

AN ESOTERIC  
COSMOLOGY

RUDOLF STEINER

# AN ESOTERIC COSMOLOGY

by Rudolf Steiner

Eighteen Lectures delivered in Paris, France  
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(A resume, as reported and transmuted from the  
German into French by Edouard Schuré who  
attended the lectures)

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## PREFATORY NOTE

When these lectures were first translated into English and published in *ANTHROPOSOPHY: A Quarterly Review of Spiritual Science* in 1929, lecture 16 “Earthquakes, Volcanoes, and the Will of Man” was not published. Rene Querido translated this 16th lecture into English from the French and kindly furnished the diagram following lecture 16 which shows the interior of the Earth. Rene Querido also wrote the preface for this reprint edition.

## PREFACE

The present cycle of lectures was given in 1906 in Paris and the report of it by Edouard Schuré now published in English in its entirety for the first time marks the beginning of a new phase in the life of Rudolf Steiner. Accompanied by Marie von Sievers (later Marie Steiner), Rudolf Steiner had been invited, by the famous French author and dramatist Edouard Schuré, to address a group consisting mainly of Russians in a small villa on the outskirts of Paris. Among them were writers of note such as Dimitri Merejkowski, his wife Zinaida Hippus, a poetess in her own right, and S. Minski. Originally it had been planned that the course be held on Russian soil but the revolution of 1905 had made that impossible.

At this time Edouard Schuré (1841–1929), a man of 65, stood at the height of his career. He had

written more than a dozen major works including *The Great Initiates* (1889), *A History of the German Lied*, *A Collection of Celtic Legends*, two important works on Richard Wagner, and a number of dramas striving to recapture the lost ritualistic element of the ancient mysteries on the stage. He felt powerfully drawn not only to Richard Wagner the composer, but also to the man. He had met the maestro on three occasions and was present in Munich at the dramatic opening of *Tristan and Isolde*.

Schuré's interest in the occult was profound. He had written *The Great Initiates* (1889) as a result of his deep connection over a period of many years with Margherita Albana-Mignaty, who continued to inspire him even after her death. Rudolf Steiner often referred to the importance of this book and although it was written ten years before the end of Kali-Yuga (the Age of Darkness), he spoke of this work as a herald of the new Age of Light, when human beings would again seek for their spiritual connection with the great initiates of the past. For some time before

their first meeting in Paris, Marie von Sievers and Schuré had corresponded. An unusual set of circumstances led to the fact that indirectly it was Schuré who had brought about the meeting between Marie von Sievers and Rudolf Steiner which was to prove so fruitful for the growth of the Anthroposophical movement. Unable to reply to a specific question related to the occult, Schuré advised the young Marie von Sievers to turn to Rudolf Steiner in Berlin. A little later Marie von Sievers wrote so enthusiastically to Schuré (in excellent French) of her meeting that he, too, wished to become acquainted with Steiner personally. This was to happen six years later in Paris on the occasion of these lectures. The recognition must have been immediate. Schuré, twenty years Steiner's senior, never tired of recounting this significant meeting: for the first time, he felt himself to be in the presence of an initiate. "Here is a genuine Master who will play a crucial part in your life." Schuré recognized Steiner as one who stood fully in the world of today and yet could also behold in clear consciousness the boundless vistas of the



supersensible. A warm friendship quickly developed between the two men: vacations spent together in Barr (1906–1907) in Schuré's summer house in the Alsace; long walks over the Odilienberg, and an active correspondence (mostly on the part of Marie Steiner, who translated several of Schuré's dramas into German). The substance of a number of intimate conversations has been recorded by Rudolf Steiner in the "Document of Barr." [The "Document of Barr," dated Sept. 9, 1907 and printed in English translation in the *Golden Blade*, 1966.] In 1907 Schuré's *Sacred Drama of Eleusis* was produced under the direction of Rudolf Steiner at the great Munich Congress of the Theosophical Society. It was on this occasion that Rudolf Steiner said that from this time on, art and occultism should always remain connected. In 1909 the first performance of Schuré's drama, *The Children of Lucifer*, was given using a German translation of the French text by Marie Steiner. The deeper connection now becomes obvious: Schuré the poet, a Celtic-Greek soul, devoted to the renewal of the ancient mysteries, and one of the first Frenchmen to

recognize Richard Wagner's impulse towards the “Gesamtkunstwerk” (a total ritualistic experience embracing all the art forms), now whole-heartedly supported Rudolf Steiner in the great Munich endeavors (1907–1913). This period saw the birth of the mystery dramas and the first performances of Eurythmy. It was also in Munich that plans had been made for the building of the First Goetheanum (the House of The Word) which was later erected on the Dornach hill near Basel in Switzerland.

The war years (1914–1918) brought an unfortunate clouding over of their friendship due to Schuré's stubborn chauvinism which nevertheless did not interfere with his continued championing of Richard Wagner. But with Rudolf Steiner, he broke his connection. A few years after the war the friendship was renewed and it must have been an amazing sight to have seen the old, still robust, white-haired Schuré in animated conversation with Steiner as they walked up and down on the terrace of the First Goetheanum in Dornach. Years later, Schuré would still speak of

his profound indebtedness to Rudolf Steiner both for the personal help he had received from him and for his having brought the new mysteries clearly to expression in an age of materialism.

These lectures were given on the fringe of the International Theosophical Congress held in Paris and attended by delegates from many countries. Rudolf Steiner himself attached a distinct importance to this course in Paris where he formulated a basic view of Esoteric Christianity which a few years later was to separate him radically from the Theosophical Society. In the 37th chapter of *Rudolf Steiner, The Story of My Life* [Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co., London and New York, 1928.] (written in 1924–25 shortly before his death) we find the following passage:

In the Paris cycle of lectures I brought forward a perception which had required a long process of “ripening” in my mind. After I had explained how the members of the human being — physical body; etheric body, as mediator of the phenomena of life; and the “bearer of the ego” — are in general related to one another, I imparted the fact

that the etheric body of a man is female, and the etheric body of a woman is male. Through this a light was cast within the Anthroposophical Society upon one of the basic questions of existence which just at that time had been much discussed. One need only remember the book of the unfortunate Weininger, "Geschlecht und Charakter," (Sex and Character), and the contemporary poetry.

But the question was carried into the depths of the being of man. In his physical body man is bound up with the cosmos quite otherwise than in his etheric body. Through his physical body man stands within the forces of the earth; through his etheric body within the forces of the outer cosmos. The male and female elements were carried into connection with the mysteries of the cosmos.

This knowledge was something belonging to the most profoundly moving inner experiences of my soul; for I felt ever anew how one must approach a spiritual perception by patient waiting and how, when one has experienced the "ripeness of consciousness," one must lay hold by means of ideas in order to place the perception within the

sphere of human knowledge.

It is perhaps not without significance that it was in Paris, where Thomas Aquinas had elaborated some seven centuries earlier his Christ-oriented Scholasticism, that Rudolf Steiner gave his first course on an Esoteric Christian Cosmology appropriate to the dawn of the new Age of Light. Schuré's notes in French of the 18 lectures, published in French in 1928, constitute the only record of this course. They now appear for the first time in English translation in their entirety in book form, readily available to the modern student of the Science of the Spirit.

R. M. Querido

## FOREWORD

In the month of May, 1906, Rudolf Steiner came to Paris with a number of students to give a series of private lectures to a small circle of friends. I myself had never seen him and did not then even know of his existence, but I had entered into correspondence on the subject of one of my dramas (*Les Enfants de Lucifer*) with his friend Mademoiselle von Sivers, who later on became his wife and his most understanding colleague. It was she who brought her teacher to my house one happy morning.

I shall never forget the extraordinary impression made upon me by this man when he entered the room. As I looked at that thin, powerful face, at the black mysterious eyes flashing light as if from unfathomable depths, it was borne in upon me that for the first time in my life I was face to face with

one of those supreme seers who have direct vision of the great Beyond. Intuitively and poetically, I had described such seers in *The Great Initiates*, but I had never hoped to meet one in this world. The impression was instantaneous, irresistible — of the unexpected as well as of the already known. Even before he opened his lips, an inner voice said to me: Here is a true master, one who will play an all-important part in your life.

Our subsequent relations were to prove that this first impression was not an illusion. The programme of the daily lectures, which was told me in advance by the speaker, aroused my keenest interest. The lectures were to cover the whole field of his philosophy although it was only possible to develop certain outstanding points. One would have said that the teacher's aim was to give a vista of the general plan from its own heights. His fervent, convincing eloquence, irradiated by invariable clarity of thought, struck me at once as possessing two outstanding and unusual qualities. First, its artistic power, — When Rudolf Steiner spoke of the phenomena and beings of the

invisible world he seemed to be living in his own home. With striking details and in familiar terms he told of events in these unknown realms just as if he were speaking of the most ordinary things. He did not describe, he actually *saw* and made others see the objects, scenes and cosmic vistas in clear-cut reality. Listening to him, one could not doubt the power of his astral vision; it was as limpid as physical vision, only much more penetrating. Again, another characteristic, no less remarkable, — This philosopher-mystic, this thinker-seer related all experiences of soul to the immutable laws of physical Nature. These laws were used to explain and classify the super-physical phenomena which, to begin with, appear before the seer in overwhelming variety and almost bewildering abundance. Then, by a wonderful counterstroke, these subtle, fluidic phenomena, proceeding from cosmic Powers grouped in a mighty hierarchy, began to illumine the edifice of material Nature. The diverse parts of Nature were linked together, related to these cosmic Powers from the heights to the depths, from the depths to the heights, and a vista of the



mighty architecture of the universe opened up from the inner world where the visible is ever coming to birth from the womb of the invisible.

I took no notes of the first lecture, but it made such a vivid impression upon me that when I reached home I felt impelled to write it down without forgetting a single link in the chain of these illuminating thoughts. I had absorbed the lecture so completely that I found no difficulty at all. By a process of involuntary and instantaneous transmutation, the German words, which had ingrained themselves in my memory, changed into French. The same thing, repeated after each of the eighteen lectures, gradually grew into a dossier which I keep as a rich and rare store of treasure. These lectures, never having been steno-graphed or revised by Rudolf Steiner, do not exist in the archives of his public lectures or in the collection of lectures duplicated for members of the Anthroposophical Society. They are, therefore, entirely unedited. A number of members of the French Group of the Society have expressed the desire to publish them in book form and

Mademoiselle Rihouet, the editor of *La Science Spirituelle*, has kindly offered the pages of this magazine. I respond all the more readily to this desire because these priceless lectures mark a significant phase of Rudolf Steiner's thought — that of the spontaneous burst of his genius and its first crystallisation. And, furthermore, it gives me joy to pay this new tribute to the teacher to whom I owe one of the great revelations of my life.

### ***1. The Origin of Esoteric Christianity***

These lectures give a kind of summary of what Rudolf Steiner calls *Anthroposophy*. In this Foreword I do not pretend to give anything like a resume of this vast and all-embracing philosophy. Its principles are contained in a theogony, cosmogony and psychology complete in themselves. It lays down the basis of a moral philosophy, an art of education, a science of aesthetics. The teaching of this thinker-seer extends into all and every domain of life. His sweeping vision embraces the whole history of mankind and imbues modern science with spiritual conceptions without by one hair's breadth

distorting it from its exactitude and pristine clarity. My only aim here is to draw my reader's attention to the most strikingly new chapters, for they lead us again to the very roots of this sublime thought.

At the time when he was delivering these lectures, Rudolf Steiner was still the General Secretary for Germany of the Theosophical Society, which has its Headquarters at Madras. The Theosophical Society, originally founded by H. P. Blavatsky, has as its present President, Mrs. Annie Besant. In spite of many gaps and ultimate digressions, this theoretical system of oriental thought which originated in India and derived its name *Theosophy* from Alexandrian tradition, served to recall to the uninitiated West, the two fundamental tenets of all esoteric tradition: (1) The plurality of the progressive lives of the human soul under the law of karma, and (2) The ascending evolution of man under the influence of spiritual Powers.

At the time when Rudolf Steiner entered the Theosophical Society — which he had chosen as his first field of action — he was already fully master of the doctrine he owed to his own

Initiation. These lectures, given in the year 1906, are proof of this.

The essential difference between Indian Theosophy and Anthroposophy lies in the supreme rôle attributed by Anthroposophy to the Christ in human evolution and also in its connection with Rosicrucian tradition. This appears clearly in the first two lectures, entitled: *The Birth of the Human Intellect* and *The Mission of Manicheism*. More clearly than any other occultist, Rudolf Steiner has seen the profound change which has come about in the course of ages in man's constitution of body and soul and in his way of perceiving truth. In ancient, pre-Christian times, man was universally endowed with a faculty of atavistic clairvoyance. In the Atlantean period, he lived more in the 'world beyond' than in this world. Clairvoyance was his outstanding faculty and his chief mode of cognition, but his perception of higher worlds was confused and chaotic. This faculty weakened and gradually faded away in the course of subsequent evolution; reason and the mere *observation* of Nature came to the fore. The Yoga of the Indian

Rishis — the source of Aryan mythology and religion — represents an effective endeavour to regain the lost power of clairvoyance and at the same time to regulate it according to cosmic laws. But shortly before the coming of Christ, humanity had reached the last stage of descent into matter and passed through a perilous crisis. The passions emanating from the animal stage, beyond which he had now passed, threatened to engulf man. Civilisation itself was in peril. The human Psyche — having freed herself from primitive darkness by dint of long struggle — threatened to be lost in the decadence of Greece and the orgies of Rome.

## ***2. Jesus the Christ as the Axis of Human Evolution. The Rosicrucian Initiation***

This lecture deals with the dangers which necessitated the Incarnation of the “Word which was in the Beginning,” the Divine Logos Who became man. The mission of Jesus the Christ had long been foretold in the sanctuaries of India, Persia and Chaldea, proclaimed in the vision of the Risen Osiris and of the “Sun at Midnight” in the crypts of ancient Egypt. The human race had

reached such a point of materialisation that salvation was only made possible by a manifestation of the Divine Spirit on the physical plane. And so the Light which up till then had not descended further than the Moon, this “Light of grace and truth” came down into the darkness of the lower earthly realms, to incarnate in the man Jesus of Nazareth and become the axis of human evolution.

A mighty revolution, a change of incalculable significance took place in the inner planes — one which was destined to transform the whole world. The result was a complete change in the mentality of man, the two poles of which were in a manner reversed. A separation took place between these two outstanding faculties: sensibility and intelligence, intuition and reason. Up to this time, intuitive seership had predominated and reason had played a secondary part; science had remained the docile hand-maiden of religion. Primordial wisdom had been a combination of the two. The conquest and mastery of the material world had now become the goal of humanity. Reason gained

the upper hand and instinctive feeling was henceforward to live its life apart. On the one side there was the triumph of reason in Aristotelian thought; on the other, religious feeling reached its climax in contemplation of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Science and religion became two separate powers and then — shortly afterwards — rivals and mortal enemies. In religion, the Cross of Christ was sufficient for salvation. By contrast, science was not long in proclaiming: that alone has reality which has passed through the sieve of physical observation and of syllogism. Hence the dualism which for two thousand years has divided and rent in twain the consciousness of man. The advantage has been the development — to their extreme points — of the two poles of the soul, the two dominating faculties of intelligence. But in our day, when pure reason has hunted intuition from science and insight from education, our materialistic civilisation has reached such a condition of anarchy that its very existence is threatened.

From the outset, the aim of Christian Esotericism was to heal this dualism, to cultivate ideas capable of reconciling the two enemy-powers of religion and science, of intuition and reason, the combined knowledge and operation of which can alone arrive at truth and ensure the healthy development of mankind.

Esoteric tradition has at all times been characterised by two fundamental principles. First, that of the plurality of progressive existences of the soul and, secondly, a knowledge of the origin of evil and the means whereby man may become its victor. All great teachers of esoteric doctrine have enjoined their pupils to tread two paths of Initiation simultaneously in order the more surely to arrive at truth: the *path of mysticism* or ecstatic contemplation of the spiritual world, and the *path of rationalism*, or the synthetic contemplation of the visible universe in the light of archetypal ideas which proceed from the spiritual hierarchies but are attainable by human intelligence through intuition, even when direct seership is not there. I think that everyone will be deeply interested to



read the notes of Rudolf Steiner's eighth lecture where he describes how the Rosicrucians strove to unite themselves with the Christ by meditation upon the first fourteen verses of the Gospel according to St. John. In successive visions the Rosicrucians lived once again through the seven stages of Calvary from the *scourging* and *crowning with thorns*, the *bearing of the Cross* to the *mystic Death* and *ineffable Resurrection*. Bathed in an ocean of love, they heard the resounding Logos, the “Word which was in the Beginning,” radiating the spiritual Light which pervades the whole universe and is the Creator of souls. The cosmic meaning attached to these stations of the Cross is deeply moving and provocative of thought.

### ***3. The Interior of the Earth and the Problem of Evil***

Instead of lingering upon the Rosicrucian Initiation which reveals the axis of Christianity and carries us into the realms of the world invisible, let me specially call readers' attention to the 16th lecture, the novelty of which is no less

striking. Rudolf Steiner there gives us a striking example of his mode of contemplating visible Nature in order to penetrate to her essential being. It is as though matter became translucent and the hidden Spirit suddenly revealed.

The highly suggestive title of this lecture is *Earthquakes, Volcanoes and the Will of Man*. The special significance is that the main theme is related to the very roots of the nature of man.

The mystery of the interior of the Earth, the basis and stage of human evolution, is one of the numerous problems which materialistic science has never been able to solve. Unceasing research has been of no avail. Many scholars think of the interior of the Earth as an igneous mass (which would be capable of bursting the crust of the Earth); others imagine that it is a compact mass of mineral substance (which explains neither the volcano nor the earthquake). Now the Earth is a living *being* like the planets and suns, endowed with an interior organism indispensable to its functions and its rôle in the Cosmos. Rudolf Steiner sees the constitution of the Earth in the

form of nine layers — or rather nine layers embedded one within the other. The eight interior layers under the crust of the Earth represent, as it were, the physiological organs of our planet from which its life emanates and upon which this life depends. The substance of these eight inner spheres does not resemble the mineral matter of which the outer crust and — in a sense — the skin of the Earth is formed. The elements composing these layers are half-liquid and half-gaseous. The Fire principle, the air-fire, mobile and pregnant with life, reservoir alike of impulses of will and the cause of volcanic eruptions, is only one of the spheres which are embedded one within the other. It is the fourth, counting from the centre, the fifth, counting from the outer mineral crust. The interior fire communicates with the crust along paths which are veritably ‘ventilating tracts’ — hence the volcanic eruptions on the surface of the Earth.

If we cast a momentary glance at this interior constitution of the Earth, one fact immediately strikes us. It comprises the forces which are concentrated in the planet and worked at its

upbuilding, through successive metamorphoses from the nebula of Saturn, through the Old Sun and Old Moon periods on to its present state. These same forces have worked at the structure of man and are more active than ever in the present age. (1) *Egoism and Black Magic* constitute the opaque centre of the Earth, for the reason that egoism, love of self for its own sake — of which black magic is the exaggeration and excess — is indispensable to the development of human individuality. The fatal products of egoism are the hatred and strife represented by the two next layers of (2) *division*, and (3) the *prism*, where individualities multiply and differentiate in order to battle with each other.

This ternary may be said to represent the kernel of the Earth as it existed in the nebula of the Saturn period. This basis is indispensable to the whole of the Earth's subsequent evolution. It is the 'spring-board' from which the individuality can rise to higher worlds, if egoism (the principle of evil) is conquered and transformed by the higher forces proceeding from the Sun and the Firmament —

forces of which Divinity is the wellspring and true human freedom the fashioner. The period when the Earth was still united with the Moon is indicated in the Earth's interior by the existence of three other elementary spheres. (4) The *Fire principle* which lies at the root of impulses of will and is the cause of volcanic eruptions when a path is forged to the mineral crust of the Earth. (5) Above this lies the level of organic *plant-life* and again (6) there is the still higher level of the *vortex of animal forces*, where the ethereal embryos of the living beings destined to crawl, to walk and to fly, germinate and quicken in a laboratory of ceaseless activity.

In this second ternary of forces constituting the interior of the Earth, we have the remains of the period when the Earth was still united with the Moon. In those times, the Earth's surface was a kind of porous substance, the home of hybrid beings, half-vegetable, half-mollusc, with gigantic tentacles, while the germs of terrestrial flora and fauna floated in the semi-liquid, semi-vaporous atmosphere. Wonderful words in the book of Genesis refer to this period: "Darkness was upon

the face of the deep and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters.”

The third ternary of the inner organs of the Earth represents its actual form. The last metamorphosis occurs at the time of the separation of the Moon from the Earth and is indicated by the addition of two new elements which are, as it were, the ‘humanised’ replica of the centre of the Earth: (7) *Consciousness inversed*, where everything changes into its opposite; (8) *Negative life*, or *death*. Every living being descending into this realm must instantly perish. It is the Styx of the Greeks, cursed by the Gods of life and of beauty. (9) Above the sphere of death stretches the *solid mineral* envelope of the Earth, the theatre of humanity.

