o- sound in admonition cf. Horace, *Satires* 2. 3. 179-80: *Praeterea ne uos titillet gloria, iure / iurando obstrin-  
gam ambo...* So too in «nagging», cf. Caecilius ap. Aul. Gell. 2. 23. 10: *ita plorando, orando, instando atque obiurgando me obtudit.*

*It uulgata fides dominosque adquiret eundo,  
quoque minus tua fit, fit quoque tuta minus;  
nam quanto accipiunt plures traduntque uicissim,  
nempe minor tanto tradere cuique pudor.  
Nil igitur narres nisi cui sit scire necessum,  
neCy nisi lege pari, narret ut ille petas.  
«Res», ais, «arcana est: tibi sit commissa fideli».  
At perit arcanum, prodis et ipse fidem.  
Nec coram hospitibus res effutisse tacendas  
credideris laudes accumulare tuas.  
Forsitan ore nocens fueris impune; sed ultrix  
laesa diu plectet te, memor umbra, Fides.*

T. F. HIGHAM

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