

A painting of a woman with long, dark hair, wearing a white dress with purple sleeves and a red flower on the bodice. She is looking into a large, arched mirror. The mirror reflects her face and upper body. The room has a checkered floor and a dark, ornate background. The text "Global Grey Ebooks" is overlaid at the top.

Global Grey Ebooks

ASPECTS OF OCCULTISM

DION FORTUNE

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Aspects of Occultism by Dion Fortune.

First published in 1962.

This ebook edition was created and published by Global Grey on the 13th July 2023.

The artwork used for the cover is '*Mariana in the South*'
painted by John William Waterhouse.

This book can be found on the site here:

globalgreyebooks.com/aspects-of-occultism-ebook.html

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Contents

I. God and the Gods

II. Sacred Centres

III. Christianity and Reincarnation

IV. The Astral Plane

V. The Worship of Isis

VI. Some Helps to Meditation

VII. Teachings Concerning the Aura

VIII. Pitfalls of Spiritual Healing

IX. Power Tides and Cycles

I. God and the Gods

WE are accustomed to think of Christianity, Judaism, and Mohammedanism as the three monotheistic faiths, and all the rest as polytheistic and pagan. But if we look more closely into things we shall find that the most polytheistic religions are at heart monotheistic, and that even the avowedly monotheistic have a certain kinship with polytheism in certain of their aspects.

Monotheism and polytheism are fundamental twin principles representing the one and the many. A religion which had not got a monotheistic basis has never been conceived by the human mind. Even the most primitive animists have some concept of a father of the gods who made heaven and earth and exercises some sort of rule over the innumerable devils of their devotion. The more highly evolved and philosophical a polytheism becomes, the more clearly does it conceive of the One Who creates and dominates the many.

The nearest approach to monotheism that exists is ultra Protestant Christianity, which has lost its angelology; and even this is a Di-theism, because it worships God the Son as well as God the Father. Concerning God the Holy Ghost, of which it has little understanding, it keeps silence and for all practical purposes ignores It. Catholic Christianity has replaced the gods with the saints, and develops and encourages what is called “*dulia*”, the veneration paid to minor and specialized manifestations of the divine. The different saints, by virtue of their personal experiences and consequent presumed sympathies, preside over different aspects of human needs and activities. St Christopher is the patron saint of all travellers. There are also local saints, the patrons of localities, to whom pilgrimages are made and prayers are said. What is the difference between this concept and that of the polytheistic Hindu, with his scores of deities, specialized and localized? What is the difference in principle between Ganesa, god of money-lenders, and Christopher, patron saint of travellers?

The only real difference lies in the fact that the instructed Catholic does not pray to the saint as the dispenser of blessings, but implores the saint to intercede for him with Deity. This is a subtle but important point. The uninstructed Catholic, however, makes his prayers and little offerings direct to the saint, troubled by no such fine distinctions; his attitude is exactly the same as that of the uninstructed Hindu. The invocation of a specialized power, believed to be specially appropriate to the occasion, and therefore more efficacious than a generalized beneficence, is deep-rooted in human nature. The out-patient at the hospital scornfully rejects advice on hygiene and demands a bottle of physic, as strongly flavoured and highly coloured as possible.

It is an ineradicable trait in human nature to want something definite and tangible that it can see and handle; St Thomas, the doubting disciple, is the patron saint of many more than those who call upon his name; and be it noted that Our Lord did not express any marked disapproval of his caution, but bid him make his experiment and prove for himself.

It is because of the very nature of our minds that we need this definiteness and tangibility; for our minds are built up by experience of sensory images, and they know no other language. It is only by means of the calisthenics of meditation that the power to conceive abstract ideas is built up, and those less highly developed intellectually never succeed in building it. For them translation into terms of concrete imagery is essential. The One God is for the initiate—the many must have the Many. God must incarnate, must be made man before He can come within range of man’s awareness.

The relationship of concept is in many cases a relationship in fact where the more local of the Catholic saints are concerned. A very small amount of archaeological research serves to prove that the local saints are in a very large number of cases local pagan deities, or deities that had important local festivals, which have been taken over, festivals and all, by the Roman Catholic Church when she was organizing her field of missionary activity.

There was great wisdom in this, for local deities and local festivals were a source of income to the neighbourhood, and their abolition would have caused not only local hardship, but resistance and rebellion. The wise thing, and the simple thing, in dealing with ignorant folk, was to rechristen the deity and canonize him, and provide him with an appropriate legend. Then the old folk carried on the profitable business of the festival-cum-fair, and the young folk were entertained by the legend, and everybody was happy in their simple way, and in one generation the conversion was effected without inflicting hardship on anybody. The Roman Catholic Church is a very wise church, and adapts her methods to the nature of the human mind instead of trying to alter human nature from what it is to what it ought to be as a preliminary to salvation.