It must be admitted that this extraordinary description of the interior constitution of our planet cannot be verified by any means of observation adopted by natural science. None but a seer possessed of equal power could contradict or confirm. On the other hand, it is surely impossible to deny that this scheme of the Earth's constitution

opens up amazing vistas of man's whole evolution. The seership itself bears a unique power of persuasion and its truth may in a measure be demonstrated by effects which reveal themselves in man. The parallelism between the cosmic fire and human passions, their close relationship, mutual action and reaction, throw a flood of light on the origin of evil. Many historians have stated that the great crises in history (wars, revolutions, social upheavals) are nearly always accompanied and followed by earthly cataclysms (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions). The passions of men have a magnetic action on the interior fire of the Earth, and this fire, when released from its chains, feeds human passions. Thus fire — which is destined to generate life — begets evil by means of the human will.

And yet the Earth, having as its kernel the egoism that is indispensable to the development of individuality, is nevertheless the solid, immutable base on which the soul can find support in order then to soar to the spiritual worlds which shelter and fashion her by the power of the solar Logos.

Evil becomes a leaven of evolution, finally, however, to be conquered by Good. The man who has won through to freedom holds the balance between destiny and Providence from the moment he can chose between good and evil. His yearning for the Divine begets enthusiasm. By his own efforts he can draw near to the sublime truth reigning in the universe. Thus Satan-Ahriman — the demon of negation and hatred — is laid low by the genius of infinite Love radiating in the Logos, the Christ. And Lucifer, the Spirit of intelligence and of beauty, released from his sojourn in the lower world of matter, is on the point of taking flight to his star. Yet Ahriman, his dire companion, who is held in check by the Christ, strives to break his chains in order that Lucifer's flight may be stayed.

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Anthroposophy is the most potent means in our present epoch to restore the severed harmony between the worlds of matter and of spirit, between science and religion. It is also the agent whereby peace may be established in social



affairs.

In very truth the hour is grave. Mankind has never faced so great a danger. The forces of evil are mobilised; not so those of good. That is proved by the unprecedented ravages of Bolshevism which is the. relentless application of destructive materialism. A mustering of all the spiritual forces at the disposal of humanity will be required to combat this scourge. But a wide and high ideal is necessary. Man would fain know whither his feet are wending in this world and in the world beyond. He needs a sublime goal in the one and the beginnings of actual realisation of the other. “Evil can only be conquered by a high ideal” says Rudolf Steiner. “A man without an ideal is weak and powerless. In the life of man ideals play the part of steam in an engine — they are the driving force.”

The knowledge gained by Rudolf Steiner in the course of his life and during his apostolate of a quarter of a century, is scattered through his writings and numerous lecture-courses, most of which have been reported. The peculiar interest

attaching to the lectures of 1906 is that they reveal the genius of this thinker-seer at the beginning of his career and the zenith of his inspiration, at the very moment when his all-embracing thought was coming, fully armed, into its own. Those who read these notes may catch, here and there, an echo of the power of the master's living words. A striking example of this impressed itself upon me during a lecture he once gave on *Planetary Evolution and the Spiritual Hierarchies*: “The thoughts of the Gods are not as the thoughts of men. The thoughts of men are images the thoughts of the gods are *living beings*.”

Revelations like this flash out into the Infinite. They are an echo from far away of the Word creative invoked by St. John at the beginning of his Gospel. Their vibrations thrill through us like the Sound Primordial whence shines the light — the Sound whose harmonies bring worlds to birth.

EDOUARD SCHURÉ

# I

## THE BIRTH OF THE INTELLECT AND THE MISSION OF CHRISTIANITY

It is only of recent times that the truths of occultism have been the subject of public lectures. Formerly, these truths were only revealed in secret societies, to those who had passed through certain degrees of initiation and had sworn to obey the laws of the Order through the whole of their life. Today, man is entering upon a very critical period. Occult truths are beginning to be disclosed to the public. In a matter of twenty years or so, a certain number of them will already be common knowledge. Why is this? The reason is that humanity is entering upon a new phase which it is the object of this lecture to explain.

In the Middle Ages, occult truths were known in the Rosicrucian Movement. But whenever they leaked out, they were either misunderstood or distorted. In the eighteenth century they entered upon a phase of much diletantism and charlatanry and at the beginning of the nineteenth century they were put entirely in the background by the physical sciences. It is only in our day that they are beginning to re-emerge and in the coming centuries they will play an important part in the development of mankind. In order to understand this, we must glance at the centuries preceding the advent of Christianity and follow the progress that has been made.

It does not require any very profound knowledge to realise the difference between a man of pre-Christian times and a man of today. Although his scientific knowledge was far less, man of olden times had deeper feelings and intuitions. He lived more in the world beyond — which he also perceived — than in the world of sense. There were some who entered into direct and actual communication with the astral and spiritual world.

In the Middle Ages, when earthly existence was by no means comfortable, man still lived with his head in the heavens. True, the mediaeval cities were somewhat primitive, but they were a far truer representation of man's inner world than the cities of today. Not only the cathedrals but the houses and porches with their symbols reminded men of their faith, their inner feelings, their aspirations, and the home of their soul. Today, we have knowledge of many, many things and the relations among human beings have multiplied ad infinitum. But we live in cities that are like deafening factories in awful Babels, with nothing to remind us of our inner world. Our communion with this inner world is not through contemplation but through books. We have passed from intuition into intellectualism.

To find the origin of the stream of intellectualism we must go back further than the Middle Ages. The epoch of the birth of human intellect, the period when this transformation took place, lies about a thousand years before the Christian era. It is the epoch of Thales, Pythagoras, Buddha. Then

for the first time arose philosophy and science, that is to say truth presented to the reason in the form of logic. Before this age, truth presented itself in the form of religion, of revelation received by the teachers and accepted by the masses. In our times, truth passes into the individual intelligence and would fain be proved by argument, would like to have its own wings clipped.

What has happened in the inner nature of man to justify this transition of his consciousness from one plane to another, from the plane of intuition to that of logic? Here we touch upon one of the fundamental laws of history — a law no longer recognised by contemporary thought. It is this: *Humanity evolves in a way which enables the different elements and principles of man's being to unfold and develop in successive stages.* What are these principles?

To begin with, man has a *physical body* in common with the mineral kingdom. The whole mineral world is found again in the chemistry of the body. He has an *etheric body*, which is, properly speaking, the vital principle within him.

He has this etheric body in common with the plants. This principle engenders the process of nutrition and the forces of growth and reproduction. Man has also an *astral body* in which feelings and sentiments, the power of enjoyment and of suffering are enkindled. He has the astral body in common with the animals.

Finally, there is a principle in man which cannot be spoken of as a body. It is his innermost essence, distinguishing him from all other entities, mineral, plant and animal. It is the *self*, the soul, the divine spark. The Hindus spoke of it as *Manas*; The Rosicrucians as the '*Inexpressible*.' A body, in effect, is only part and parcel of another body, but the self, the 'I' of man exists in and by itself alone — "I am I." This principle is addressed by others as 'thou,' or 'you;' it cannot be confused with anything else in the universe. By virtue of this inexpressible, incommunicable self, man rises above all created things of the Earth, above the animals, indeed above all creation. And only through this principle can he commune with the Infinite Self, with God. That is why, at certain

definite times, the officiating hierophant in the ancient Hebrew sanctuaries said to the High Priest: Shem-Ham-Phores, which means: What is his name (the name of God)? He-Vo-He, or — in one word — Jev or Joph, meaning God, Nature, Man; or again, the inexpressible ‘I’ of man which is both human and divine.

These principles of man's being were laid down in remote ages of his vast evolutionary cycle — but they only unfold slowly, one by one.

The special mission of the period which began about a thousand years before the Christian era has been to develop the human Ego in the intellectual sense. But above the intellectual plane there is the plane of Spirit. It is the world of Spirit to which man will attain in the centuries to come, and to which he will be wending his way from now onwards. The germs of this future development have been cast into the world by the Christ and by true Christianity.

Before speaking of this world of Spirit, we must understand one of the forces by means of which



humanity *en masse* passed from the astral to the intellectual plane. It was by virtue of a *new kind of marriage*. In olden times, marriages were made in the bosom of the same tribe or of the same clan — which was only an extension of the family. Sometimes, indeed, brothers and sisters married. Later on, men sought their wives outside the clan, the tribe, the civic community. The beloved became the stranger, the unknown. Love — which in days of yore had been merely a natural and social function — became personal desire, and marriage a matter of free choice. This is indicated in certain Greek myths like that of the rape of Helen and again in the Scandinavian and Germanic myths of Sigurd and Gudrun. Love becomes an adventure, woman a conquest from afar.

This change from patriarchal marriage to free marriage corresponds to the new development of man's intellectual faculties, of the Ego. There is a temporary eclipse of the astral faculties of vision and the power of reading directly in the astral and spiritual world — faculties which are included in

ordinary speech under the name of *inspiration*.

Let us now turn to Christianity. The brotherhood of man and the cult of the One God are certainly features of it but they only represent the external, social aspect, not the inner, spiritual reality. The new, mysterious and transcendental element in Christianity is that it creates divine Love, the power which transforms man from within, the leaven by which the whole world is raised. Christ came to say: "If you leave not mother, wife and your own body, you cannot be my disciple"

That does not imply the cessation of natural links. Love extends beyond the bounds of family to all human beings and is changed into vivifying, creative, transmuting power.

This Love was the fundamental principle of Rosicrucian thought but it was never understood by the outer world. It is destined to change the very essence of all religion, of all cults, of all science.

The progress of humanity is from unconscious spirituality (pre-Christian), through intellectualism (the present age), to *conscious* spirituality, where the astral and intellectual faculties unite once more and become dynamic through the power of the Spirit of Love, divine and human. In this sense, Theology will tend to become Theosophy.

What, in effect, is Theology? A knowledge of God imposed from without under the form of dogma, as a kind of supernatural logic. And what is Theosophy? A knowledge of God which blossoms like a flower in the depths of the individual soul. God, having vanished from the world, is reborn in the depths of the human heart.

In the Rosicrucian sense, Christianity is at once the highest development of individual freedom and universal religion. There is a community of free souls. The tyranny of dogma is replaced by the radiance of divine Wisdom, embracing intelligence, love and action.

The science which arises from this cannot be measured by its power of abstract reasoning but by

its power to bring souls to flower and fruition. That is the difference between 'Logia' and 'Sophia,' between science and divine Wisdom, between Theology and Theosophy.

In this sense, Christ is the centre of the esoteric evolution of the West. Certain modern Theologians — above all in Germany — have tried to represent Christ as a simple, naive human being. This is a terrible error. The most sublime consciousness, the most profound Wisdom live in Him, as well as the most divine Love. Without such consciousness, how could He be a supreme manifestation in the life of our whole planetary evolution? What gave Him this power to rise so high above His own time? Whence came transcendental qualities?

## II

### THE MISSION OF MANICHEISM

The purpose of this lecture is to expand and deepen what was said in the preceding lecture.

The difference between Occult Brotherhoods before and after Christianity is that *before* the advent of Christianity their chief mission was to guard the sacred tradition; *afterwards*, it was to form and mould the future. Occult science is not abstract and dead but active and living.

Christian occultism is derived from the Manicheans whose founder, Manes, lived on the Earth three hundred years after Jesus the Christ. The essence of Manichean teaching relates to the doctrine of Good and Evil. In ordinary thought, the Good and the Evil are two irreducible qualities,

one of which — the Good — must destroy the other — the Evil. To the Manicheans, however, Evil is an integral part of the cosmos, collaborating in its evolution, finally to be absorbed and transfigured by the Good. The great feature of Manicheism is that it studies the function of Evil and of suffering in the world.

To understand the development of humanity, it must be viewed in its whole range. Only so can we see its high ideal. To believe that an ideal is not necessary for action is a great error. A man without ideals is a man without power. The function of an ideal in life is like that of steam in an engine. Steam comprises in a small area a vast expanse of ‘condensed space’ — hence its tremendous power of expansion. The magic power of thought is of the same nature. Let us then rise to the thought of the ideal of humanity as a whole, guided by the thread of its evolution through the epochs of time.

Systems like that of Darwin are also seeking for this guiding thread. The grandeur of Darwinian thought is not disputed, but it does not explain the integral evolution of man. It only sees the lower,

inferior elements. So it is with all purely physical explanations which do not recognise the spiritual essence of man's being. Theories of evolution based entirely on physical facts, attribute to man an animal origin because science has established that in fossilised man the brow is lacking. Occultism, knowing that physical man is but an expression of etheric man, sees something very different. At the present point of time, the etheric body of man has practically the same form as his physical body, although extending a little beyond it. But the farther back we go in history, the greater is the difference in size between the etheric head and the physical head. The etheric head is found to be much larger. Especially was this so in the period of earthly development which precedes our own. The men living at that time were Atlanteans. Geologists, indeed, are beginning to discover traces of ancient Atlantis, of the minerals and flora of this ancient continent now submerged under the ocean that bears its name. Traces of man himself have not yet been discovered but that is only a matter of time. Occult prophecies have always preceded authentic history.

The frontal part of the human head began to develop in the European races which followed those of Atlantis. The focus-point of consciousness in the Atlanteans lay outside the brow, in the etheric head. Today it lies within the physical head, a little higher than the nose.

*Nifelheim* or *Nebelheim* (the land of mists) in Germanic mythology is the country of the Atlanteans. In that age the Earth was hotter and still enveloped by vaporous clouds. The continent of Atlantis was destroyed by a series of deluges, as a consequence of which the terrestrial atmosphere cleared, — Then and only then came the blue sky, the storm, rain, the rainbow. That is why the Bible says that when Noah's Ark had come to rest, the rainbow, the “bow in the cloud” was a new token of alliance between God and man.

The ‘I’ of the Aryan race could only be consciously realised when the etheric body was centralised in the physical brain. Not until then could man begin to say: ‘I.’ The Atlanteans spoke of themselves in the third person.



Darwinism has made many errors in regard to the differentiation expressed by the races actually existing on the Earth. The higher races have not descended from the lower races; on the contrary, the latter represent the degeneration of the higher races which have preceded them. Suppose there are two brothers — one of whom is handsome and intelligent, the other ugly and dull-witted. Both proceed from the same father. What should we think of a man who believed that the intelligent brother descends from the idiot? That is the kind of error made by Darwinism in regard to the races. Man and animal have a common origin; the animals represent a degeneration of the one common ancestor, whose higher development comes to expression in man.

This should not give rise to pride, for it is only thanks to the lower kingdoms that the higher races have been able to develop.

Christ washes the feet of the Apostles. That is a symbol of the humility of the Initiate in face of his inferiors. The Initiate owes his existence to those who are not initiated. Hence the deep humility of

those who truly *know* in face of those who do not. The tragic aspect of cosmic evolution is that one class of beings must abase themselves in order that the other may rise. In this sense we can appreciate the beauty of Paracelsus' words: "I have observed all beings — stones, plants, animals — and they seem to me nothing but scattered letters, man being the word, living and whole."

The animals are crystallised passions.

In the course of human and animal evolution the inferior descends from the superior.

The contradictions in man, the way in which the elements mingle in him, constitute his *karma*, his destiny.

Just as man has wrested himself from the animal so will he wrest himself from evil. But never yet has he passed through a crisis as severe as that of the present age.

The evil and the good are still within man just as in days of yore the animals were within him.

The aim of Manicheism is to sublimate men to be redeemers.

The Master must be the servant of all.

True morality flows from an understanding of the mighty laws of the universe.

### III

## GOD, MAN, NATURE

One of the fundamental tenets of occultism, founded on the law of analogies, is that Nature can reveal to us what is taking place within our own being.

A striking and typical example of this law, but one which is wholly ignored by orthodox science, is given in the *Philosopher's Stone*, known to the Rosicrucians. In a German magazine published at the end of the eighteenth century, we find mention of this Philosopher's Stone. It is spoken of as something quite real and the writer says: "Everyone contacts it frequently although he knows it not." This is literally true. In order to understand this mystery we must penetrate into the laboratory of Nature even more deeply than is the

habit of modern science.

All the world knows that man inhales oxygen and exhales carbonic acid. In Yoga this has both a physical and spiritual significance. Man cannot inhale carbonic acid for the purposes of nourishing his being. He would die, whereas the carbonic acid keeps the plants alive. The plants provide man with the oxygen which gives him life; they renew the air and make it fit to breathe. On the other side, man and the animals provide the plants with the carbonic acid by which they, in their turn, are nourished. What does the plant do with the carbonic acid it absorbs? It builds up its own body. We know that the corpse of the plant is coal. Coal is thus crystallised carbonic acid.

The red blood in man must be refreshed and renewed with oxygen, for the carbonic acid cannot be used for the purpose of building up the body. The exercises of Yoga are a training which enables man to make the red blood into a body-builder. In this sense the Yogi works at his body by means of his blood, just as the plant works with the carbonic acid.

Thus we see that the power of transmutation in Nature is represented in coal which is a crystallised plant. The Philosopher's Stone, in its most general sense, signifies this power of transmutation.

The law of regression, as well as the law of ascension, is true for all beings. The minerals are plants which have degenerated; the plants are the remnants of animal life; animals and man (his physical body) have a common ancestor. Man has ascended, the animal has descended. The spiritual part of man proceeds from the Gods. In this sense, man is a God who has degenerated, and Lamartine's words are literally true: "Man is a fallen god who remembers the heavens."

There was an epoch when all life on the Earth was semi-plant and semi-animal. The Earth herself was, as it were, a great animal-being. Her whole surface was one mass of peat-like 'turf' with gigantic forest growing from it. This is the epoch when the Earth and the Moon were united in one body. The Moon represents the feminine element of the Earth.

There are beings whose progress is checked, who remain at a lower stage of evolution. The *mistletoe*, for instance, is a token of this ancient epoch. It is a survival of the parasitic plant-beings which once lived on the Earth as upon a plant. Hence its peculiar, occult properties, known to the Druids who spoke of it as the most sacred of all plants. Mistletoe is a survival from the lunar epoch of the Earth. It is parasitic because it has not learned, like other plants, to live directly upon mineral substance.

Disease is something of an analogy. It is a regression, caused by the parasitic elements in the organism. The Druids and the Skalds knew of the relation between the mistletoe and man. There is an echo of this in the legend of Baldur. The God Baldur is put to death by the mistletoe because the mistletoe is a hostile element from the preceding epoch — an element no longer united — with man. The other plants, having adapted themselves to the subsequent epoch, swore friendship to him.

When this plant-earth became mineral, it acquired, through the metals, a new property — that of

reflecting the light.

A star is visible in the heavens only when it has become mineral. Thus there are many heavenly bodies imperceptible to the physical eye of man and visible only to clairvoyant vision.

The Earth has been “mineralised,” so also has the physical body of man. But the characteristic feature of man is that a twofold movement takes place in him. As a physical being, man has descended; as a spiritual being he has ascended. St. Paul spoke of this truth when he declared that there is one law for the body and another for the Spirit. Thus man represents both an end and a beginning.

The vital point, the point of intersection and of change in the ascending life of man, lies at the time of the separation of the sexes. There was an age when the two sexes were united in the being of man. Even Darwin recognised this as a probability. As the result of the separation of the sexes, a new, all-embracing element came to birth: the element of love. The attraction of love is so powerful, so



mysterious, that tropical butterflies of different sexes, brought to Europe and then released to the air, will fly back again and meet each other half-way.

There is some analogy between the relations established by the world of man with the divine world and by the human kingdom with the animal kingdom. Oxygen and carbonic acid are in-breathed and out-breathed by man. The plant-kingdom breathes out oxygen; man breathes out *love* — since the separation of the sexes. The Gods are nourished by this effluence of love.

How comes it that the animals and man out-breathe love?

The occultist sees in the man of today a being in the full swing of evolution. Man is at the same time a fallen God and a God in the becoming.

The kingdom of the heavens is nourished by the effluence of human love. Ancient Greek mythology expresses this reality when it speaks of nectar and ambrosia. The Gods are so far above

man that their natural tendency would be to subjugate him. But there is a half-way state of being between man and the Gods, just as the mistletoe is half-way between the plant and the animal. It is represented by Lucifer and the Luciferian element.

The interest of the Gods is the element of human love by means of which their life is sustained.

When Lucifer, in the form of the serpent, induces man to seek for knowledge, Jehovah is wrath. Lucifer is here understood as the fallen God who instills into man the desire for personal knowledge. This sets him in opposition to the Divine Will which has created him in its image.

Rosicrucian science explains the rôle of Lucifer in the world. We shall return to this later on. Here we will merely recall the following saying of the Rosicrucian Order: “Know, O man, that through thy being flows a current which ascends and a current which descends.”

## IV

### INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

There is a phenomenon of physical life which has never been explained by exoteric thought — the chaotic life bound up with sleep and called the life of *dream*.

What is the dream? It is an activity which has survived from prehistoric times. To understand it by analogy, let us consider certain phenomena which do not any longer belong, properly speaking, to physical life — organs which have now become useless, rudimentary organisms of which the naturalist can make nothing. Such are the motor organs of the ear and eye which function no longer, the appendix and, — notably, the pineal gland in the brain which has the form of a tiny pine cone. Naturalists explain it as a product of

degeneration, as a parasitic growth in the brain. This is not correct. In the lasting creations of Nature, nothing is without its use. The pineal gland is the surviving remnant of an organ of great significance in primitive man, an organ of perception which served simultaneously as antenna, eye and ear. This organ existed in man during his rudimentary period of development, in days when the semi-fluid, semi-vaporous Earth was still united with the Moon. Man moved through the semi-fluid, semi-gaseous element like a fish, guiding his way by means of this organ. His perceptions were of a visionary, allegoric nature. Currents of warmth evoked in him the impression of dazzling red and of powerful sound. Currents of cold evoked the impression of shades of green and blue, silvery, rippling sounds.

The rôle played by the pineal gland was thus of great significance. But with the mineralisation of the Earth, other organs of sense made their appearance, and with us the pineal gland has no apparent purpose.

Let us now turn to the phenomenon of the dream.

The dream is a rudimentary function of our life — seemingly without use or purpose. In reality it represents an atrophied function — a function which in days of yore gave rise to a very different mode of perception.

Before the Earth became metallic, it was only perceptible in the astral sense. All perceptions are relative; they are merely symbolic. The central core of truth is ineffable and divine. This is wonderfully expressed in the words of Goethe: “All things transitory are but symbols.”

Astral vision (which is still present in the dream) is allegoric and symbolic.

Examples of dreams provoked by physical and bodily causes:

A student dreams that a companion gives him a blow, whereupon a duel is fought and he himself is wounded. He wakes up to find that the cause of the dream is a chair that has fallen over. Again someone may dream of a trotting horse but the

sound is really caused by the ticking of a watch.

The bodily nature of man lies at the root of certain dreams but others are directly related to the astral and spiritual worlds. This latter class of dreams are the origin of myths.

In the opinion of modern scholars, the myths are poetic interpretations of the phenomena of Nature. If, however, we study certain folk-legends, we shall find that they are more than this. Myths and legends are based upon astral visions which have been travestied, changed and added to by tradition.

Think of the Slavonic legend of the 'Woman of Noonday.' If peasants who are labouring at the harvest in the oppressive heat of summer lie down to rest on the ground at midday instead of going to their homes, the figure of a woman appears and places a number of enigmas before them. If the sleeper can solve these enigmas, he is saved; if not, the woman slays and cuts him in two with a scythe. The legend goes on to say that this phantom can be exorcised by reciting the verses of the Lord's Prayer in backward order. Occultism

teaches us that the Woman of Noonday is an astral figure, an incubus who appears and oppresses man during his sleep. The reversed Lord's Prayer indicates that in the astral world everything is reflected as in a mirror (inversion). In *The Riddle of the Sphinx*, Ludwig Laistner says that the origin of the legend of the sphinx is to be found among all races. He also proves that all legends have been conceived in a condition of higher sleep where realities are perceived, and that the sphinx is in truth a daemonic figure.

A state of dream-consciousness, or perception of a real world in astral symbols-this, then, is the origin of all the myths. Myths describe the astral world seen in symbolic visions.

In the course of history we find that the creation of myths ceases when the life of logic and intellectuality begins to develop.

A law known to occultism is that with every new stage of evolution, an element from the past makes its appearance. Ancient faculties, survivals from past epochs which have atrophied in the being of

man, act as ferments for subsequent development; they are like the yeast which makes the dough rise. Man's present faculty of dreaming will beget a new kind of vision, a perception of the astral and spiritual world.

The man of today lives only in his senses and intellect which elaborates what the senses tell him. The intellect of man of the future will awaken to the full light of consciousness and he will live consciously in the astral world.

The trance of the hypnotised subject and of the medium is an atavistic phenomenon, bound up with lowered consciousness. The initiated clairvoyant is not an unbalanced visionary; he possesses, in advance, the consciousness which will be possessed by all men in future ages; he has his feet on solid ground just as firmly as the most matter-of-fact human being; his reason is just as clear and certain but he sees in two worlds.

It is a law of evolution that certain organs atrophy, subsequently to take on new functions.



The pineal gland has a certain physiological relation with the lymphatic system. In olden times this gland was the organ of perception of the outer world and it is still to be seen near the top of the head of newly-born babes where the soft matter recalls the nature of man's body in olden times.

In our life of intellect, the dream plays a rôle similar to that of the pineal gland in the physiology of the human body.

Why is there a descending and an ascending process in evolution? What is the purpose of evil? These are weighty questions which have never been solved by science or religion. Yet the whole problem of education depends upon their solution. We cannot speak of evil in the absolute sense. Evil, indeed, plays a part in the development of beings and the unfolding of freedom. The materialist will not admit that the thoughts stimulated in us by Nature are, in fact, already contained in her being. He imagines that we infuse our thoughts into Nature. The Rosicrucians in the Middle Ages were wont to place a glass of water before the neophyte and say to him: 'This water

would not be in the glass if some being had not put it there.’

Thus it is in regard to the ideas we find expressed in Nature. They must have been implanted there by divine Intelligences, by servants of the Logos. The thoughts we derive from the universe are actually there. All that we create is contained somewhere in the universe. It is a false idea on the part of certain mystics to disparage the value of the physical body. It has just as much value as the astral body; its mission is to become the temple of the soul. Think of the marvelous structure of the femur, of the bone which bears the whole body. Its construction is such that the maximum amount of strength is produced with the minimum amount of substance. No engineer could create such a wonder-structure. In comparison with the physical body, the astral body — the seat of passions and desires — is rudimentary and crude.

The physical world is the expression of wisdom incarnate, divine wisdom. The Rosicrucians taught that the Earth, in primeval times, was an Earth of *wisdom*. Today we may call it an Earth of *love*.

The mission of man is to accomplish for the imperfect part of his being what divine wisdom once accomplished for his physical body. He must ennoble his astral body and therewith the world around him.

All that has entered into us *without* our conscious will under the influence of divine wisdom — that is Involution. All that we must bring out of ourselves *by dint of* conscious will — that is Evolution. The pyramids will perish in the course of the centuries but the ideas which gave them birth will develop onwards. The cathedral of today will take another form. Raphael's pictures will fall into dust but the soul of Raphael and the ideas which his creations represent will be living powers forever. The Art of today will be the Nature of tomorrow and will blossom again in her. Thus does Involution become Evolution.

Here we have the point of intersection between the divine and the human, the twofold power which brings God to man and raises man to God.

## V

### YOGA IN EAST AND WEST

Before embarking on this subject, we must realise that since occultism has been popularised, a certain class of theosophical literature has given rise to mistaken ideas as to the real goal of occult science. It has been contended that the goal is the annihilation of the body through asceticism and that reality is an illusion which must be conquered, reference being made to the 'maya' spoken of by Hindu philosophy. This is more than exaggeration; it is an actual error, contradicted by the science and practice of occultism.

Greek imagery compares the soul to a bee and this is much truer to the facts. Just as the bee emerges from the hive and gathers the juice of flowers to distil and make it into honey, so does the soul

come forth from the Spirit, penetrates into reality and gathers its essence which is then borne back again to the Spirit.

Occultism does not disdain reality but seeks rather to understand and make use of it. The body is not merely the vesture, it is the *instrument* of the Spirit. Occultism is not a science which subordinates the body but teaches us how to use it for higher ends. Could we be said to understand the nature of a magnet if we described it merely as a piece of iron shaped like a horse-shoe? No, indeed. But we *have* understood if we say: 'The magnet is a piece of iron having the power to attract other pieces of iron.' Visible reality is wholly pervaded with a deeper reality and it is this deeper reality which the soul tries to penetrate and master.

For thousands of years the higher wisdom was guarded in profound secrecy by Occult Brotherhoods. A man had to belong to one of these Brotherhoods before he could learn even the elements of occult science. To enter a Brotherhood he had to pass certain tests and swear not to make

wrong use of the truths revealed to him. But the conditions of civilisation, and particularly of the human intellect, have entirely changed since the sixteenth century and above all in the last hundred years under the influence of scientific discoveries. As the result of science, a certain number of truths pertaining to Nature and the world of sense — which in olden times were known only to Initiates — have become public property. Knowledge possessed by science today was once in the keeping of the Mysteries. The Initiates have always known that which all men were destined, in time, to know. That is why the Initiates have been called prophets.

The advent of Christianity wrought a great change in the manner of Initiation. Initiation since the time of Christ Jesus has not been the same as before His coming. We can only understand this by studying the nature of man and the seven fundamental principles of his being.

(1) The physical body, visible to the natural eye and familiar to science. As a purely physical being, man corresponds to the mineral world; he is a

combination of all the physical forces of the universe.

(2) The etheric body. How does it become perceptible?

We know that hypnosis induces a different state of consciousness, not only in the hypnotised subject but also in the hypnotist, who suggests anything he pleases to his subject. He can make him think that a chair is a horse, or that the chair is not there, or again that there is nobody in a room which is really full of people. The *Initiate* consciously exercises a power whereby he can blot out from his vision the physical body of the person in front of him. Then, in place of the physical body he beholds, not an empty space, but the etheric body. This body somewhat resembles the physical body and yet it is different. It takes on the form of the physical body, extending slightly beyond it. The etheric body is more or less luminous and fluidic. Instead of organs there are currents of diverse colours, the heart being a veritable vortex of forces and streaming currents. The etheric body is the 'etheric double' of the material body. Man

possesses it in common with the plants. It is not produced by the physical body as naturalists might be led to believe; on the contrary, the etheric body is the builder of every living organism. In the plant, as well as in man, it is the force of growth, rhythm and reproduction.

(3) The astral body has neither the form of the etheric nor of the physical body. It is an ovoid and extends beyond the body like a cloud, an aura. The astral body can take on all the colours of the rainbow, according to the passion by which it is animated. Each passion has its astral colour. Besides this, the astral body is, in a certain sense, the synthesis of the physical and etheric bodies, for the reason that the etheric body always has a contrary character to the sex of the physical body. The etheric body of a man is female; the etheric body of a woman is male. In both man and woman, the astral body is bisexual. In this sense, therefore, it is a synthesis of the two other bodies.

(4) The self — *Manas* in Sanscrit, *Joph* in Hebrew — is the intelligent, rational soul. It is the indestructible individuality which can learn to



build the other bodies — the ‘inexpressible,’ the human self and the divine self.

The union of these four elements was venerated by Pythagoras in the sign of the *tetragram*.

The evolution of man consists in transforming the lower bodies with the aid of the self into spiritualised bodies. The physical body is the most ancient principle — hence the most perfect — of man's being. The task of the present epoch of human evolution is to transform the astral body.

In civilised man, the astral body is divided into two parts — a lower and a higher. The lower part is still chaotic and dark, the higher is luminous, penetrated even now by the forces of Manas — that is to say, it has a certain order and regularity.

When the Initiate has purified his astral body of all animal passions, when it has become wholly luminous (the first phase of Initiation), he has arrived at the stage of *catharsis*. Only then can he work at his etheric body and by this means ‘affix his seal’ to the physical body. Of itself, the astral

body has no direct influence upon the physical body. Its forces must pass by way of the etheric body. The task of the disciple, therefore, is concerned with the transformation of the astral and etheric bodies in order, finally, to acquire full and complete control of the physical body. This is how he becomes a master.

We are touching here upon a marvelous law of human nature, proving that the self and *Manas* are the central points of man's development. When *Manas* dominates the astral and etheric bodies, man acquires new faculties and these in turn influence the spiritual and divine form of man. When *Manas* works upon the etheric body, light and power for the purpose of man's spiritual being (*Budhi*) are generated. When *Manas* works upon the physical body, light and power for man's divine Spirit (*Atma*) are generated. The evolution of man, therefore, amounts to a transformation of the lower bodies by the higher *Self*.

We have a paramount example of the working of the lower self in an anecdote told by Darwin. On one of his journeys he conversed with a cannibal

and asked, through an interpreter, if he felt no repugnance against eating human flesh. Whereupon the savage burst into laughter, saying: “One must have tasted human flesh before one can know whether it is good to eat. And you know nothing about it whatever!”

The transformation of the astral body goes hand in hand with the control of feelings and their purification.

The lower part of the astral body of man in our age is dark; the higher part is limpid and full of colour. The higher part has been transmuted and permeated by the self but not the lower part as yet. When man has transformed the whole of his astral body we say that he has changed it into Manas. Not until then can he begin to work on the etheric body. There is a reason why this is so. Everything in the astral body is ephemeral.) Everything that happens in the etheric body leaves an indelible trace which is, furthermore, impressed like a seal into the physical body.

The higher stages of Initiation consist in controlling all the phenomena connected with the physical body, in mastering and controlling them at will. The Initiate possesses *Atma* to the extent to which he achieves this; he becomes a sage and has power over Nature.

The difference between Eastern and Western Initiation lies in the method by which the master brings the pupil to the point of being able to work on his etheric body. Here we must consider the different conditions in which man finds himself during sleep and waking life.

During sleep the astral body is partly freed from the physical body and is in a condition of inactivity, but the vegetative activity of the etheric body continues.

At death, the etheric and astral bodies are wholly severed from the physical body. In the etheric body — which is the bearer of memory — inheres a remembrance of the past life and at the moment the etheric body frees itself, the dying have before them a tableau of their whole life. Freed from the

physical body, the etheric body becomes much more sensitive and impressionable because it is no longer impeded by physical substance.

Oriental Initiation consisted in a process whereby the etheric and astral bodies of the neophyte were forced out of his physical body. He lay in a trance lasting three days and during this time the hierophant controlled his freed etheric body, poured impulses into him and taught him wisdom which remained as a powerful, lasting impression. When he awoke from the trance, the new Initiate found himself in possession of this wisdom, for the reason that memory inheres in the etheric body. The wisdom was occult doctrine but it bore the permanent and personal stamp of the hierophant who had imparted it. A man who had passed through this Initiation was said to be 'twice-born.'

The process of *Western* Initiation is quite different. Eastern Initiation takes place while man is in a state of sleep; Western Initiation must be achieved in a state of wakefulness. In other words, there is no separation of the etheric and physical bodies. In

Western Initiation the neophyte is free; the master simply plays the rôle of an awakener. He does not try to dominate or convert; he simply recounts what he himself has seen, — And how ought we to listen? There are three ways of listening: to accept the words as infallible authority; to be sceptical and fight against what is heard; to pay heed to what is said without servile, blind credulity and without systematic opposition, allowing the ideas to work upon us and observing their effects. This latter is the attitude which the pupil should adopt towards his master in Western Initiation.

The Initiator knows that he who is master must also be servant. It is not his task to mould the soul of his pupil to his own image but to discover and solve the enigma of this soul. The teaching given by the Initiator is not dogma; it is simply an *impulse* for development. Every truth that is not at the same time a vital impulse, is a sterile truth. That is why all thought must be filled with the element of *soul*. Thought must be permeated with feeling; otherwise it will not pass into the realm of soul and it will be stillborn thought.

## VI

### YOGA IN EAST AND WEST

(Conclusion)

The first thing to realise is that Yoga is not a sudden, convulsive event, but a process of gradual training, inner transformation. It does not consist, as is often supposed, in a series of external adjustments and ascetic practices. Everything must run its course in the depths of the soul.

It is often said that the first steps of Initiation are fraught with perils and grave dangers. There is a measure of truth in this. Initiation, or Yoga, is a coming-to-birth of the higher soul which lies latent in every human being. The astral body is faced with dangers analogous to those attending physical birth; there is travail before the divine soul comes

forth from the desire-nature of man. The difference is that the birth of Spirit is a much longer process than that of physical birth.

Let us take another comparison. The higher soul is closely linked with the animal soul. By their fusion the passions are tempered, spiritualised and dominated according to the strength of man's intelligence and will. This fusion is of benefit to man but he pays for it by the loss of clairvoyance. Imagine to yourself a green liquid, produced by a combination of blue and yellow elements. If you succeed in separating them, the yellow will descend and the blue will rise to the surface. Something analogous happens when, through Yoga, the animal-soul is separated from the higher soul. The latter acquires clairvoyant vision; the former is left to its own devices if it has not been purified by the *self* and it is then given over to its passions and desires. This often happens in the case of mediums. The 'Guardian of the Threshold' protects man from this danger.

The first condition requisite for the Initiate is that his character shall be strong and that he shall be



master of his passions. Yoga must be preceded by a rigorous discipline and the attainment of certain qualities, the first of which is inner calm. Ordinary 'morality' is not enough, for this relates merely to man's conduct in the outer world. Yoga is related to the *inner* man.

If it is said that compassion suffices, our answer will be: compassion is good and necessary but has nothing directly to do with occult training. Compassion without wisdom is weak and powerless.

The task of the occultist, of the true Initiate, is to change the direction of his life's current. The actions of man today are impelled and determined by his feelings — that is to say, by impulses from the outer world. Actions determined by space and time have no significance. Space and time must be transcended. How can we achieve this?

(1) Control of thought. We must be able to concentrate our thought upon a single object and hold it there.

(2) Control of actions. Our attitude to all actions, be they trivial or significant, must be to dominate, regulate and hold them under the control of the will. They must be the outcome of *inner* initiative.

(3) Equilibrium of soul. There must be moderation in sorrow and in joy. Goethe has said that the soul who loves is, till death, equally happy, equally sad. The occultist must bear the deepest joy and the deepest sorrow with the same equanimity of soul.

(4) Optimism — the attitude which looks for the good in everything. Even in crime and in seeming absurdity there is some element of good. A Persian legend says that Christ once passed by the corpse of a dog and that His disciples turned from it in disgust. But the Christ said: ‘Lo! the teeth are beautiful.’

(5) Confidence. The mind must be open to every new phenomenon. We must never allow our judgments to be determined by the past.

(6) Inner balance, which is the result of these preparatory measures. Man is then ripe for the

inner training of the soul. He is ready to set his feet upon the path.

(7) Meditation. We must be able to make ourselves blind and deaf to the outer world and our memories of it, to the point where even the shot of a gun does not disturb. This is the prelude to meditation. When this inner void has been created, man is able to receive the prompting of his inner being. The soul must then be awakened in its very depths by certain ideas able to impel it towards its source.

In the book *Light on the Path*, there are four sentences which may be employed in meditation and inner concentration. They are very ancient and have been used for centuries by Initiates. Their meaning is profound and many-sided. “Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears.” “Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.” “Before the voice can speak in the presence of the masters, it must have lost the power to wound.” “Before the soul can stand in the presence of the masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.” These four

sentences have magical power. But we must bring them to life within us, we must love them as a mother loves her child. This, the first stage of training, has power to develop the etheric body and particularly its upper part which corresponds to the head. Having trained the upper part of the etheric body, the disciple must begin to control the systems of breathing and blood, the lungs and the heart. In remote ages of earthly evolution, man lived in the waters and breathed through gills like fish. Sacred literature indicates the time when he began to breathe the airs of heaven. Genesis says "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." The disciple must purify and bring about changes in his breathing system. All development proceeds from chaos to harmony, from lack of rhythm to rhythm (eurhythmy). Rhythm must be brought into the instincts. In ancient times, the various degrees of Initiation were called by particular names:

First degree: The Raven (he who remains at the threshold). The raven appears in all mythologies. In the *Edda*, he whispers into the ear of Wotan what he sees afar off. Second degree: the hidden

Scholar, or the Occultist. Third degree: the Warrior (struggle and strife). Fourth degree: the Initiate bears the name of his people — he is a “Persian” or a “Greek” because his soul has grown to a point where it includes the soul of his people. Sixth degree: the Initiate is a Sun-Hero, or Sun-Messenger, because his progress is as harmonious and, rhythmic as that of the Sun. Seventh degree: the Initiate is a ‘Father,’ because he has power to make disciples of men and to be the protector of all; he is the Father of the new being, the ‘twice-born’ in the risen soul. The Sun represents the vivifying movement and rhythm of the planetary system. The legend of Icarus is a legend of Initiation. Icarus has attempted to reach the Sun-sphere prematurely, without adequate preparation, and is cast down.

The new rhythm of breathing produces a change in the blood. Man is purified to the point of himself being able to generate blood without the aid of plant-nourishment. Prolonged meditation changes the nature of the blood. Man begins to exhale less carbon; he retains a certain amount and uses it for

building up his body. The air he exhales is *pure*. He gradually becomes able to live on the forces contained in his own breath. He accomplishes an alchemical transmutation. What are the higher stages of Yoga?

(1) The Initiate finds calm within his soul. Astral vision — where everything is a symbolic image of reality is acquired. This astral vision which arises during the sleeping state, is still incomplete.

(2) Dreams cease to be chaotic. Man understands the relation between dream-symbolism and reality; he gains control of the astral world. And then the inner astral light awakens in the soul who perceives other souls in their real being.

(3) Continuity of consciousness is set up between the waking state and the sleeping state. Astral life is reflected in dreams but in deep sleep, pure *sounds* arise. The soul experiences the inner words issuing from all beings as a mighty harmony. This harmony is a manifestation of reality; it was called by Plato and Pythagoras, the *harmony of the spheres*. This is not a poetic metaphor but a reality

experienced by the soul as a vibration emanating from the soul of the world.

Goethe, who was initiated between the periods of his life at Leipzig and Strasburg, knew of the harmony of the spheres. He expressed it at the beginning of Faust in words spoken by the Archangel Raphael: “The Sun makes music as of old Amid the sister-spheres of heaven. On its predestined circle rolls With roar of thunder.”

In deep sleep, the Initiate hears these sounds as if they were the notes of trumpets and the rolling of thunder.

## VII

### THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

The rôle of Christianity in human history is unique. The coming of Christianity represents, in a sense, the central moment, the turning point between involution and evolution. That is why it radiates so brilliant a light — a light that is nowhere so pregnant with life as in the Gospel of St. John. Truth to tell it is only in this Gospel that the full power of the light is made manifest.