In the pagan faiths the same principles prevail. The simple soul likes gods and plenty of them, full-flavoured and highly coloured; but the instructed and thoughtful man develops the idea of the God behind the gods, the Creator and Sustainer, Whose nature determines the nature of His creation; right relationship with Whom is essential to man's welfare in this world and the next. This is not a God Who will be satisfied with burnt offerings, but demands a righteous life.

Monotheistic Judaism upon its orthodox side bears much resemblance in spirit to Protestant Christianity, which latter, in actual fact, draws its inspiration from the Old Testament far more than from the New. But mystical Judaism, the Judaism of the Qabalah, knows the Ten Holy Archangels, the spirits before the throne, and innumerable choirs of angels, their servitors. These are the exact analogue of the saints and gods of other faiths. So much so that there exist what are called the tables of correspondences, in which saints, gods, and angels are classified together under their respective headings; and no honest student, with the facts before him, cares to upset that classification, little as it may appeal to a one-way mind, to whom the truth has been delivered once for all in his own little Bethel with the tin roof.

In order to understand a man's point of view we need to put ourself in his place and enter into it imaginatively, even if not sympathetically. We owe a great deal of our misconceptions of other people's faiths to the fact that the first translators of their holy books were in many cases Christian missionaries, and these reserved for the expression of their own teaching all words that had a laudatory meaning, and reserved for the teachings of their opponents, even when these were identical with their own upon specific points, words that had debased associations. If the words that were translated as gods had been translated as archangels, as they ought to have been, we should have had a much better understanding with some of our spiritual neighbours, though of course we might not have contributed so liberally to missionary societies as we have done had we realized that the spiritual plight of these our brethren was by no means desperate.

The different great faiths evolved at different epochs of the world's history and represent different stages of spiritual development. Those who have studied esoteric science know that the different levels of consciousness which correspond to the different planes developed at successive epochs of cosmic evolution. If the great faiths be examined from the standpoint of consciousness—that is to say, from the standpoint of psychology rather than theology, it will be found that they correspond to these different phases of development.

Each religion builds upon the basis left behind by its predecessor, even when it repudiates it and all its works and looks upon its gods as devils. Each religion tries to give a complete answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. But it will be remembered that the riddle of the Sphinx had four clauses, and it is generally to be found that each new faith comes to answer one or another of these clauses and leaves the rest of the problem untouched. Each faith, then, specializes, and at the same time tends to become one-sided.

We shall find that the faith held as the official exoteric religion of his race is the faith that speaks to a man's conscious mind; that his personal religion, if he has any, is the product of his superconscious mind; and that the primitive folk-religion of his race rules over his unconscious mind and fills it with its symbols and images. The racial past lives on in the subconscious mind of each of us, as the Zurich school of psychology recognizes; but it can be evoked to visible appearance in a manner which no orthodox psychologist is acquainted with. It is this evocation of the racial past which is the key to certain forms of ceremonial magic which have as their aim the evocation of Principalities and Powers.

The different gods and goddesses of a polytheistic faith, or the angels and archangels of a monotheistic one, are neither divine creations nor the arbitrary products of the imagination. They are the creations of the created, fashioned in astral substance after a manner well understood by the esotericist, and ensouled by cosmic forces. A cosmic force without an astral form is not a god; and a god-form unensouled by cosmic force is not a god either. When a cosmic force of a pure type, that is to say, with a single specialized mode of activity, uncontaminated by any alien type of energy to detract from its single-pointedness, is embodied in an astral thought-form of a suitable type, which gives full scope to its activities, we have what is called an artificial Elemental. When the thought-form in which the embodiment takes place is made by the composite efforts of the group-mind of a race, and is ensouled by one of the primary modes of cosmic energy, we have what is called in some faiths a god and in others an archangel.

A god, therefore, is an artificial Elemental of a very powerful type, built up over long periods of time by successive generations whose minds were cast in the same mould. It is therefore a form of such potency that no evocator can hope to dominate it in the way he would an Elemental of his own creating. He must yield himself to its influence and permit it to dominate him if it is to be evoked to visible manifestation. The operator himself is the channel of evocation. It is in his imagination that the image of both god and Elemental builds itself up, and it is the corresponding aspect of his own nature which provides the ensouling force. In the case of an artificial Elemental, however, the whole of the force is derived subjectively; but in the case of a god, objective, racial, cosmic force passes through the corresponding aspect of the operator's nature to ensoul the form.