It cannot be said that modern theology has this conception of the Gospel. From the historical point of view it is considered inferior to the three synoptic Gospels, as being, in a sense, apocryphal. The very fact that its authorship is said by some to have taken place in the second century after Christ has made certain theologians of the school of



Bible criticism regard it as a work of mystical poetry and Alexandrian philosophy.

Occultism has quite another conception of the Gospel of St. John.

During the Middle Ages a number of Brotherhoods saw in this Gospel the essential source of Christian truth. Such Brotherhoods were the Brothers of St. John, the Albigenses, the Catharists, the Templars and the Rosicrucians. All were engaged in practical occultism and looked to this Gospel as to their Bible. It may be said in a sense that the legend of the Grail, Parsifal and Lohengrin emanated from these Brotherhoods and that it was the popular expression of the secret doctrines.

All the members of these different parent Orders were considered to possess the secret. They were the precursors of a Christianity which should spread over the world in later times. In the Gospel of St. John they found the secret, for its words contained eternal truth — truth applicable to all times. Such truth as this regenerates the souls of

all who become aware of it in the depths of their being. The Gospel was never regarded or read merely as a gem of literature. It was used as an instrument for developing the mystic life of the soul. Let us, to begin with, leave its purely historical value out of account.

The first fourteen verses of this Gospel were the subject of daily meditation among the Rosicrucians. These verses were held to possess a magical power — a fact well known to occultists. By repeating these verses at the same hour, day by day without intermission, the Rosicrucians began to see in dream-visions all the events recorded in the Gospel and lived through them in inner experience.

Thus in spiritual vision the Rosicrucians saw the life of Christ — nay indeed the Christ Himself being born in the depths of the soul. They believed, of course, in the actual and historic existence of the Christ, for to know the inner Christ is also to recognise the outer Christ.

A materialist of today might ask whether the fact that the Rosicrucians had these visions is any proof of the actual existence of Christ. To this the occultist will reply: 'If there were no eye to perceive the sun, there would be no sun; but if there were no sun in the heavens, there would be no eye to perceive it. For it is the sun which in the course of ages has formed and built the eye in order that it may behold the light.' In this sense the Rosicrucians said: — 'The Gospel of St. John awakens thine inner senses but if there were no living Christ, He could not live within thee.'

The mission accomplished by Christ Jesus cannot be understood in all its depths unless we realise the difference between the Ancient Mysteries and the Christian Mystery.

The Ancient Mysteries were held in the temple-sanctuaries. The Initiates were the awakened ones. They had learnt to work upon the etheric body and were the 'twice-born' because they could perceive truth in a two-fold sense: directly, through dream and astral vision, indirectly, through sense-perception and logic. The initiation through which

they passed was accomplished, in three stages: life, death and resurrection. The disciple spent three days in a sarcophagus in a tomb of the temple. His Spirit was released from his body; but on the third day, at the call of the hierophant, the Spirit came down again into the body from the cosmic spaces of universal life. The man was a transformed, new-born being. The greatest Greek writers have spoken of these mysteries with great awe and inspiration. Plato goes so far as to say that the Initiate alone is worthy of the name of man. This ancient initiation has its crowning-point 'in Christ.' Christ represents the crystallised initiation of the life of sense. All that was supersensibly seen in the Ancient Mysteries becomes, in Christ, *historic fact on the physical plane*. The death undergone by the ancient Initiates was only a partial death in the etheric world. The death of Christ was a full and complete death in the physical world.

The Raising of Lazarus may be regarded as a moment of transition from the ancient initiation to the Christian initiation. In the fourth Gospel no

mention is made of John himself until after the story of the death of Lazarus. “The disciple whom Jesus loved” is he who passed through the stages of death and resurrection in initiation and who was called to new life by the voice of Christ Himself. John is Lazarus who came forth from the tomb after his initiation; he lived through the death undergone by Christ. Such is the mystic path concealed in the depths of Christianity.

The marriage at Cana expresses one of the most profound mysteries of the spiritual history of mankind. It is related to the saying of Hermes: “The above is as the below.” In the marriage at Cana, water is changed into wine. The symbolic meaning of this miracle is that the sacrifice of water was to be replaced for a time by the sacrifice of wine.

There were ages in the history of man when wine was not known. In the days of the Vedas it was practically unknown. In the ages when there was no drinking of alcohol, the idea of previous existences and of many lives was universally held; nobody doubted its truth. As soon as man began to

drink wine, however, the knowledge of re-incarnation rapidly faded away, ultimately to disappear entirely from the consciousness of man. It existed only among the Initiates who took no alcohol. Alcohol has a peculiarly potent effect on the human organism, especially on the etheric body which is the seat of memory. Alcohol obscures the intimate depths of memory. 'Wine induces forgetfulness' — so the saying goes. The forgetfulness is not only superficial or momentary, but deep and permanent and there is a deadening of the power of memory in the etheric body. That is why, little by little, men lost their instinctive knowledge of reincarnation when they began to drink wine.

Belief in reincarnation and the law of *Karma* had a great influence not only upon the individual but upon his social sentiment. It helped him to bear with the inequalities of human life. When the unhappy Egyptian labourer was working at the Pyramids, or the lowest caste of Hindu building the gigantic Indian temples in the heart of the mountains, he said to himself that another

existence would compensate him for labours patiently accomplished, that his master if he were good had already undergone similar tests or that he would have to undergo them in the future if he were unjust and cruel.

As the era of Christianity drew near, man was destined to enter upon an epoch of concentration upon earthly efforts; he was to work towards the amelioration of earthly existence, the development of intellect, of logical and scientific understanding of Nature. The knowledge of re-incarnation, therefore, was to be lost for two thousand years and wine was the means to this end.

Such is the profound background of the cult of Bacchus, the God of wine and intoxication. (Bacchus is the popular expression of the God Dionysos of the Ancient Mysteries to whom quite a different significance must be attached.) Such, too, is the symbolic meaning of the Marriage at Cana. Water served the purpose of the ancient sacrifice; wine was to serve the purpose of the new. The words of Christ, "Happy are they who have not seen and yet have believed," refer to the

new epoch when man — wholly given up to his earthly tasks — was to live without remembrance of his incarnations and without immediate vision of the divine world.

Christ has left us a testament in the scene on Mount Tabor, in the Transfiguration before Peter, James and John. The disciples see Him between Elias and Moses. Elias represents the Way of Truth; Moses, the Truth itself; Christ, the Life that epitomises them. That is why Christ can say of Himself: *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.”*

All life is thus concentrated, illumined, deepened and transfigured in Christ. He epitomises the past of the human soul back to its primal source and prefigures its future to the point of union with God. Christianity is not only a power of the past but of the future. In common with the Rosicrucians, the occultist of our day teaches of the Christ in the inner being of each individual and of the Christ, in the future, in all mankind.



## VIII

### THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

Christian initiation has existed since the founding of Christianity. Through the Middle Ages and in our own time it has remained the same among a number of religious Orders as well as among the Rosicrucians. It consists of a spiritual training which culminates in certain identical and invariable symptoms. The Brotherhoods where, in profound secrecy, this training used to be given, are the home of all spiritual life and religious progress.

In certain respects the Christian initiation is more difficult of attainment than the initiation of ancient times. It is bound up with the essence and mission of Christianity which came into the world at a time when man had descended most deeply into matter.

This descent was to imbue him with a new consciousness, but the struggle involved in rising from the depths of materialism demands greater effort and renders initiation more difficult. That is why the Christian masters demand intense humility and devotion of their pupils.

The Christian initiation has always consisted of seven stages, four of which correspond to four of the Stations of Calvary. The stages are: —

The Washing of the Feet.

The Scourging.

The Crowning with Thorns.

The Bearing of the Cross.

The Mystic Death.

The Entombment.

The Resurrection.

*The Washing of the Feet* is a preparatory exercise of a moral character, relating to the scene where

Christ washes the feet of the disciples before the Easter Festival (St. John 13): “Verity, verily I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.” Theology gives a purely moral interpretation to this act and looks upon it merely as an example of the profound humility and devotion of the Master to His disciples and His work. The Rosicrucians also held this view but in a deeper sense, relating the story to the evolution of all beings in Nature. The scene is really an allusion to the law that the higher is a product of the lower. The plant might say to the mineral: I am above you since I have a life which you have not; yet without you I could not exist, for the substances which nourish me are drawn from you. The animal again might say to the plant: I am above you, for I have feeling, desires, the capacity for voluntary movement which you have not; but without the food which you provide, without your leaves and fruits I could not live. And man should say to the plants: I am above you, but to you I owe the oxygen which I breathe. To the animals he should say: I have a soul and you have not; yet we are

brothers and companions, involved in the great process of evolution. The esoteric meaning of the Washing of the Feet is that Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, could not exist without the Apostles.

The neophyte who meditates on this theme for months and years has a vision of the Washing of the Feet in the astral world during sleep. Then he is ready to pass to the second stage of the Christian initiation.

*The Scourging*, — At this stage man learns to resist the scourgings of life. Life brings sufferings of all kinds — physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual. Life is felt to be a dreadful and incessant torture. The disciple must endure it with perfect equanimity of soul and heroic courage. He must cease to know physical or moral fear. When he has become fearless, he sees, in dream, the scene of the Scourging. In another vision he sees himself in the Christ Who is scourged. Certain symptoms in physical life accompany this event. There is an intensification of the life of feeling, a wider sense of life and of love. We have an example of

heightened sensibility transferred to the world of intelligence, in the life of Goethe. After lengthy osteological studies of the skeleton of man and of the animals, as well as comparative embryological research, Goethe came to the conclusion that the intermaxillary bone must exist in man. Before his time, science denied the existence of this bone in the upper jaw of man. Goethe himself says that he was overcome with joy and a kind of ecstasy when he actually discovered the intermaxillary bone in the human jaw, adding that it was one of the most wonderful experiences of his life. During his Italian journey he again had the same experience. He was looking at a fragment of a sheep's skull, and another idea came to him — an idea still more significant in regard to human evolution — that the human brain, the seat of intelligence, the centre of voluntary movements, is a development and a metamorphosis of the spinal marrow, just as the flower is a culmination and synthesis of root and stem. What faculty was it that enabled Goethe to make these marvelous discoveries which by themselves deserve to make his name immortal? It was his sublime intelligence on the one hand, but

also his intense sympathy with all living beings and the whole of Nature. Such sensitiveness is a refinement and an extension of the forces of life and love. It corresponds to the second stage of Christian initiation and is the recompense for the trial of the Scourging. Man acquires a feeling of love for all beings and this gives him a sense of living in the heart of Nature herself.

*The Crowning with Thorns*, — At this stage man must learn to brave the world morally and intellectually, to desist from anger when all that is most dear to him is being attacked. The capacity to remain aloof when everything is tumbling about our ears, to say “Yea” when the rest of the world says “Nay” — that is what must be acquired before the next step can be taken. This gives rise to a new symptom, namely a dissociation, or rather the power of a momentary dissociation of three faculties which, in man, are united: the faculties of willing, feeling and thinking. We must learn to separate and to re-unite them at will. So long, for example, as some outer event carries us away with uncontrolled enthusiasm, we are immature, for

such enthusiasm comes from the event, not from ourselves, and we may even exercise a shattering influence of which we are not master.

The enthusiasm of the disciple must have its well-spring in the depths of his inner life. He must therefore be able to remain impassive in the face of any event, no matter how catastrophic. That is the only way to reach freedom. The dissociation of feeling, thinking and willing produces in the brain a change that is symbolised by the Crown of Thorns. If this test is to be passed without danger, the powers inherent in the personality must be sufficiently intense and in perfect equilibrium. If the disciple has not reached this stage, or if he receives wrong guidance, the change in the brain may lead to insanity. Insanity is nothing but an involuntary separation of these faculties without the possibility of their re-union by dint of the inner will. The disciple brings about the separation by an act of conscious volition. A flash of his will re-establishes the link between the organs and the activities of soul. In the lunatic, the cleft may be incurable and produce a physical lesion in the

nerve-centres.

In the course of the stage in the Christian initiation known as the Crowning with Thorns, there arises the phenomenon known as the *Guardian of the Threshold* — the appearance of the *lower double* of man. The spiritual being of man, composed of his impulses of will, his desires and his thoughts, appears to the Initiate in visible form. It is a form that is sometimes repugnant and terrible, for it is the offspring of his good and bad desires and of his *karma* — it is their personification in the astral world, the *Evil Pilot* of the Egyptian Book of the Dead. This form must be conquered by man before he can find the higher Self. The Guardian of the Threshold which has been a phenomenon of astral vision from times immemorial, is the origin of all the myths concerning the struggles of Heroes with monsters, of Perseus and Hercules with the Hydra, of St. George and Siegfried with the dragon.

The premature appearance of the astral world and the sudden apparition of the Double or Guardian of the Threshold may lead a man who is not fully prepared or who has not taken all the precautions



necessary for the disciple, to madness and insanity.

*The Bearing of the Cross* refers, symbolically, to a virtue of the soul. This virtue which consists in a sense of having 'the world on one's conscience' as Atlas bore the world on his shoulders, may be called a feeling of identification with the whole Earth, or in the words of oriental occultism the cessation of the feeling of separateness.

In general, and above all in modern times, men identify themselves with the body. (In his *Ethics*, Spinoza says that the basic and fundamental idea of man is the idea of the body in action.) The disciple must cultivate the idea that in the sum-total of things, his body in itself is of no more importance than any other body, whether it, be the body of an animal, a table or a piece of marble. The self is not bounded by the skin; it is united with the great organism of the universe as the hand is united with the rest of the body. The hand alone would be as dust and ashes. What would the body of man be without the soil on which he rests, without the air he breathes? It would die, for it is but a tiny organ of the Earth and the air. That is

why the disciple must sink himself in every other being and identify himself with the Spirit of the Earth.

Goethe has given a marvelous description of this stage at the beginning of Faust. The Spirit of the Earth to whom Faust aspires, appears before him and speaks these words: “In the tides of life, in Action's storm, A fluctuant wave, A shuttle free, Birth and the Grave, An eternal sea, A weaving, flowing Life, all-glowing; Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares The garments of Life which the Divinity weaves.”

To identify oneself with all beings does not mean that the body is to be despised. It must be borne as some exterior object, even as Christ bore His Cross. The Spirit must wield the body as the hand wields the hammer. At this stage the disciple is conscious of the occult powers lying latent in his body. In the course of his meditations. the stigmata may even appear on his skin. This is the sign that he is ripe for the fifth stage, where, in sudden illumination, the *Mystic Death* is revealed to him.

*The Mystic Death*, — In the grip of the greatest of all suffering the disciple recognises that the world of the senses is illusion. He is actually aware of death and of descending into the world of shades, but then the darkness breaks and a new light—the astral light—shines out. The veil of the temple is ‘rent in twain.’ This light has nothing in common with the physical light of the sun. It rays forth from the inner being of man. The impression it makes is wholly unlike that made by outer light. The following comparison will give us some idea of what is meant. We imagine that we are leaving a turbulent city behind us and entering a dense forest. The noises gradually cease and the silence becomes complete. We finally begin to be aware of what lies beyond the silence, to pass the zero point at which all external sound has ceased. And now sound arises again for the inner ear from the other side of existence. Such is the experience of the soul of one who enters the astral world. He is then in contact with the inverse quality of the things with which he was familiar, just as in arithmetic, beneath the zero point, we enter into the growing series of negative numbers.

Thus do we need to lose all in order to regain all, and this applies to our own existence. In the moment of losing all we appear to die to ourselves and it is in the world around us that we begin to live again.

Such is the *Mystic Death*. When a man has passed this stage, the time has come for the next:

*The Entombment*, — Man feels that he is freed from his own body and is one with the planet. He is one with the Earth and finds himself again within the planetary life.

*The Resurrection*, — This is a sublime experience, impossible of description unless it be within the walls of the sanctuary. The last stage of Christian initiation transcends all words and all analogy fails. At this stage man acquires the power of healing. Yet it must be realised that he who possesses it, possesses at the same time the inverse power to bring about disease. The negative invariably goes in hand with the positive. Hence the tremendous responsibility attaching to this power which may be characterised by the saying:

The creative word issues from the soul aflame.

## IX

### THE ASTRAL WORLD

How are we to conceive of the astral world? The three different worlds of which occultism speaks are as follows: —

(1) The physical world.

(2) The astral world (Purgatory).

(3) The spiritual world, or Devachan in Sanscrit terminology (The Christian Heaven).

There are yet other worlds above and beyond these three but they will not concern us in these lectures. They are, moreover, beyond all human conception. Even the highest Initiates can have but a faint presentiment of them. We will concern ourselves here with planetary evolution within the confines

of our solar system.

The physical world encloses us in the narrow span of material existence between birth and death. Between two incarnations we live and move in the astral and devachanic worlds. The kernel of man's being is immutable, reincarnating perpetually but not eternally. The rhythm of incarnation and reincarnation had a beginning and will have an end. Man comes from other-where and passes other-where.

The astral world is not a place but a *state*, a condition of existence. It surrounds us and we are immersed in it while we live on Earth. We live in it as beings born blind who guide themselves by touch. If sight is opened up for them by operation they see for the first time the forms and colours with which they have always been surrounded.

Thus does the astral world open up to clairvoyant sight. It is another state of consciousness. In Goethe's scientific works there is a wonderful passage on the essence of the light as the language of Nature:

“It is useless to attempt to express the nature of a thing abstractedly. Effects we can perceive, and a complete history of those effects would, in fact, sufficiently define the nature of the thing itself. We should try in vain to describe a man's character, but let his acts be collected and an idea of the character will be presented to us.

“The colours are acts of light — its active and passive modifications: thus considered, we may expect from them some explanation respecting light itself. Colours and light, it is true, stand in the most intimate relation to each other, but we should think of both as belonging to Nature as a whole, for it is Nature as a whole which manifests itself by their means in an especial manner to the sense of sight.

“The completeness of Nature displays itself to another sense in a similar way. Let the eye be closed, let the sense of hearing be excited, and from the lightest breath to the wildest din, from the simplest sound to the highest harmony, from the most vehement and impassioned cry to the gentlest word of reason, still it is Nature that speaks and



manifests her presence, her power, her pervading life and the vastness of her relations; so that a blind man to whom the infinite visible is denied, can still comprehend an infinite vitality by means of another organ.

“And thus as we descend the scale of being, Nature speaks to the senses — to known, misunderstood, and unknown senses: so speaks she with herself and to us in a thousand modes. To the attentive observer who is nowhere dead nor silent, she has even a secret agent in inflexible matter, in a metal, the smallest portions of which tell us what is passing in the entire mass.” [*Theory of Colours*. Preface.]

Let us endeavour to form some conception of the astral world. We must accustom ourselves to quite a different mode of vision. To begin with, everything is confused and chaotic.

The first thing to realise is that in the astral world, everything that exists is revealed as it were in a mirror, inversed. In the astral light the cipher 365 must be read backwards: 563. If an event unfolds

before us, it is perceived in inverse sequence. In the astral world the cause comes *after* the effect, whereas on Earth, the effect follows the cause. In the astral world, the aim appears as the cause — proving that the aim and the cause are identical, acting in an inverse sense according to the sphere of life in which we are functioning. The teleological problem which no metaphysician has been able to solve by dint of abstract thought is thus solved by clairvoyance.

Another result of this inverse unraveling of things in the astral world is that it teaches man to know himself. Feelings and passions are expressed by plant and animal forms. When man begins to behold his passions in the astral world he sees them as animal forms. These forms proceed from himself, but he sees them as if they were assailing him. This is because his own being is objectivised — otherwise he could not behold himself. Thus it is only in the astral world that man learns true self knowledge in contemplating the images of his passions in the animal forms which hurl, themselves upon him. A feeling of hatred

entertained against another being appears as an attacking demon.

This astral self-knowledge occurs in an abnormal way in those who are troubled with Psychical illnesses which consist in constant visions of being pursued by animals and menacing entities. The sufferers are seeing the mirror images of their emotions and desires.

No psychical trouble arises in true initiation, but the premature and sudden flashing-up of the astral world may give rise to insanity. In clairvoyance, man is liberated from his physical body. Hence the dangers that may threaten the mind and brain of one who attempts this kind of training without being absolutely balanced.

The Rosicrucian initiation involved a discipline which was directed to making man objective to himself, to producing, as it were, an objective *self*. We must begin by seeing ourselves objectively. This outer personification of the self makes it possible for the astral body to go forth from the physical body.

What happens at the moment of death? After death, the etheric body, the astral body and the Ego of man have left the physical body. The corpse alone remains in the physical world. A short time after death the etheric and astral bodies unite. The etheric body imprints in the astral body the memory of the life just passed; then the etheric body slowly dissolves and the astral body passes alone into the astral world.

The astral body then contains all the desires generated by life and, being bereft of the physical body, has no means of satisfying them. This gives rise to a sensation of devouring thirst — the basis of the imagination of the punishment of Tantalus in Greek Mythology. There is also the impression of being immersed in fire — Gehenna or Purgatory. The idea of the fire of Purgatory which is laughed at by materialists is a true expression of the subjective state of man after death. By contrast, unsatisfied thirst for action produces the sensation of cold in the soul. It is this cold — born of action unrealised on Earth — that is said to be sensed by the spirits in mediumistic séances. The

soul living in the astral body must learn to break free from the forces of the physical organs and acquire a new organism for existence in the astral world.

The soul now begins to live through the past life in backward order, beginning at death and going back to birth. Not until the life has been lived through in this purifying fire to the point of birth is the soul ready to pass into the spiritual world — into Devachan. Such is the import of Christ's words to His disciples: “Verity, verily I say unto you, unless ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

Man is impelled by desire when he is descending to earthly incarnation. Not for nothing is desire for the Earth born in man. The end and aim is that he shall learn.

We learn through all our experiences and they enrich our store of knowledge. But in order that man may learn on the Earth, he must be allured by, [or] involved in enjoyment.

When the soul is experiencing the past life in the astral world after death, in backward order, there must be abnegation of enjoyment, while the essence of the experience itself is retained. The passage through the astral world is thus a purification whereby the soul learns to forego all taste for physical pleasures.

Such is the purification of the Hindu *Kamaloca*, of the 'consuming fire.' Man must grow accustomed to existence without a physical body. Death gives rise, at first, to the impression of an immeasurable void.

In cases of violent death and of suicide, the impressions of emptiness, thirst and burning are much more terrible. An astral body that is not prepared for existence outside the physical body, separates with great travail, whereas in natural death the detachment of the matured astral body takes place easily and smoothly. In the case of violent death that is not caused by the will of man, the process of separation is less distressing than in the case of suicide.

During life itself a kind of spiritual death may occur, caused by a premature separation of the Spirit from the body. The astral world is confused with the physical world. Nietzsche is an example of this. In his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche has all-unconsciously transferred the astral into the physical world. The result is a confusion and chaos of ideas, culminating in error, insanity and death.

The dim, dreamy life of many mediums is an analogous phenomenon. The medium invariably loses his orientation between these different worlds and is unable to distinguish the true from the false.

A lie in the physical world becomes an agent of destruction in the astral world. A lie is a murder in the astral world. This phenomenon is the origin of black magic. The earthly commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, may therefore be translated into *Thou shalt not lie*, in reference to the astral world. The lie is nothing but a word, an illusion. It may do untold harm, but nothing is actually destroyed. In the astral world, every feeling, every idea is a

visible form, a living force. The astral lie brings about an impact between the false and true forms, resulting in death.

The white magician would impart to other souls the spiritual life he bears within him. The black magician has the urge to kill, to create a void around him in the astral world because this void affords him a field in which his egoistic desires may disport themselves. He needs the power which he acquires by taking the vital force of everything that lives, that is to say, by killing it.

That is why the first sentence on the tables of black magic is: Life must be conquered. For the same reason, in certain schools of black magic the followers are taught the horrible and diabolical practice of gashing living animals with a knife at the precise part of the body which will generate this or that force in the wielder of the knife. From the purely external aspect, there are certain points in common between black magic and vivisection. On account of its materialism, modern science has need of vivisection. The anti-vivisection movements are inspired by deeply moral motives.



But it will not be possible to abolish vivisection in science *until clairvoyance has been restored to medicine*. It is only because clairvoyance has been lost that medicine has had to resort to vivisection. When man has regained conscious access to the astral world, clairvoyance will enable doctors to enter spiritually into the inner conditions of diseased organs and vivisection will be abandoned as worthless.

Knowledge of life in the astral world leads us to a conclusion of fundamental importance, namely that the physical world is the product of the astral world.

The epidemics which raged notably in the Middle Ages are one example among thousands of the relation of human sins to astral events, as well as of the repercussion in the astral world of sins committed in earthly life. Leprosy was the result of the terror caused by the invasions of the Huns and hordes of Asiatic peoples. The Mongolians, the descendants of the Atlanteans, bore within them the germs of degeneracy. This contact with the European populace produced, in the first

instance, the moral malady of fear in the astral world; the substance of the astral body decomposed and this field of astral decomposition became a field for the development of bacteria, giving rise, on Earth, to diseases such as leprosy.

All that we throw out of ourselves into the astral world at one time will reappear in times to come, on the physical plane. What we sow in the astral world we reap on Earth in future times. We are reaping today the fruits of the narrow, materialistic thoughts strewn by our ancestors in the astral world.

This will make us realise how essential it is to nourish ourselves with occult truths. If science would accept the truths of occultism — merely as hypotheses to begin with — the very world would change. Materialism has cast man into such depths that a mighty concentration of forces is necessary to raise him again. He is subject to illnesses of the nervous system which are veritable epidemics of the life of the soul.

What on the Earth we call *feeling* comes back again to Earth in the form of actuality, event, fact. The nerve-storms that exhaust man have their origin in the astral world.

It is for this reason that the Occult Brotherhoods decided to demonstrate and reveal the hidden truths. For humanity is passing through a crisis and must be helped to regain health and equilibrium. Only by virtue of spirituality can this health and equilibrium be restored.

## X

### THE ASTRAL WORLD

(continued)

The occultist will never dream of imposing dogmas. He is one who tells what he has seen and tested in the astral and spiritual worlds or what has been revealed to him by trustworthy and reliable teachers. He does not desire to convert but to quicken in others the sense that has awakened in him and to enable them to see likewise.

Here we shall consider man as an astral being as he is revealed by clairvoyant vision. The astral being of man includes the whole world of feelings, passions, emotions and impulses of the soul. To inner sight these are changed into forms and colours. The astral body itself is a cloud-like,

ovoid form, permeating and enveloping man. We can perceive it from within.

In man as a physical being, we have to consider the substance and form of the body. The astral substance entirely changes in the course of seven years, but the *form* remains. Behind substance is the constructive, upbuilding principle — the etheric body. We do not, in the ordinary way, perceive it; we only see its accomplished work, in the physical body. The eye of sense only sees what is finished, not what is in the state of becoming.

The contrary is the case when we are able to see the astral body — that is to say, our own astral body. We become aware of it from within through our desires and the various movements of the soul.

Seership consists in learning to *see* from without that which in ordinary life we *feel* from within. Feelings, desires and thoughts then become living and visible forms, constituting the *aura* around the physical sheath.

The etheric body builds and moulds the physical body; the astral body is made up of desires. Every human aura has its own individual shades and predominating colours. There is one fundamental colour in which the others play. The aura of a man with a melancholic temperament, for example, is of a bluish hue. But so many impressions coming from without flow through it that the observer may easily be deceived, above all if he is looking at his own aura. The clairvoyant sees his own aura reversed, as it were, the outer as the inner, the inner as the outer, because he is observing it from outside.

All the great Founders of religions have been possessed of clairvoyant sight. They are the spiritual Guides of mankind, and their precepts are precepts of the moral life based on astral and spiritual truths. This explains the similarities in all the religions. There is a certain similarity, for instance, between the Eight-fold Path of the Buddha and the Eight Beatitudes of Christ. The same underlying truth is that whenever man develops one of the virtues, he unfolds a new

faculty of perception. Why are eight stages mentioned? Because the seer knows that the faculties which may be transmuted into organs of perception are eight in number.

The astral organs of perception are called in occultism, the 'lotus-flowers' (sacred wheels, chakra). The lotus-flower with sixteen petals lies in the region of the larynx. In very ancient times this lotus-flower turned from right to left — that is to say in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock. In the man of today, this lotus-flower has ceased to turn. In the clairvoyant seer it begins to move in the opposite direction — from left to right. In earlier times, eight of the sixteen petals were visible, the others undeveloped. In future ages they will all be visible, for the first eight are the result of the action of unconscious initiation, the other eight of *the conscious* initiation attained by dint of personal effort. The eight new petals correspond to the Beatitudes of Christ.

Another lotus-flower (with twelve petals) is situated in the region of the heart. In earlier times, six petals only were visible. The acquisition of six

virtues will, in times to come, develop the other six. These six virtues are: control of thought, power of initiative, balance of the faculties, optimism which enables a man always to see the positive side of things, freedom from prejudice, and finally, harmony in the life of soul. When these virtues have been acquired, the twelve petals begin to move. They express the sacred quality of the number twelve which we have in the twelve Apostles, the twelve knights of King Arthur, and again in all creation, in all action. Everything in the world develops according to twelve different aspects. We have another example in Goethe's poem, *Die Geheimnisse*, which expresses the ideal of the Rosicrucians. According to the explanation given by Goethe to certain students, each of the twelve Companions of the Rose Cross represents a religious creed.

We find these virtues expressed again in signs and symbols, for symbols are not arbitrary inventions — they are realities. The symbol of the Cross, for instance, as well as that of the Swastika, represents the four-petalled chakram in man. The twelve-



petalled flower is expressed in the symbol of the Rose Cross and the twelve Companions. The thirteenth among them, the invisible Companion who unites them all, represents the truth that unites all religions.

This truth underlies the rites and ceremonies of the various religions. Divine wisdom speaks through the rites and cults which have been founded by seers. The astral world expresses itself through them in the physical world. As in a reflection, the rite represents what is happening in higher worlds. This fact appears again in masonic ritual and in certain Asiatic religions. At the birth of a new religion, an Initiate gives the foundations upon which the ritual of the outer cult is built. As evolution proceeds, the rite — a living picture of the spiritual world — tends towards the domain of Art. Art, too, comes from the astral world; the rite becomes *beauty*. This came to pass notably at the time of Greek civilisation. Art is an astral event of which the cause has been forgotten.

We have an example in the Mysteries and Gods of Greece. In the Mysteries, the hierophant retraced

the development of man in its three stages: man the animal, man the human, man the God (the true Superman, not the false Superman of Nietzsche). The hierophant projected these three supersensible types as living images into the astral light, where they were visible to those who had been initiated into the Mysteries. At the same time they were expressed in poetry and sculpture by three symbols: (1) the Satyr, or bestial type; (2) the human type: Hermes, or Mercury; (3) the divine type: Zeus, or Jupiter. Each of these figures, together with everything around them, represents a cycle of human evolution. That is the way in which the disciples of the Mysteries carried over into Art what they had seen in the astral light.

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The zenith of the earthly life of man is reached at about the age of thirty-five. Why is this so? Why does Dante begin his journey at the age of thirty-five, the middle point of human life? Before this moment, man's activity has been concentrated on the development of the physical body but he can now begin his ascent to the spiritual worlds and

apply his forces for the unfolding of seership. Dante became a seer at the age of thirty-five. It is the age when the physical forces cease to forestall the influx of Spirit; liberated from the body, these same forces can be transformed into clairvoyant faculties. Here we are touching upon a deep mystery: the law of the transformation of organs. Transformation of the organs constitutes man's evolution. The highest in him is the product of what once was the lowest and which has been transfigured.

At the time of the separation of the sexes, the astral body of man divided: the lower part producing the sexual (physical) organism and the higher part giving rise to thought, imagination, speech.

In days of yore, the sexual organs (the procreative forces) and the organ of the voice (the word creative) were united. Two poles have appeared in man's being, where formerly there was but one single organ. The negative pole (animal) and the positive pole (divine) were once united and have separated.

The third aspect of the Logos is the creative power of the word (as expressed at the beginning of the Gospel of St. John), of which the words of human speech are the reflection. In the old myths and legends this truth was represented in the figure of Vulcan, the cripple. His mission was to guard the sacred fire. He is crippled because, in initiation, man must lose something of his lower, physical forces; the lower part of the body is a product of the past. Raised to the heights of initiation, the lower nature must fall away, to rise thereafter to a yet higher stage. Thus in the course of his evolution man has divided into a lower and higher nature.

In certain mediaeval pictures, the human body is divided into two parts by a straight line; the head and left upper part of the body are above, the right upper part and the lower part of the body are below the line. This division is an indication of the past and the future of the human body.

The two-petalled lotus-flower lies beneath the forehead, at the root of the nose. As yet it is an undeveloped astral organ which will one day

unfold into two antennae or wings. The symbol of them can already be seen in the horns traditionally represented on the head of Moses.

Viewed from above downwards, head and sexual organ, man is synthetic and one. All this is the product of the past. Left and right he is symmetrical, representing the present and the future. These two symmetrical parts, however, have not the same value. Why is man usually right-handed? The right hand which is the more active of the two today, is destined subsequently to atrophy. The left hand will survive when the two 'wings' on the forehead have developed. The heart will be the brain of the chest — an organ of knowledge.

Before man assumed the upright posture there was a time when he moved on all fours. Such is the origin of the riddle of the Sphinx: 'Who is the being who in infancy walks on four legs, in middle age on two, in old age on three?' Oedipus answers that this being is man, who when, a baby crawls on all fours, and in old age leans on a stick. In reality, riddle and answer refer to the whole evolution of

humanity, past, present and future, as it was known in, the ancient Mysteries. Quadruped in a previous epoch of development, man walks today on two feet; in the future he will 'fly' and will indeed make use of three auxiliary organs, namely the two wings developed from the two-petalled lotus which will be the motive organ of his will, and for the rest, the organ arising by a metamorphosis of the left half of the chest, and the left hand. Such will be the organs of movement in the future.

The present organs of reproduction will atrophy as well as the right side and the right hand. Man will give birth to his like by the force of the word; his word will mould ethereal bodies like his own.

## XI

### THE DEVACHANIC WORLD

(HEAVEN)

Devachan is the Sanscrit term for the long period of time lying between the death and rebirth of man. After death, in the astral world, the soul first learns to cast off the instincts that are connected with the body. After this, the soul passes into Devachan for the long period that lies between two incarnations.

The devachanic world is a state or condition of existence. It surrounds us even in earthly life, but we do not perceive it. In order, by way of analogy, to understand devachanic existence and its functions in earthly and cosmic life, it will be best to take our start from a consideration of the state

of sleep.

For the vast majority of human beings, sleep is a condition full of enigmas. During sleep, man's etheric body remains with his physical body and continues its vegetative, restorative functions, but the astral body and individual Ego leave the sleeping body and live an independent existence.

The physical body is used up, consumed, as it were, by our conscious life. From morning till night man spends his forces; the astral body transmits sensations to the physical body which gradually exhaust it. At night, the astral body functions in quite a different way. It no longer transmits sensations which come from outside; it works upon them and brings order and harmony into what the waking life, with its chaotic perceptions, has thrown into disorder. By day, the function of the astral body is to receive and transmit; by night, during sleep, its function is to bring order, to build up and refresh the spent forces.



In man's present stage of evolution, it is not possible for the astral body to do this work of restoration by night and at the same time to observe what is happening in the surrounding astral world. How, then, can man arrive at the point of being able to relieve his astral body of its work, in order to set it free for *conscious* existence in the astral world?

The procedure adopted by the adept in order to release his astral body is, on the one hand, to train and develop such feelings and thoughts as possess, in themselves, a certain rhythm which can then be communicated to the physical body and, on the other, to avoid those which give rise to physical disorder. Joy or suffering that runs to extremes is avoided. The adept teaches the necessity for equanimity of soul.

Nature is governed by one sovereign law which is that rhythm must enter into all manifestation. When the twelve-petalled lotus-flower which constitutes man's organ of astral-spiritual perception has developed, he can begin to work upon his body and imbue it with a new rhythm

whereby its fatigue is healed. Thanks to this rhythm and the restoration of harmony it is no longer necessary for the astral body to perform the restorative work on the sleeping physical body which alone prevents it from falling into ruin.

The whole of waking life is a process destructive of the physical body. Illnesses are caused by excessive activity of the astral body. Eating to excess affords a stimulus to the astral body which re-acts in a disturbing way on the physical body. That is why fasting is laid down in certain religions. The effect of fasting is that the astral body, having greater quiet and less to do, partially detaches itself from the physical body. Its vibrations are modulated and communicate a regular rhythm to the etheric body. Rhythm is thus set going in the etheric body by means of fasting. Harmony is brought into life (etheric body) and form (physical body). In other words, harmony reigns between the universe and man.

This gives us some idea of the function performed by the astral body during sleep. Where is the Self, the Ego of man? In the world of Devachan, but he

has no consciousness of it. We must distinguish between sleep that is filled with dreams and the state of deep sleep. Sleep that is filled with dreams is an expression of astral consciousness. Deep, dreamless sleep — the sleep that follows the first dreams — corresponds to the devachanic state. Nothing of it is remembered because it is a condition of unconsciousness for the physical being of ordinary man. Only after the attainment of higher initiation is man aware of his experiences in deep sleep. In the Initiate there is continuity of consciousness through waking life, dream life and dreamless sleep.

Let us now consider the condition of man in Devachan, after death. At the end of a certain time, the etheric body disperses into the forces of the living ether.

What is the next task of the astral body and Ego? A new etheric body has to be built for the incarnation that is to follow. Devachanic existence is devoted, in part, to this work. The substance of the etheric body, like that of the physical body, is not conserved. The substance of which the

physical body is composed, is constantly changing — to the point of being wholly renewed in the course of seven years. Similarly, etheric substance is renewed, although its principles of form and inner structure remain the same under the influence of the higher Self. At death, this substance is given completely over to the ether-world and nothing remains from one incarnation to another, any more than the substance of the physical body remains. In each successive incarnation, therefore, the etheric body of man is entirely renewed. That is why there is such a change in the physiognomy and bodily form of man from one incarnation to another. The physiognomy and bodily form do not depend upon the will of the individual but upon his *karma*, his desires, passions and his involuntary actions.

It is quite different in the case of an initiated disciple. He develops his etheric body in earthly existence in such a way that it is conserved and is fit to pass into Devachan after death. Here on Earth he is able to awaken, within his etheric forces, a 'Life-Spirit' which constitutes one of the

imperishable principles of his being. The Sanscrit term for the etheric body which has developed into Life-Spirit is *Budhi*. When this principle of Life-Spirit has developed in the disciple, it is no longer necessary for him entirely to re-mould his etheric body between two incarnations. His period of devachanic existence is then much shorter and for this reason the same character, temperament and outstanding traits are carried forward from one incarnation to another. When the *master* in occultism has reached the point of conscious control not only of his etheric but of his *physical* body, another, higher spiritual principle comes into being — Spirit-Man (in Sanscrit, *Atma*). At this stage the Initiate preserves the characteristics of his physical body every time he incarnates on Earth. With unbroken consciousness, he passes from earthly to heavenly life, from one incarnation to another. Here we have the origin of the legend referring to Initiates who lived for a thousand or two thousand years. For them there is neither Kamaloca or Devachan but unbroken consciousness through deaths and births.

The following objection to the idea of re-incarnation is sometimes made: When a man has accomplished his task in the physical world, he knows the Earth. Why, then, should he return? This objection would be justifiable if man were to return under similar conditions. But as a general rule, he returns to find a new Earth, a new humanity, even a new Nature. For all have evolved and he can enter a new apprenticeship, fulfil a new mission.

These changing conditions of the Earth which determine the times of rebirth, are themselves determined by the passage of the Sun through the Zodiac. Eight centuries before Jesus the Christ, the vernal equinox fell with the Sun in the sign of the Ram. Reference is made to this in the legend of the Golden Fleece and in the name of the Lamb of God — the Christ. 2,160 years before that, the vernal equinox fell with the Sun in the sign of the Bull, a fact expressed in the cults of the Egyptian Apis or the Mithras Bull in Persia. 2,160 years before that again, the vernal equinox fell with the Sun in the sign of the Twins and we find this

expressed in the cosmogony of the very ancient Persians, in the two opposing figures of Ormuzd and Ahriman. When the civilisation of Atlantis was destroyed and the age of the Vedas was beginning, the Sun at the vernal equinox was in the sign of Cancer, (inscribed as the sign of cancer) indicating the end of one period and the beginning of another.

There has always been some consciousness among the peoples of the Earth of their relation to the heavenly constellations. The great periods of human civilisation are subject to the heavenly cycles and the movement of the Earth in its relation to Sun and stars. This fact explains the different characteristics of the various epochs and gives new meaning to the incarnations occurring in them. 2,160 years is approximately the time needed for the accomplishment of a male and a female incarnation — that is to say, for the two aspects under which the human being gathers all the experiences of one epoch.

A new flora and a new fauna on Earth are brought forth on Earth by the Devas; they are an

expression of the forms of Devachan.

Darwin tries to explain the process of earthly evolution by the struggle for existence — but that is no explanation. The occultist knows that the flora and fauna of Earth are shaped by forces issuing from Devachan. The more man has advanced in his evolution, the more he can participate in this process. His influence upon the moulding of Nature is measured by the extent to which his consciousness has developed.

The Initiate can work in the sphere where the germs of new plants come into being, for Devachan is the region where vegetation receives its form. In Kamaloca, man works at building up the animal kingdom. Kamaloca belongs to the Moon-sphere; Devachan to the Sun-sphere.

Thus man is bound up with all the kingdoms of Nature. Plato speaks of the symbol of the Cross, saying that the soul of the world is bound to the body of the world as it were upon a Cross. What is the meaning of this symbol? It is an image of the soul passing through the kingdoms of Nature. In



contrast to the human being, the plant has its root beneath and its organs of generation above, turned towards the Sun. The animal is at the intermediary stage, its organism lying, generally speaking, in the horizontal direction. Man and the plants stand vertically upright and with the animal form a Cross — the Cross of the world.

In future ages there will be conscious participation on the part of man in the higher worlds after death in the work of building up the lower kingdoms of Nature. The consciousness of man will govern the circumstances whereby a new civilisation comes into being, concurrently with the appearance of a new flora. The divine mission of the Spirit is to forge the future. A time will come when there will be no question of 'miracle' or chance. Flora and fauna will be a conscious expression of the transfigured soul of man. Creative works on Earth are wrought by the Devas and by man. If we build a cathedral, we are working on the mineral kingdom. The mountains, the banks of the holy Nile are the work of the Devas the temples on the banks of the Nile are the work of man. And the

aim is one and the same — the transfiguration of the Earth.

In future ages man will learn to mould all the kingdoms of Nature with the same consciousness with which today he can give shape to mineral substances. He will give form to living beings and take upon himself the labours of the Gods. Thus will he transform the Earth into Devachan.

## XII

### THE DEVACHANIC WORLD

(Continued)

Devachan (abode of the Gods) corresponds to the heaven of the Christians, the spiritual world of the occultists.

These regions of existence are beyond the range of our physical senses, although they are intimately connected with this world. In attempting to describe them, we must have recourse to allegories and symbols. The words of human language are only adapted to express the world of sense.

There are seven distinct stages or degrees of Devachan. The seven stages are not definite 'localities' but conditions or states of the life of soul and Spirit. Devachan is everywhere present; it

envelops us as does the astral world, only it is invisible. By dint of training, the Initiate acquires, one by one, the faculties necessary for beholding it.

At the first stage of clairvoyance, greater order enters into dreams; man sees marvelous forms and hears words that are pregnant with meaning. It becomes more and more possible to decipher the meaning of dreams and to relate them to actuality. We may dream, for example, that a friend's house is on fire and then hear that he is ill. The first faint glimpses of Devachan give the impression of a sky streaked with clouds which gradually turn into living forms.

At the second stage of clairvoyance, dreams become precise and clear. The geometrical and symbolic figures employed as the sacred signs of the great religions are, properly speaking, the language of the creative Word, the living hieroglyphs of cosmic speech. Among such symbols are: the cross, the sign of life; the pentagram or five-pointed star, the sign of sound or word; the hexagram or six-pointed star (two

interlaced triangles) the sign of the macrocosm reflected in the microcosm, and so forth. At the second stage of clairvoyance, these signs — which we today delineate in abstract lines — appear full of colour, life and radiance on a background of light. They are not, as yet, the garment of living beings, but they indicate, so to say, the norms and laws of creation. These signs were the basis of the animal forms chosen by the earliest Initiates to express the passage of the Sun through the Zodiacal constellations. The Initiates translated their visions into such signs and symbols. The most ancient characters employed in Sanscrit, Egyptian, Greek and Runic scripts — every letter of which has ideographic meaning — were the expressions of heavenly ciphers.

At this stage of his seership, the disciple is still at the threshold of Devachan. His task is to penetrate into Devachan, to find the path leading from the astral world to the first stage of the devachanic world proper. This path was known to all the occult schools and even during the first centuries, Christianity contained esoteric teaching of which

traces can be found. The ancient methods of Initiation, however, were abandoned from the beginning.

In the *Acts of the Apostles*, mention is made of Dionysius the Areopagite. He was an initiated disciple of St. Paul and taught an esoteric Christianity. Later on, at the Court of Charles the Bald in the ninth century, John Scotus Erigena again taught the esoteric doctrines. Esoteric Christianity was then gradually obscured by dogma. When the Initiate has penetrated into Devachan, however, he finds that the descriptions given by Dionysius of this world are correct.

The rhythmic breathing practised in Yoga was one of the methods by means of which man was enabled to penetrate the world of Devachan. A certain sign that this entrance has been made is a conscious experience indicated in Vedic philosophy by the words: *tat twam asi* (Thou art That).

In dream, man beholds his own bodily form from without. He sees his body stretched on the couch

but merely as an empty sheath. Around this empty form shines a radiant, ovoid form — the astral body. It has the appearance of an aura from which the body has been eliminated. The body itself seems like a hollow, empty mould. It is a vision where everything is reversed as in a photographic negative. The soul of crystal, plant and animal is seen as a kind of radiation, whereas the physical substance appears as an empty sheath. But it is only the phenomena of Nature that so appear — nothing that has been made by the hands of men. At the first stage of Devachan, we are contemplating the *astral* counterparts of the phenomena of the physical world. This region has been spoken of as the ‘continents’ of Devachan — the ‘negative’ forms of the valleys, mountains and physical continents.

If he enters into deep meditation while the breath is held, man reaches the second stage of Devachan. The moulds which represent physical substance are seen to be filled with spiritual currents — the currents of life universal. This is the *ocean* of Devachan. At this stage the Initiate

enters the well-spring of all life. This life has the appearance of a network of vast streams with their tributaries. At the same time there is a strange and new experience of living *within* the metals. Reichenbach, the author of *L'Od*, speaks of this phenomenon in connection with sensitive subjects who were able to detect different metals wrapped in paper.

The Beings living in the region which becomes perceptible at the second stage of clairvoyant vision are called by Dionysius the Areopagite, the Archangels. [In German, Erzengel, — Erz = ore, mineral.] They represent the living soul of the minerals.

To attain the third stage of Devachan, thought must be freed from bondage to the things of the physical world. Man can then live consciously in the world of thought, quite independently of the actual content of thought. The pupil must experience the *function* of pure intellect, apart from its content. A new world will then be revealed. To the perception of the ‘continents’ and ‘waters’ of Devachan (the astral soul of things and



the streaming currents of life) will be added the perception of its 'air' or 'atmosphere.' This atmosphere is altogether different from our own; its substance is living, sonorous, sensitive. Waves, gleams of light and sounds arise in response to our gestures, acts and thoughts. Everything that happens on Earth reverberates in colours, light and sound. Whether it be in sleep or after death, the echoes of Earth can be experienced in these 'airs' of Devachan. It is possible, for example, to experience the effects of a battle. We do not actually see the battle, nor hear the cries of the soldiers and the booming of the cannons. Strife and passions appear in the form of lightning and thunder. Thus Devachan does not separate us from the Earth, but reveals it to us from outside, as it were. We do not experience sorrow and joy as if they were arising in ourselves; we behold them objectively, as a spectacle. Devachan is a school of apprenticeship where we learn to regard sorrows and joys from a higher point of view, where we strive to transmute suffering into joy, failures into renewed efforts, death into resurrection.

This has nothing in common with the passive contemplation and more or less egotistic bliss of heaven conceived of by certain writers on religion who think that the sufferings of the damned are part of the bliss of the elect. Devachan is a living heaven, where the overwhelming urge to sympathy and action contained in the human soul is faced with a boundless field of activity and a vista of infinity.

At the fourth stage of Devachan, the *archetypes* of things arise — not the ‘negatives’ but the original types. This is the laboratory of the Cosmos wherein all forms are contained, whence creation has proceeded; it is the home of the Ideas of Plato, the ‘Realm of the Mothers’ of which Goethe speaks in *Faust* in connection with Helena. In this realm of Devachan, the Akashic Record of Indian philosophy is revealed. In our modern terminology we speak of this Record as the astral impression of all the events of the world. Everything that passes through the astral bodies of men is ‘fixed’ in the infinitely subtle substance of this Record as in a sensitive plate. To understand the images which

hover in the astral nimbus of the Earth, we must have recourse to analogies. The human voice pronounces words which set up waves of sound, penetrating by the ears into the brains of others, where images and thoughts are evoked. Each of these words is a wave of sound with an absolutely definite form which — if we could see it — is distinct from all others. Let us imagine these words congealing somewhat as water congeals to ice by sudden, intense cold. In such a case the words would descend to Earth as congealed air and we could recognise each word by its form.

And now, instead of a process of densification, let us imagine the reverse. We know that matter can pass through the most solid to the most rarified states: solid, liquid, gaseous. Matter can be subtilised to a point at which we are led over to ‘negative’ matter — Akasha. Events on Earth impress themselves into this akashic substance and can be rediscovered there even those which occurred in far remote ages of the past.

Akashic pictures are not static and immobile. They unroll before the eye of the seer as living tableaux

where objects and persons move and even speak. The astral form of Dante would speak as he spoke in his own milieu. It is almost invariably this kind of image that is seen in spiritualistic séances, where it is thought to be the spirit of the dead.

Our task is to learn how to decipher the pages of this book of living images and to unroll the innumerable scrolls of the ‘Chronicle’ of the universe. This can only be done if we are able to distinguish between appearance and reality, between the human sheath and the living soul. Daily discipline and long training are necessary if false interpretations are to be prevented. Definite answers to questions, for example, might be received from the form of Dante thus perceived. But they do not emanate from the *individuality* of Dante, for the individuality continues to evolve; they emanate from the ancient figure of Dante, ‘fixed’ in the etheric milieu of his time.

The fifth realm of Devachan is the sphere of heavenly harmony. The higher regions of Devachan are characterised by the fact that all sounds have a greater clarity, brilliance and

richness. In a mighty harmony we hear the voice of all beings. This harmony was called by Pythagoras, the 'Music of the Spheres.' It is the living, Cosmic Word. To the clairvoyant who has now become *clairaudient*, each being communicates his true name in a definite sound or tone. In *Genesis*, Jehovah takes the hand of Adam and Adam gives all beings their names. On Earth, the individual is lost among the crowd of other beings. In the highest sphere of Devachan, each being has his own particular sound; yet at the same time the Initiate is united with all beings, becomes one with his environment.

The Initiate who has attained to this degree is called the 'Swan.' He hears the sounds through which his master speaks to him and then communicates them to the world. The singing swan of Apollo brings to the ears of men the tones of the Beyond. The swan is said to come from the land of the Hyperboreans — that is to say from the world where the Sun sinks to rest, from heaven.

At this point, the Initiate passes to a sphere beyond the world of stars. He no longer reads the Akashic

Records from the side of the Earth but from the side of the heavens. The Akashic Record becomes the occult script of the stars and the Initiate experiences the primal source of the universe, of the Logos.

In the myths, we find indications of this degree of the Swan, notably in the Middle Ages in the Grail stories which give expression to experiences in the devachanic world. All the exploits there described are by knights of the Grail, who represent the great spiritual impulses given to mankind by command of the masters.

The time when the legend of the Grail was composed, under the inspiration of high Initiates, is the age when the reign of the Bourgeoisie began and when the movement connected with the freedom of great cities had its rise, coming from Scotland into England and thence to France and Germany. When he is a free citizen, man aspires unconsciously to truth and divine life. In the legend of Lohengrin, Elsa represents the soul of man in the Middle Ages, striving to develop what is always expressed in occultism by a female

figure. Lohengrin, the knight who comes from an unknown country, from the Castle of the Holy Grail, to deliver Elsa, represents the master who is the bearer of truth. He is the messenger of the Initiate and is borne by the symbolic swan. The messenger of the great Initiates is a “Swan.” None may ask his true name nor whence he comes. His authority may not be doubted. By his words he must be believed; by the truth shining in his countenance he must be recognised. He who has not this faith is incapable of understanding, unworthy to listen. That is why Lohengrin forbids Elsa to ask his name and whence he comes. The Swan is the *chela* who bears the master.

The disciple who has reached the fifth degree of initiation is sent by the master into the world. The legend of Lohengrin is a description of events occurring in the higher worlds. The light of the Logos — the solar and planetary Word — shines through the myths and legends of the ages.

## XIII

### THE LOGOS AND THE WORD

We will endeavour in contemplation to retrace the stages of man's evolution to the Logos by Whom this world was created.

Modern exoteric science goes back to the Stone Age — an epoch when man lived in caves, using shaped stones as his only instruments. His existence was primitive in the extreme, his horizon narrow, his thought limited to the search for food and means for defending his life.

Occult science leads us back beyond this Stone Age to the epoch of Atlantis. In those times, man's physical appearance was not at all the same as it is today. It is known that the brow of prehistoric man was not developed, for, in effect, the development



of the brow and forehead runs parallel with the development of the brain and of thinking. In days of yore, the physical brain was much smaller than the corresponding ether-form which extended beyond it on all sides. In the course of evolution, the etheric and physical brains have become more or less equal in size. A certain centre in the etheric brain which is now *inside* the skull, was in the evolution of Atlantean man, this centre moved to the interior of the skull. It was a moment of cardinal importance, for as soon as man began to think, to be conscious of his own being and to say 'I,' he began to associate ideas and to calculate — which he could not do before. On the other hand, the earliest Atlanteans possessed a far stronger and truer *memory*. Their knowledge was based, not upon the relations between facts but on their memory of these facts. They knew, by their memory, that a certain event would invariably give rise to a series of others; but they did not grasp the *causes* of these facts, nor could they think about them. In addition to this powerful memory, they possessed another faculty — a mighty power of *will*. Today, man can no longer work directly with

his will upon the life forces. He cannot, for example, hasten the growth of plants by an act of will. The Atlantean had this power and was, moreover, able to draw from the plants ether forces which he knew how to use. He did this instinctively, without the help of intellect and the faculties of logical reasoning which are associated today with what we call the 'scientific mind.' To the measure in which intellectuality, the faculty of reflective thought and calculation unfolded in the men of Atlantis, to that measure their powers of instinctive clairvoyance declined.

If we go still further back in the history of Atlantis, we come to a very remote period when expression through *speech*, that is to say, expression in articulate sounds, first became possible. This was the age when man began to walk upright, for speech and the expression of articulate sounds can only be a faculty of beings who stand upright.

Before the great Atlantean race, of which all European and Asiatic races were the offshoots, there existed another continent and other peoples, still nearer to the animal nature — the Lemurian

race. Science only admits its existence as a hypothesis. Certain islands to the South of Asia and the North of Australia are, nevertheless, evidences of this continent; they are the metamorphosed remains of old Lemuria. The temperature of the Earth in those times was much higher than it is today. The atmosphere was vaporous, full of currents. In Lemuria, we find rudimentary human forms, breathing not through the nasal organs but through organs more like gills.

In the course of human evolution, organs are perpetually being transformed both as to character and appearance. Thus primitive man walked on four feet; he could not utter articulate sounds; he had no ears with which to hear. Movement in the semi-liquid, semi-gaseous element surrounding him was made possible by an organ which enabled him to float and swim. When the elements differentiated and man found himself on solid earth, this organ changed into the lungs, the gills into ears and the frontal parts of his structure into arms and hands-free instruments for action.

Besides this, he began to utter articulate sounds — the words of speech.

This great transformation was of cardinal importance to man. In *Genesis* (II.7), we read: “And the Lord God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a *living soul*.” This passage describes the period when the gills once possessed by man changed into lungs and he began to breathe the outer air. Simultaneously with the power to breathe, he acquired an inner soul and with this soul, the possibility of inner consciousness, of becoming aware of the self living within the soul.

When man began to breathe air through the lungs, his blood was invigorated and it was then that a soul higher than the group-soul of the animals, a soul individualised by the Ego-principle, could incarnate in him to carry evolution forward to its fully human and then divine phases. Before the body breathed air, the soul of man could not descend to incarnation, for air is an element enfilled with soul. At that time, therefore, man actually inbreathed the divine soul which came

from the heavens. The words of Genesis, in their evolutionary sense, are to be taken quite literally. To breathe is to be permeated with Spirit. This truth was the basis of the exercises given in ancient systems of yoga. These exercises were founded upon the rhythm of breathing, their purpose being to render the body fit to receive the impouring Spirit. When we breathe, we commune with the world-soul. The inbreathed air is the bodily vesture of this higher soul, just as the flesh is the vesture of man's lower being.

These changes in the breathing-process mark the transition from ancient consciousness which was merely a play of pictures, to consciousness as it is in our time. Sense perceptions are received from the body; consciousness has a purely objective character. Consciousness in pictures (imaginative) created its own inner content by means of an inherent, plastic force. The further we go into the past, the more we find the soul of man living, not *within* him, but *around* him. We reach a point when the sense-organs existed only in germ and when man merely received from external objects

impressions which gave rise to attraction or repulsion, sympathy or antipathy. The movements of this being — whom we cannot really call ‘man’ in our sense of the word — were governed by these feelings of attraction or repulsion. He had no reasoning faculty and the pineal gland — an organ of cardinal importance in those times — was his only ‘brain’.

The existence of this imaginative consciousness is the answer to endless philosophical discussions on the objective nature and reality of the world and it is the refutation of all purely subjectivist philosophies, such, for instance, as that of Berkeley. Two poles of being and of life are essential to evolution. The ‘subjective universal’ becomes the objective universe; man proceeds, first, from the subjective to the objective and he will finally be led from the objective to the subjective by the development of Spirit-Self (Manas), Life-Spirit (Budhi), Spirit-Man (Atma).

Dream-consciousness is an atavistic survival of the picture consciousness of olden times. One quality of this picture consciousness is that it is *creative*. It

creates forms and colours which do not exist in physical reality.

Objective consciousness is by nature analytic subjective consciousness is by nature plastic and has magical power. (This is indicated by the etymology of the word '*image*'). The subjective, plastic consciousness of man was thus superseded by objective, analytic consciousness. The procedure by which the soul (which, to begin with, enveloped man like a cloud) subsequently penetrated into the physical body, may be compared with that of a snail secreting its own shell and then shrinking back inside it. The soul first gave form to the body and then penetrated within this body, having prepared the organs of perception from outside. The power of sight with which the human eye is endowed today is the same power which once was exercised upon the eye from without, in order that it might take shape.

The change from outer to inner activity of soul is expressed by a hieroglyph. This is the sign of Cancer in the Zodiac, expressing a dual action or movement — one from without inwards, the other

from within outwards.

The middle of the third (Lemurian) epoch was the time when the soul passed into its self-created dwelling place and began to 'animate' the body from within. Before this point of time we find an astral humanity indwelling a purely astral Earth. Before that again, man and Earth existed merely in a devachanic condition. There was as yet no picture consciousness. Cosmic thoughts poured into and through the being of man. His higher soul was still part and parcel of the whole Cosmos, participating in cosmic thought.

The further we retrace the parallel development of man and Earth, the more do we find them existing in a fluid, embryonic condition and the nearer to Spirit. Today, we have reached the lowest point on the curve of descent; man and Earth have reached the greatest degree of solidification and are about to re-ascend, through the action of individual will, towards the Spiritual.

What underlies this great process of evolution? Where was the home of human beings when, at the



beginning, they existed merely in germ? Whence has man proceeded? Who created him? It is here that we must try to envisage a life and power of manifestation infinitely more sublime than all human, nay, than all planetary life. This power is the Logos.

In what does human and planetary life differ from the life of the Logos? — This question would seem to demand a flight into the unknown, into a universe of another order. And yet there are analogies which help us to understand or at least to divine something of the creative power of the Logos.

Let us try to envisage an all-embracing mind, a mind to which all earthly and planetary experiences are known. Such a mind could live through all and every form of evolution. But with this power alone, it could not rise beyond the point of the creation of man and of the planetary system. It would remain in the sphere of what can be and has been proved by man. Human intelligence cannot pass beyond this limit.

But we can rise to a consciousness other than that wherein our experiences are merely realised in the mind. There are certain states of creative activity in which the spirit of man can give birth to something new, something never seen before. Such, for instance, is the consciousness of a sculptor at the moment he conceives or sees in a flash the form of a statue before his inner eye. He has never seen a model, he *creates* his statue. Such too, is the consciousness of a poet who conceives a poem in one flash of inspiration, in creative, spiritual vision.

This creative power is not generated by any intellectual idea but rather by a spiritual sense, — Think of a hen sitting on its eggs. It is wholly given up to this brooding activity and is filled with a kind of warm, almost voluptuous pleasure in which there arises a dreamy pre-vision of the hatching of the little winged chicken. This bliss in the work of creation exists at every stage of cosmic life, and warmth pours from it. In the sphere of Cosmic Intelligence — which may be conceived as the world of thoughts accessible to

the higher Self (Manas) — this warmth seems to pervade the whole universe, emanating from the creative life of soul (Budhi). We can divine the presence of a creative sphere in existence before our Earth and ‘brooding’ over it. This is to ascend from Spirit-Self to Life-Spirit, and from Life-Spirit to Spirit-Man.

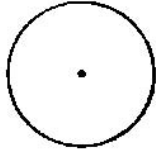
The Ego or ‘I’ Principle of man is created by the third Logos.

We should try to conceive the power of the higher Ego as being suffused through the whole universe as a life-begetting warmth and then we reach the conception of the second Logos by Whom macrocosmic life is quickened and Who is reflected in the creative activities of the human soul.

The one primal source and centre of manifestation is the first Logos — the unfathomable Godhead.

In every age these three Divine principles have been represented in occultism by these three signs:

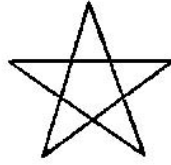
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First Logos  
Godhead



Second Logos  
Macrocosm



Third Logos  
Microcosm

## XIV

### THE LOGOS AND MAN

In the last lecture we retraced the past of man more particularly from the point of view of his form and his body. We will now consider the past as regards his states of consciousness.

The following questions often arise before the mind: Is man the only being upon Earth who possesses self consciousness? Or again: What is the relation between the consciousness of man and that of the animals, plants and metals? Have these lower kingdoms of life any consciousness at all?

Imagine that a tiny insect crawling on the body of a man could see only his finger. It could have no conception whatever of the organism as a whole, nor of the soul. We ourselves are in exactly the

same position as regards the Earth and other beings indwelling it. A materialist has no conception of the soul of the Earth and, as a natural result, he is not aware of the existence of his own soul. Similarly, if a tiny insect is unaware of the soul of man, this is because it has no soul with which to perceive.

The Earth-soul is much more sublime than the soul of man and man knows nothing of it. In reality, all beings have consciousness but man's consciousness is quite different, inasmuch as in our age it is perfectly attuned to the physical world.

As well as the waking state (corresponding to the physical world), man passes through other conditions of consciousness. During dreamless sleep, his consciousness lives in the devachanic world. The consciousness of the plant is always devachanic. If a plant 'suffers,' the suffering brings about a change in devachanic consciousness. The animal has astral consciousness, corresponding to the dream-life of man.

These three states of consciousness are very different. In the physical world we evolve ideas simply by means of the sense organs and the outer realities with which these organs put us into touch. In the astral world, we perceive the surrounding milieu only in the form of pictures, feeling at the same time as if we were part of them.

Why does man, who is conscious in the physical world, feel himself separate from all that is not himself? It is because he receives all his impressions from a milieu which he perceives very distinctly outside his body. In the astral world, on the contrary, we do not perceive by means of the senses but by the sympathy which makes us penetrate to the heart of everything we encounter. Astral consciousness is not confined within a relatively limited field; in a certain sense it is liquid, fluidic. In the devachanic world, consciousness is as diffused as a gas might be. There is no resemblance whatever with physical consciousness, into which nothing penetrates except by way of the senses.

What was the object of this shutting-off of consciousness which followed the stage of imaginative consciousness? If such a shutting-off had not taken place, man could never have said ‘I’ of himself. The divine germ could not have penetrated into his being in the course of evolution if it had not been for the crystallisation of his physical body. Where, then, was this divine Spirit before the solidification of the Earth and of consciousness? Genesis tells us: “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” The divine Spirit, the spark of the Ego, was still in the astral world.

In higher Devachan, beyond the fourth degree, referred to in occultism as *Arupa* (without body), where Akasha (negative substance) has its rise — there is the home of the consciousness of the minerals. We must try to reach a deep and true understanding of the mineral kingdom and discover our moral link with it. The Rosicrucians in the Middle Ages taught their disciples to revere the chastity of the mineral, — “Imagine,” they said, “that while retaining his faculties of thinking



and feeling, a man becomes as pure and free from desire as the mineral, — He then possesses an infallible power — a spiritual power.” — If we can say that the spirits of the several minerals are living in Devachan, we can say equally correctly that the spirit of the minerals is like a man who might live only with devachanic consciousness.

In other beings, then, the existence of consciousness must not be denied. Man has traversed all these degrees of consciousness on the descending curve of evolution. Originally he resembled the minerals, in this sense, that his Ego lived in a higher world and guided him from above. But the aim of evolution is to free man from being subject to beings endowed with a consciousness higher than his own and to bear him to a point where he himself is fully conscious in higher worlds.

All these levels of consciousness are contained within man today:

The consciousness of the mineral-corresponding to deep sleep.

The consciousness of the plant-ordinary sleep.

Animal consciousness-dream-life.

Physical, objective consciousness-the normal waking state. The two former states are atavistic survivals.

A consciousness which repeats the third stage but retains the acquired quality of objectivity. Images have definite colours and are realised as being quite distinct from the perceiver. The subjective sense of attraction or repulsion vanishes. In this new imaginative consciousness, the faculty of reason that has been acquired in the physical world retains its own powers.

Sleep itself — not the dream — here becomes a conscious state. We do not only behold images but we enter into the living essence of beings and hear their inner tones. In the physical world we give names to things but the names are merely outer appellations. Only man can express his own being from within by saying ‘I’ — the ineffable name of conscious individuality. By this word we

distinguish our own personality from the rest of the universe. But when we become conscious of the world of sound, each being, each thing communicates its own true name; in clairaudience we hear the sound which expresses its innermost being and rings forth as a tone in the universe that is distinct from all others.

One stage further and deep sleep becomes a conscious state. Description is impossible, for this condition passes beyond the limits of comparison. All that can be said is that it exists.

Such are the seven states of consciousness through which man passes, and he will pass through others too. There is always one central state, with three beneath and three above. The three higher states reproduce, in a higher sense, the three lower. A traveler is always at the centre of the horizon. Each state of consciousness develops through seven states of life, and each state of life through seven states of form. Thus seven states of form always constitute one state of life; seven states of life compose one whole period of planetary evolution, for example that of our Earth.

The seven states of life culminate in the formation of seven kingdoms, of which four are actually visible: the mineral, plant, animal and human kingdoms. In each state of consciousness, therefore, man passes through 7 x 7 states of form this brings us to 7 x 7 x 7 metamorphoses (343).

If we could envisage in one single tableau the 343 states of form, we should have a picture of the third Logos.

If we could envisage the 49 states of life, we should have a picture of the second Logos.

If we could envisage the 7 states of consciousness, we should have a conception of the first Logos.

Evolution consists in the mutual interaction of all these seven forms. In order to pass from one *form* to the other, a new *spirit* is necessary (the action of the Holy Spirit). In order to pass from one state of life to another, a new *power* is necessary (the action of the Son). In order to pass from one state of *consciousness* to another, a new *consciousness* is necessary (the action of the Father).

Christ Jesus brought a new state of life and was in very truth the Word made Flesh. With the coming of the Christ, a new force entered into the world, preparing a new Earth in a new relationship with the heavens.

## XV

### THE EVOLUTION OF PLANETS AND EARTH

To gain an idea of this evolution we must have recourse not to abstractions but to pictures, for pictures have a living, creative quality that is not contained in the pure idea. The picture is a symbol in one world but corresponds to a reality in a higher world.

We know that before developing to its present stage, our Earth passed through a phase called the Old Moon period. But this Old Moon phase of evolution is not to be confused with the satellite we now see in the sky, nor to any other planet that astronomy might ever discover. The heavenly bodies visible today are bodies which have been *mineralised*. The human eye can only see objects which contain mineral elements and reflect the

light, in other words, objects which have a physical body. When the occultist speaks of the mineral kingdom, he is not merely referring to the stones but to the milieu at the central core of which the consciousness of man unfolds. Many scholars regard living beings as mere machines and reject the idea of a vital force. This mentality is a result of the fact that our organism is unable really to behold life. The occultist, on the other hand, says that in our age *man lives in the mineral world*.

Think of the human eye. It is a highly complicated mechanism, a kind of 'dark chamber,' with the pupil as a window and the crystalline as a lens. The whole body of man is composed of a number of physical organs, equally delicate and complicated. The ear is like a harpsichord with a key-board and fibres for strings. And the same may be said of every sense-organ.

The consciousness of modern man is only awakened if connection is established with his physical or mineral body. True, it awakens first in the physical world, but it must none the less

gradually light up in the other members of man's being — in the member that is constituted by the life-forces (the plant-nature of man), in the member that is chiefly dominated by the forces of feeling (the animal-nature), and finally in the Ego.

Truth to tell, man only knows what is mineral in the universe. He does not know the essential laws underlying the animal's life of instinct and feeling, and the growth of plants. He simply sees their physical expressions. Try to conceive a plant in super physical existence, having lost its mineral substance — it would be invisible to our physical eyes.

But even though man knows only the mineral, at least he has it in his power. He works it, moulds it, smelts and combines it. He fashions the face of the Earth anew. He is able to do this in our age with the help of machines. If we go back to remote historic ages when as yet no human hand had been laid on the Earth, we find it as it issued from the hands of the Gods. But ever since man began to exercise control over the mineral kingdom, the Earth has been changing, and we may foresee an



age when the whole face of the Earth — which at the beginning was the work of the Gods — will have received the stamp imparted by the hand of man.

In the beginning, form was given to all created things by the Gods. This power of giving form has passed from the Gods to men, in so far as the mineral kingdom is concerned. In ancient traditions it was taught that man must accomplish the task of transforming the Earth in fulfillment of a threefold goal, namely the realisation of truth, beauty, goodness. It is for man to make the Earth into a temple of truth, beauty and goodness. And then, those who come after him will look upon his work as we now look upon the mineral world which came forth from the hands of the Gods. Neither cathedrals nor machines have been built in vain. The Gods have given form to the crystal which we extract from the Earth, just as we build our monuments and our machines. Just as in the past the Gods created the mineral world from a chaotic mass, so our cathedrals, inventions and even our institutions are the germs from which a

future world will come to birth.

Having transformed the mineral world, man will learn to transform the plants. This denotes a higher power. Today, man erects buildings; in future times he will be able to create and give shape to plant-life by working upon plant-substance. At a still higher stage, he will give form not only to living beings but to *conscious* beings. He will have power over animal life. When he has reached the stage of being able to reproduce his like by an act of conscious will, he will accomplish, at a higher level, what he accomplishes today in the mineral world.

The germ of this sublime power of generation, cleansed of all element of sensuality, is the *word*. Man became a conscious being when he drew his first breath; consciousness will reach its stage of perfection when he is able to pour into the words he utters, the same creative power with which his thought is endowed today. In this age, it is only words that he communicates to the air. When he has reached the stage of higher creative consciousness, he will be able to communicate

images to the air. The word will then be an Imagination — wholly permeated with life. In giving body to these images, he will be giving body to the word which bears and sustains the image. When we no longer simply embody our thoughts in objects, as for instance when we make a watch, but give body to these images, they will *live*.

And when man knows how to impart life to what is highest in him, these ‘images’ will lead a real and actual existence, comparable to animal existence. At the highest stage of evolution, man will thus be able, finally, to reproduce his own being. At the end of the process of the Earth's transformation, the whole atmosphere will resound with the power of the Word. Thus man must evolve to a stage where he will have the power to mould his environment in the image of his inner being. The initiate only precedes him along this path.

It is evident that the Earth today cannot produce human bodies such as will be produced at the final stage of evolution. When that final stage has come,

these bodies will be a fit expression of the Logos. The one great Messenger, He alone Who manifested in a human body like our own, this power of the Logos, is Christ. He came at the central turning-point of evolution, to reveal its goal.

And now let us enquire into the form in which the Spirit of man lived before this Spirit entered into him by way of the breath. The Earth is a reincarnation of an earlier planet — of the Old Moon. In this lunar period of evolution, the pure mineral did not yet exist. The planetary body was composed of a substance somewhat akin to the nature of wood a substance midway between the mineral and the plant. Its surface was not hard like the mineral — indeed it was liken to turf. It brought forth beings by nature half-plant, half-mollusc, and was inhabited by a third kingdom of beings at a stage of existence midway between the human being and animal. These beings were endowed with a dreamlike, imaginative consciousness. We can envisage the kind of matter of which their ‘bodies’ were composed, by

thinking of the nerve-substance of the crayfish. This matter densified to become the substance of which the brain is now composed. On the Old Moon, this matter remained in a more fluid state but on Earth it required a protective sheath of bone — the skull. In this sense, all the substances of which we are composed are ‘extracts’ of the macrocosm. All this preparatory activity in the universe was necessary in order that the Ego might descend into man.

We have heard that man was only ready to receive the germ of his Ego, when, on Earth, he began to breathe the air around him. Did he then breathe on the Moon?

The further we go back in the periods of evolution, the higher the temperature. Atlantis was bathed in hot vapours. In earlier times still, the air was pure warmth; before that again, fire. Fire was there in the place of air. The Lemurians breathed *fire*. That is why it is said in occult writings that the first Teachers of men were the Spirits of Fire. When physical man appeared on the Earth, air became his element of life. But man changes this air, in

that he transforms it into carbonic acid and the breathing-process has thus caused the materialisation of our globe to descend still one degree lower. The equilibrium is restored by the plant-world.

In times to come, the physical body will disappear; man and the Earth will live as astral forms. Physical substance destroys itself by its own forces. But before this metamorphosis comes about, a cosmic night will fall, just as a previous cosmic night marked the transition of the Old Moon evolution to that of our present Earth.

The atmosphere of the Moon contained nitrogen, just as today the atmosphere of the Earth contains oxygen, and it was the predominance of nitrogen which brought about the end of the Old Moon period and the onset of a cosmic night. The cyanides on Earth are survivals from the conditions existing at the final stages of the Old Moon evolution. That is why they have a destructive effect on Earth, for the Earth is not their proper sphere. They are the poisonous remains of life in another age.

Animal-man, as he lived on the old Moon, is thus the ancestor of earthly, physical man; the Spirit within man is the offspring of the Spirits of Fire in the lunar period. The Beings who on the Old Moon were incarnate in the fire, incarnated, on Earth, in the *air*. But now, has anything of the action of these Spirits of Fire remained in man? On the Old Moon, living beings had no warm blood. What was it that gave rise to the warmth of the blood and, as a consequence, to the life of passions? — The *fire* which was inbreathed by the beings of the Old Moon and which lives again on Earth in their blood. And the Spirit of the air surrounds the body which contains the heritage of the Old Moon evolution, namely, the warmth of the blood, the brain, the spinal fluid, the nerves.

These examples serve to show that a close study of the transformation of substances is required before we can begin to understand the great processes of metamorphosis which took place during the earlier periods of the Earth's evolution. At a stage still earlier than that of the Old Moon, the planetary sphere which has now become our Earth had a

body composed merely of gaseous substance; before that again, we can only speak of a body of *sound*. It is in this sound — the Cosmic Word — that man's evolution has its origin, proceeding thence towards light, fire, air. Only in the fourth condition does consciousness flash up in the Spirit of man. From this point onwards, the directing force bestowed by the Logos has its rise from *within man's own being* and his conscience becomes his rightful guide. His primordial being comes to expression in the 'I,' the Ego. The conscious Ego is the realisation in man of the Christ Principle.



## XVI

### EARTHQUAKES, VOLCANOES, AND HUMAN WILL

In a preceding lecture we went back in human evolution to the time when the division of the sexes occurred. This moment is in itself the climax of a long cosmic preparation. After the night which separated the phase of the ancient moon from the terrestrial phase, the earth to begin with appeared combined with the forces of the present sun and moon. They formed but one body which, little by little, became differentiated thus giving birth to the three bodies as we now know them. The present division of the sexes is the result of the separation between the moon forces and the earthly forces. The feminine forces of reproduction have remained under the influence of the moon. The moon still rules over the forces of propagation

both in man and animal. Thus occult knowledge reveals the forces that are at play in the planetary system.

At the time when the sun was still united both with the earth and the moon, neither plants nor animals nor human beings existed as we know them today. In fact, only a plant kingdom existed then but under totally different conditions from our own. This kingdom preserved a particular connection with the forces of the sun similar to that of the animal with the moon and of man with the earth. As long as the sun was united with the earth-moon, the plants directed their blossoms toward the center of the globe; when the sun separated off they oriented themselves in accordance with it and directed their flowers heavenward. We have seen in an earlier lecture (XI) that the plants have thus adopted an inverted position in relation to man; both manifest themselves in the vertical whereas the animal is found to be half way between the human orientation and that of the plant world. The spinal column of the animal is in the horizontal. It is by means of the gradual separation of the three

heavenly bodies that the different kingdoms on earth have become as we now know them: the plant kingdom at the time of the separation of the sun, the animal when the separation of the moon occurred. The pristine composition of these forces contained in germ what was later to take on physical manifestation. Let us imagine a substance which is heated to a high temperature and then cooled; one would then see the various elements which it contains taking on form.

At the time of the ancient moon we also find the solar forces which during a certain period are concentrated in a celestial body outside the moon. The moon was revolving around the ancient sun but in such a manner that it always turned the same side to the sun; the orbit of the moon around the earth is a continuation of the motion formerly described around the ancient sun. These bodies, both at the beginnings and at the end of this cosmic period, became one — just as the earth, the moon and the sun were united at the beginning of earth evolution and will again be united at the end. These two ancient cosmic bodies would never

have been able to be active in evolution had they not recast their forces after their separation. The moon, during the time it was separated from the sun, developed in such a way that forces were engendered which later made it possible for a third body to appear. In fact, it was during this separation that man was able to develop within himself what later took on physical embodiment and gave him the possibility of developing objective, waking consciousness on earth.

The period which preceded the lunar one is referred to as the solar. At this time of evolution everything was pure solar life. Occultism sees the sun as a fixed star which had previously been a planet and similarly it recognizes the earth as a planet destined to become the sun of a future cosmic system. During the solar period, man was only endowed with a consciousness akin to that of dreamless sleep.

Yet another state preceded the solar period; at that time the sun was not even a planet. The human being was only endowed with a deep trance consciousness or deep sleep. He was not yet the

being of light which he would become on the ancient sun; he simply vibrated like a tone in the pure harmony of this Saturn period, but it should be noted that our present Saturn has nothing to do with this condition.

After our earthly period of clear physical consciousness, a fifth condition will dawn of conscious astral imagination during a period known as Jupiter. This will be followed by a period of Venus where we shall become conscious of what today is the unconsciousness of sleep. Finally, a period of Vulcan will come into being which corresponds to the highest state of consciousness which can be attained by an initiate.

But this does not exhaust the relationships of the earth and the planets. We in fact can divide our present terrestrial stage into two parts. During the first it came about that our blood is red. What has given us our red blood? During the separation of the earth and the sun, this globe composed of fluid substance was shot through by other fluid forces emanating from the planet Mars. Before this passage of Mars not the slightest trace of iron

existed on this earth. In fact, that is a result of this passage; all substances containing iron such as our blood have been subjected to the influence of Mars. Mars has colored the substance of the earth. And the appearance of red blood is the result of its influence. That is why the first half of earth evolution is referred to as the period of Mars.

At that time, iron was a fluid substance and the metals only hardened later on. Mercury is the only metal which has not solidified. When this will have happened the soul of man will have become totally independent of the physical body and astral imaginative vision will have become conscious. This fact is connected with the forces of Mercury which influence the second part of Earth evolution during which they will densify and finally become solid. The Earth is both Mars and Mercury. And it is this which Initiates have woven into our language by indicating that the days of the week belong to the planets of our evolution: Mars and Mercury are placed between the Moon and Jupiter.

## **THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH**

Physical science as yet only knows of the terrestrial crust, a mineral layer which in fact is only like a thin skin at the surface of the earth. In reality the earth consists of a succession of concentric layers which we shall now describe:

1) The mineral layer contains all the metals which are found in the physical bodies of everything that lives at the surface. This crust is formed like a skin around the living being of the earth. It is only a few miles in depth.

2) The second layer can only be understood if we envisage a substance which is the very opposite of what we know. It is negative life, the opposite of life. All life is extinguished there. Were a plant or an animal plunged into it, it would be destroyed immediately. It would be totally dissolved. This second shell — half liquid — which envelopes the earth is truly a sphere of death.

3) The third layer is a circle of inverted consciousness. All sorrow appears there as joy.

And all joy is experienced as sorrow. Its substance, composed of vapors, is related to our feelings in the same negative manner as the second layer is in regard to life. If we now abstract these three layers by means of our thinking, we would then find the earth in the condition in which it was before the separation of the moon. If one is able by means of concentration to attain a conscious astral vision, one would then see the activities in these two layers: the destruction of life in the second and the transformation of feelings in the third.

4) The fourth layer is known as water-earth, soul-earth, or form-earth, It is endowed with a remarkable property. Let us imagine a cube and now picture it reversed inasmuch as its substance is concerned. Where there was substance there is now nothing: the space occupied by the cube would now be empty while its substance, its substantial form, would now be spread around it; hence the term 'earth of form.' Here this whirlwind of forms, instead of being a negative emptiness, becomes a positive substance.



5) This layer is known as the earth of growth. It contains the archetypal source of all terrestrial life. Its substance consists of burgeoning, teeming energies.

6) This fire-earth is composed of pure will, of elemental vital forces — of constant movement — shot through by impulses and passions, truly a reservoir of will forces. If one were to exert pressure on this substance it would resist.

If now again in thought one were to abstract these last three layers just described, one would arrive at the condition in which our globe was when Sun, Moon and Earth were still interwoven.

The following layers are only accessible to a conscious observation which is not only that of dreamless sleep but a conscious condition in deep sleep.

7) This layer is the mirror of the earth. It is similar to a prism which decomposes everything that is reflected in it and brings to expression its complementary aspect; seen through an emerald it

would appear red.

8) In this layer everything appears fragmented and reproduced to infinity. If one takes a plant or a crystal and one concentrates on this layer the plant or the crystal would appear multiplied indefinitely.

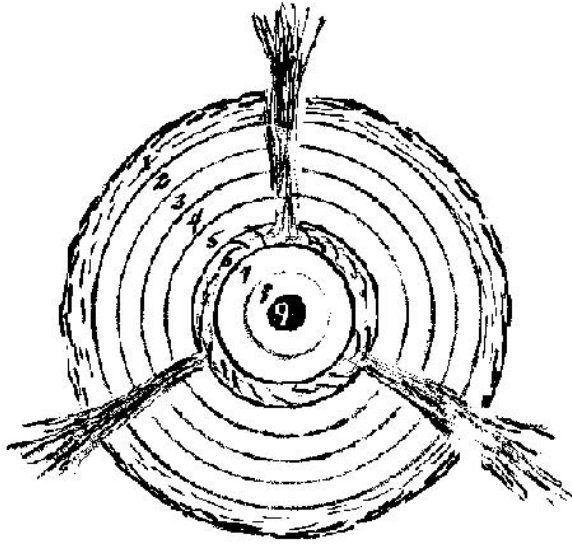
9) This last layer is composed of a substance endowed with moral action. But this morality is the opposite of the one that is to be elaborated on the earth. Its essence, its inherent force, is one of separation, of discord, and of hate. It is here in the hell of Dante that we find Cain the fratricide. This substance is the opposite of everything which among human beings is good and worthy. The activity of humanity in order to establish brotherhood on the earth diminishes the power of this sphere. It is the power of Love which will transform it inasmuch as it will spiritualize the very body of the Earth. This ninth layer represents the substantial origin of what appears on earth as black magic, that is, a magic founded on egoism. (See diagram)

These various layers are connected by means of rays which unite the center of the earth with its surface. Underneath the solid earth there are a large number of subterranean spaces which communicate to the sixth layer, that of fire. This element of the fire-earth is intimately connected with the human will. It is this element which has produced the tremendous eruptions that brought the Lemurian epoch to an end. At that time the forces which nourish the human will went through a trial which unleashed the fire catastrophe that destroyed the Lemurian continent. In the course of evolution this sixth layer receded more and more toward the center and as a result volcanic eruptions became less frequent. And yet they are still produced as a result of the human will which, when it is evil and chaotic, magnetically acts on this layer and disrupts it. Nevertheless, when the human will is devoid of egoism, it is able to appease this fire. Materialistic periods are mostly accompanied and followed by natural cataclysms, earthquakes, etc. Growing powers of evolution are the only alchemy capable of transforming, little by little, the organism and the soul of the earth.

The following is an example of the relationship that exists between the human will and telluric cataclysms: in human beings who perish as a result of earthquakes or volcanic eruptions one notices, during their next incarnation, inner qualities which are quite different. They bring from birth great spiritual pre-dispositions because, through their death, they were brought in touch with forces which showed them the true nature of reality and the illusion of material life.

One has also noticed a relationship between certain births and seismic and volcanic catastrophes.

During such catastrophes materialistic souls incarnate, drawn sympathetically by volcanic phenomena — by the convulsions of the evil soul of the earth. And these births can in their turn bring about new cataclysms because reciprocally the evil souls exert an exciting influence on the terrestrial fire. The evolution of our planet is intimately connected with the evolution of the forces of humanity and civilizations.



## THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH

Mineral crust  
Negative life  
Inverted Consciousness  
Circle of forms  
Circle of growth  
Circle of fire  
Circle of decomposition  
Circle of fragmentation  
Ego-centric-egoism

## XVII

### REDEMPTION AND LIBERATION

There are seven mysteries of life which up till now have never been spoken of outside the ranks of Occult Brotherhoods. Only in our age is it possible to speak of them openly. They have been called the seven 'inexpressible' or 'unutterable' mysteries. We shall attempt to deal with the fourth mystery, that of Death. These mysteries are as follows:

The mystery of the Abyss.

The mystery of Number (which can be studied in Pythagorean philosophy).

The mystery of Alchemy. (We can learn something of this mystery in the works of Paracelsus and Jacob Boehme).

The mystery of Death.

The mystery of Evil (to which reference is made in the Apocalypse).

The mystery of the Word, of the Logos.

The mystery of Divine Bliss. (This mystery is the most occult).

In speaking of the planetary body which preceded our Earth — the Old Moon phase of evolution — we distinguished three kingdoms of Nature, very different from those we know. Our mineral kingdom did not then exist. It came into being as the result of condensation and crystallisation of what on the Old Moon was half-mineral, half-plant. Our plant-world has sprung from the lunar plant-animal. Similarly, the animal world has arisen from the lunar animal-man. So we see that on the Earth, each of these lunar kingdoms makes a descent into materiality. The same thing happens to the Beings who on the Old Moon were higher than animal-man: the Spirits of Fire. In that period man breathed fire, just as today we breathe air.

This is why the legends and myths speak of fire as the primary manifestation of the Gods. Goethe alludes to this in *Faust*, in the words: "Let us kindle fire in order that the Spirits may clothe themselves as in a garment." These Fire-Spirits of the ancient Moon descended to the *air* in the Earth period proper. They too have descended into denser materiality, into the air we inbreathe and outbreathe.

Now it is just because these Spirits have descended into the air that man can, by their help, rise to the Divine. A twofold movement occurred in the innermost nature of the beings dwelling in the Old Moon. Animal-man divided into two groups. In the one group, a brain developed under the influence of the inspiration and action of the Spirits of Fire who became Spirits of Air. The other group descended towards the animal kingdom. This division is now apparent in the very constitution of man, for the lower part of his being is more akin to the animal, while the higher rises towards the Spirit. According to whether the one or the other characteristic was more or less



pronounced, two groups of human beings came into existence: the one bound by a lower nature to the Earth — the other more developed and free of the Earth. The first group grew more like the animals. The beings of the other group received the Divine Spark, the consciousness of 'I.' Such is the relation between man of today and the animals, more particularly the ape.

The physical correlate of this spiritual evolution was the growth and development of the human brain into a veritable temple of God. But if this had been the only evolution, something would have been lacking. There would have been minerals, plants, animals and human beings possessing a brain and a human form and figure, but something would have remained at the lunar stage of evolution. On the Old Moon there was neither birth nor death.

Try to conceive of man without a physical body. He would not pass through death; the renewal of his being would not be brought about by birth as we know it, but by some other means. Certain parts of the astral body and the etheric body would

be subject to change, that is all. Around an imperishable centre, the surrounding sheaths alone would be the media of communication with the environment, — such was the condition of man during the Old Moon period of evolution; his being was subject to metamorphoses, not to birth or death. But in this state he had no consciousness in our sense of the word. The Gods who had given him form were around him, behind him, not within him. They were to him what the tree is to the branch or what the brain is to the hand. The hand moves, but the consciousness of the movement is in the brain. Man was a branch of the divine tree and if earthly evolution had not changed this condition of things, his brain would have been but a flower of the same divine tree, his thoughts would have been reflected in his countenance as in a mirror but he would have had no consciousness of his own thoughts. Our Earth would have been a world of beings endowed with thoughts, but not with consciousness, a world of statues ensouled by the Gods, above all by Jahve or Jehovah. What was it that changed this order of things and how has man arrived at independence?

The Gods of the nature of Jahve were able to descend into the human brain. But other Spirits who, on the Moon, had been of the order of the Spirits of Fire, had not completed their evolution, and instead of penetrating into the brain of man on the Earth they mingled with his astral body. The astral body is composed of instincts, desires, passions, and it was there that those Spirits of Fire who had not attained the goal of evolution on the Moon, took refuge. They found a home in the animal nature of man where the passions unfold, and at the same time they imbued these passions with higher qualities. They poured the capacity for higher *enthusiasm* into the blood and the astral body of man. The gift of the Jehovistic Gods was the pure, cold form of the *idea*; but under the influence of these Spirits — we may speak of them as Luciferian Spirits — man became capable of enthusiasm for ideas, of being passionately for them or against them. The Jehovistic Gods gave form and shape to the human brain; the Luciferian Spirits set up the connection between the brain and the physical senses; they live in the nerve branches which end in the sense-organs. Lucifer has lived in

us for as long as Jehovah.

The fact that his senses give man an objective consciousness of the world around him is due to the Luciferian Spirits. Human thought is the gift of the Gods; human *consciousness* is the gift of Lucifer. Lucifer lives in the astral body of man, and Lucifer's activity comes to expression at the point where the nerves give rise to feeling and perception. That is why the Serpent in *Genesis* says: 'Your eyes shall be opened.' These words must be taken literally, for it was by the Luciferian Spirits that the senses of man were opened.

The individualisation of consciousness is due to the senses. If man's thoughts were not related to the sense-world they would simply be reflections of the Divine — not knowledge but belief. The contradiction between faith and science is due to this dual origin of human thought. Faith turns to the eternal Ideas, the 'Mother-Ideas' lying in the bosom of the Gods. All science, all knowledge of the outer world by means of the senses owes its existence to the Luciferian Spirits. In man, the Luciferian principle and Divine Intelligence are

combined. It is this fusion of opposing principles which makes evil possible for man but it also gives him the power of self-consciousness, choice and freedom. Only a being capable of individualisation could be thus helped by opposing elements within his being. If when he descended into matter, man had only received the form given by Jehovah, he would have remained an *impersonal* being. And so it was due to Lucifer that man was able to become truly man, a being independent of the Gods. Christ, or the Logos made manifest in man, is the Principle which enables him to ascend once again to God.

Before the Coming of Christ, man embodied the principle of Jehovah (form) and that of Lucifer (individualisation). He was divided between obedience to the Law and the revolt of the principle of individuality. But the principle of Christ came to establish equilibrium between the two. Christ taught man how to find the Law which was originally laid down from outside, within the centre of individual being. This is what St. Paul meant when he said that freedom and love are the

highest principles of Christianity. The ancient world was ruled by Law; Love is the governing principle of the new order of things. Thus three principles are inseparable from and essential to man's evolution — Jehovah, Lucifer, Christ. Christ Jesus is not only a Universal Principle; Christ is a Being who appeared once, and once only, at a definite moment in history. In human form, He revealed by His words and His life, a state of perfection which it is possible for all men ultimately to acquire by their own free-will. Christ came to the Earth at a critical moment, when the descending arc of human evolution was about to reach its lowest point of materialisation. In order that the Christ-Principle might awaken in man, the life of Christ Himself on Earth was necessary in a human body.

Karma is the law of cause and effect in the spiritual world; it represents the spiral process of evolution. The Christ Impulse intervenes in this karmic process and becomes its central pivot. Since He came to Earth the Christ has lived in the depths of every human soul.

When karma is conceived as a necessity imposed on man in order that his wrong doings may be redressed and his errors redeemed by an implacable justice working over from one incarnation to another, the objection is sometimes raised that karma must do away with the rôle of Christ as the Redeemer. In reality, karma is a redemption of man *by himself*, by dint of his own efforts as he gradually ascends to freedom through the series of incarnations. It is through karma that man is able to draw near to Christ.

The Christ-Impulse transforms implacable Law into Freedom, and the source of this Impulse is the person and example of Christ Jesus. Karma is not to be conceived as fatalism but as an instrument essential to the attainment of that supreme freedom which is life in Christ — a freedom attained not by defying the world-order but by fulfilling it.

Another objection is one that may be made from the point of view of oriental philosophy. It is said that the idea of a Redeemer of men does away with the logical concatenations of karma and

substitutes for it an act of a miraculous Providence which intervenes in the universal laws of evolution. It is surely right and just that those who have committed sins should bear the weight of them. This is an error of thought. Karma is the law of cause and effect in the *spiritual* world, just as mechanical action is the law of cause and effect in the material world. At every moment of life karma represents something like a balance sheet, an exact statement of debit and credit. By every action, bad or good, man augments his debit or credit. Those who will not admit the possibility of an act of freedom are like a business man who will not venture to embark upon a new transaction because he does not wish to run any risk; he prefers always to keep the same balance sheet.

A purely logical conception of karma would prohibit one from helping a man in adversity. But there, too, such fatalism would be false. The help we give freely to another opens up a new era in his destiny. Our destinies are woven of these impulses, of these acts of grace. If we accept the idea of individual help, may we not conceive that a far



mightier Being could help, not one man alone, but all men, could give a new impulse to all humanity? Such, indeed, was the act of a God Who was made man, not in order to defy the laws of karma but to fulfil them. Karma and Christ — the means of salvation and the Saviour. Through karma, the Act of Christ becomes cosmic law, and through the Christ-Principle karma achieves its aim — the liberation of conscious souls and their identification with God. Karma is gradual redemption, Christ is the Redeemer.

If men would steep themselves in these ideas, they would realise that they belong to one another; they would understand the law recognised in all true occult brotherhoods — namely *that each individual suffers and lives for others*. There will come a time in the future when outer redemption will coincide in each man with the interior act of the Redeemer. It is not revelation but truth which makes men free: “You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.”

The path of evolution leads to freedom. When man has awakened in himself all those qualities which

were prophetically manifest in the Christ, he will be a free being. For if necessity is the law of the material world, freedom is the law of the spiritual world. Freedom is only acquired step by step and it will not be fully manifest in man until the end of his evolution, when his nature will be truly spiritualised.

## XVIII

### THE APOCALYPSE

It has been said many times in the course of these lectures that Christianity marks the turning point of human evolution. All the religions have their *raison d'etre* and have been partial manifestations of the Logos, but none have changed the world so deeply as Christianity. — Those who ‘have not seen’ are those who have not known the Mysteries. Through Christianity, certain fundamental teachings of the ancient Mysteries — for instance those which dealt with morality, the immortality of the soul by Resurrection or the ‘second birth’ — were given to the whole world.

Before Christianity, supersensible truth was revealed in the rites and dramatic ritual of the Mysteries. Since then, we have believed in it as it

was revealed in the Divine Personality of Christ. But in every epoch there has been a difference between esoteric truth as known to the Initiates and its exoteric form which has been adapted to the multitude and expressed in the religions. The same applies to Christianity. What is written in the Gospels is the message, the good tidings announced to all the world. But there was a more profound teaching; it is contained in the Apocalypse in the form of symbols.

There is a way of reading the Apocalypse which only now can be made public. But it was practised in the Middle Ages, in the occult schools of the Rosicrucians. They paid less attention to the historic aspect of the writing, the question of its author and all the problems which occupy the minds of modern theologians who only seek to discover the outer, historical circumstances. Theology today only knows the shell of the Apocalypse and has neglected its essence and core. The Rosicrucians were concerned with the prophetic utterances, with the eternal truths.

Occultism in general is not concerned with the history of a single evolutionary cycle or period but with the inner history of human evolution as a whole. True, occultism is at pains to discover the first manifestations of the life of our planetary system and the earlier stages of man's existence, but it looks forward through the millennia to a divine humanity, to a time when the Earth herself will have changed in substance and in form. Is it possible to predict the far distant future? It is indeed possible, because all that has finally to become physical in the future, already exists in germ, in archetypal form. The plan of evolution is contained in archetypal thought. Nothing comes into being in the physical world which in its broad lines has not been foreseen and prefigured in the devachanic world. Individual freedom and power of initiative depends upon the manner of the realisation of this truth.

Esoteric Christianity is not based upon vague and sentimental idealism, but upon a realisation born of a knowledge of the higher worlds. Such was the knowledge possessed by the author of the

Apocalypse, the Seer of Patmos, who gave a picture of the future of humanity.

Let us try to envisage this future in the light of the cosmological principles which we have been studying in these lectures. Certain visions of the past and also of the future were revealed to the pupils in the Rosicrucian Schools and then, in order that they might interpret these visions, they were told to study the Apocalypse. We will proceed in the same way and consider how man has gradually become what he is today and what lies before him in the future. We have spoken of the ancient continent of Atlantis, and of the Atlanteans who had only a primitive consciousness of the 'I' towards the end of their period. The Post-Atlantean civilisations were as follows:

Pre-Vedic civilisation in the south of Asia and in India-the beginning of Aryan culture.

The epoch of Zoroaster, comprising the civilisation of ancient Persia.

Egyptian civilisation (including the Chaldean and Semitic). The first germs of Christianity were laid down in this epoch among the Hebrew peoples.

Graeco-Roman civilisation, the era of the birth of Christianity.

A new epoch commenced at the time of the migrations of the peoples and of the invasions. The heritage of the Graeco-Roman civilisation was taken over by the races of the North: the Celts, the Germanic peoples and the Slavs. We ourselves are living in this epoch. It is a later transformation of the Graeco-Roman culture, brought about by the invigorating impulses of new races under the influence of Christianity mingled with the leaven of the East which was brought into Europe by the Arabs. The essential mission of this epoch of civilisation is to adapt man to the physical plane to develop reason and practical logic, to immerse intelligence in physical matter so that matter may be understood and finally mastered. In this hard and difficult task which is reaching its culminating point in our own day, man has temporarily forgotten the higher worlds whence he came. If we

compare our intellectuality with that of the Chaldeans, for example, it is easy to see how much we have acquired and yet how much we have lost. When a Chaldean Magus looked at the sky — which for us simply presents problems of heavenly *mechanics* — his feelings were quite different from ours. Whereas modern astronomy is concerned with calculations and abstractions, the Magus of old Chaldea sensed the deep harmony of the heavens as that of a living and divine Being. When he looked at Mercury, Venus, Moon or Sun, he not only perceived the physical light of these celestial bodies; he perceived their *souls* and he knew that his own soul was in communion with these mighty souls of the heavens. Their forces of attraction or repulsion seemed to be a marvelous symphony of divine will; the music of the macrocosm sounded in his being. Thus the ‘Music of the Spheres’ was a reality uniting man to the heavens. The superiority of the scholar in our modern age lies in a knowledge of the physical world, of mineral matter. What was once *spiritual* knowledge has descended to the physical world, to the world we know so well. But from now



onwards we must strive to reach a knowledge of the astral world and of the world of pure Spirit by true clairvoyance.

This descent into materialism was necessary in order that the fifth epoch might fulfil its mission. It was essential that astral and spiritual clairvoyance should grow dim in order that the intellect might develop by dint of precise, minute and mathematical observation of the physical world. Physical Science must be supplemented by Spiritual Science. Here is an example: Comparisons are often made between Ptolemy's chart of the heavens and that of Copernicus. It is said that Ptolemy's chart is erroneous. Now this in itself is not correct. Both are true from different points of view. Ptolemy's chart is concerned with the astral world where the Earth is seen in the centre of the planets, including the Sun. The map of the heavens given by Copernicus was prepared from the point of view of the physical world — the Sun is at the centre of the solar system. The significance of Ptolemy's system will be recognised again in ages to come.

Our fifth epoch will be followed by another, the sixth. This sixth epoch will see the development of brotherhood among men, clairvoyance and creative power. What will Christianity be in the sixth epoch? To the priest in the Mysteries before Christ, there was harmony between science and faith. Science and faith were one and the same. When he looked up to the heavens, the priest knew that the soul was a drop of water from the celestial ocean, led down to Earth by the great streams of life flowing through space. Now that the attention of men is wholly directed to the physical world, faith has need of a refuge, of religion. Hence the separation between science and faith. Faith in the Person of Christ, of the God-Man on Earth has temporarily replaced Occult Science and the Mysteries of antiquity. But in the sixth epoch, the two streams will again unite. Mechanical science will become spiritually creative. This will be Gnosis-spiritual consciousness. This sixth epoch which will be radically different from our own, will be preceded by mighty cataclysms. It will be as spiritual as ours has been material. But the transformation can only be brought about by

physical catastrophes. The sixth epoch will prepare for a seventh epoch. This seventh epoch will be the end of the Post-Atlantean civilisations and conditions of earthly life will be entirely different from those we know. At the end of the seventh epoch there will be a revolution of the elements analogous to that which put an end to Atlantis, and the subsequent eras will know a spirituality prepared by the two preceding Post-Atlantean periods.

Thus there are seven great epochs of Aryan civilisation in which the laws of evolution slowly come to expression. At first, man has *within* him what he later sees *around* him. All that is actually around us now, passed out from us in a preceding epoch when our being was still mingled with the Earth, Moon and Sun. This cosmic being from whom the man of today and all the kingdoms of nature have issued, is referred to in the Cabala as Adam-Cadmon. Adam-Cadmon embraced all the manifold aspects of man as we know him today in the various races and peoples.

All that lives today in the inner being of man, his thoughts, his feelings, will find expression in the outer world and become his surroundings. The future lies within man. He is free to make it good or evil. Just as he has already left the animal kingdom behind him, so the evil in him today will form a race of degenerate beings. In our age man can to a certain extent hide the good or evil within him. But a time will come when he will no longer be able to do so, when the good and the evil will be written in indelible characters upon his countenance, upon his body, nay even upon the very face of the Earth.

Humanity will then divide into two races. Just as today we see rocks or animals, in that future age we shall encounter beings who are wholly evil, wholly ugly. In our time it is only the clairvoyant who is able to see moral goodness or moral ugliness in human beings. But when man's very features express his karma, human beings will divide into groups of themselves, according to the stream to which they manifestly belong, according to whether the lower nature has been conquered or

whether it has conquered the Spirit. This differentiation is beginning to operate little by little. When we derive understanding of the future from the past, and strive to realise the ideal of this future, its plan begins to unfold before us. A new race will come into being to be the link between the man of the present and the spiritual man of the future.

It was taught in Manicheism that from our age onwards the souls of men would begin to transmute into good the evil which will manifest in full force in the sixth epoch. In other words: human souls must be strong enough to bring good out of evil by a process of spiritual alchemy.

When the Earth begins to recapitulate the previous phases of its evolution, there will first be a re-union with the Moon, and then of this Earth-Moon with the Sun. The re-union with the Moon will mark the culminating point of evil on the Earth; the re-union with the Sun will signify, on the other hand, the advent of happiness, the reign of the 'elect.' Man will bear the signs of the seven great phases of the Earth. The Book with the Seven

Seals, spoken of in the Apocalypse, will be opened. The Woman clothed with the Sun who has the Moon under her feet, refers to the age when the Earth will once again be united with Sun and Moon. The Trumpets of Judgment will sound for the Earth will have passed into the Devachanic condition where the ruling principle is not light but *sound*. The hallmark of the end of earthly existence will be that the Christ-Principle permeates all humanity. Having become like unto Christ, men will gather around Him as the hosts around the Lamb, and the great harvest of evolution will constitute the new Jerusalem.

E.S.

**THE END**