In the great majority of cases of evocative magic, the form is built up on the astral and can only actually be seen by the clairvoyant, though any sensitive person can feel its influence. It is only when there is a materializing medium as member of the circle that materialization takes place and the form evoked is visible to the physical eye. A tenuous type of form can be induced to build itself up by the use of certain substances that give off ectoplasm, the principal of which is fresh blood; excreta can also be used for the same purpose. A considerable bulk of these unpleasant substances is necessary, however, to get a form of any definiteness, and their virtue is fugitive, for the ectoplasm has gone off by the time the body heat has departed. Therefore for all practical purposes they are of no use to the operator under the ordinary conditions of civilized life; neither can a very high type of presence be induced to manifest through such media. It is necessary to mention them, however, because the fact that they emanate ectoplasm explains certain phenomena of occult pathology. There is also a

field of research here for the scientific student with the necessary laboratory equipment, though for obvious reasons it does not lend itself to drawing-room performances or the operations of home circles.

It is valuable to note in this connection that constipation, which is the accumulation of a bulk of excreta within the body, is frequently found to be present in obsessional hallucinations, which yield immediately to the exorcism of a purgative, and it is probable that the accumulation of faeces forms the physical basis of the obsessing entity.

The initiated magician is usually, unless engaged in some special experiment or research, content to evoke to visible appearance on the astral, depending upon his psychic powers for communication with the entity evoked. He does not go to the trouble to evoke to visible appearance on the physical because, if he is an adequate psychic, astral appearance serves his purpose just as well; in fact better, because it is more congenial to the nature of the beings invoked and places less limitation upon their activities.

He knows quite well that it is his own temperament which is the channel of evocation and that his own astral body supplies the basis of manifestation. He knows, therefore, that the chief part of his preparation must be self-preparation. Part of the work of the Mysteries consists in developing grade by grade the different aspects of the microcosm, which is man, and linking them up by means of symbols planted in consciousness with the corresponding macrocosmic aspects, which are the gods. Once a student has taken a given grade, he should be capable of evoking the beings of all grades corresponding to that particular type of cosmic force; and not only of evoking them, for anyone can do that who has a little knowledge and plenty of imagination, but also of controlling their manifestations when evoked. In order to do this he needs to have the corresponding force in himself purified, developed, equilibrated and controlled. His control of the objective manifestation depends entirely on his control of the corresponding subjective factor, or trait in his character. Mars is an easy potency to evoke to visible appearance, but a difficult one to control when evoked; for the control of the Geburah potencies depends entirely upon our control of our own tempers. Equally with Venus, our power over whom depends upon our control of our emotions. To operate in the sphere of Luna we must be very sure of the accuracy of our psychism, which depends upon thought-control.

One of the most important uses of ceremonial working lies in its power to energize any given aspect of our nature, and so bring about a profound change in character, doing in a brief hour's work what years of painful effort and self-discipline might fail to achieve. A man cannot make himself brave by force of will; he can merely keep the outward manifestations of his fear under control, though they may be tearing him to pieces inwardly; but by means of an operation of Mars he may fundamentally change his nature. It is for this reason that ceremonial, and especially talismanic magic is the essential complement of astrology; for astrology is the diagnosis of the trouble, but magic is the treatment of it by means of which the warring forces in our natures are equilibrated.

These things, however, can only be done where there is adequate knowledge, in order that the real needs of a nature; may be discerned. It is little use to do an operation of Mars for a person whose fears are not due to lack of courage out to a too lively imagination; an operation of Luna is indicated in such a case. An operation of Mars, misguidedly; undertaken, will merely make him excessively quarrelsome.

The karmic record also must be taken into consideration when doing operative magic of a concentrated kind, for some unbalanced manifestations of character may be of the nature of reactions, or what the psychologist calls overcompensations. For instance, the timidity for

which an operation of Mars is desired may be due to lack of wisdom in the past which produced disastrous karmic consequences which are even now being worked out. The concentration of a Martial force is not going to help such a condition as that, but will tend to produce fresh problems for it to solve.

Moreover, operations should never come singly, but always in the equilibrating pairs of opposites, and it is usually sound policy to perform the operation of the opposite Pillar previous to the performance of the operation whose effect is specifically desired. For instance, if the energizing effects of Mars (Geburah, Severity), are desired, it would be highly desirable to perform a few days previously an operation of Jupiter, (Chesed, Mercy) which balances Mars in the opposite column of the Tree of Life when the symbols are set up according to the system of the Qabalists. If this is done, all the good of Mars will be obtained without any of the evil of its unbalanced influence.

Although the highly concentrated form of a force should only be applied by an expert to one who has undergone the necessary preparation leading up thereto, there can be little doubt that life could be made much richer, and our temperaments far more vital and equilibrated were we to observe the times and seasons in a way that all primitive faiths that are in close touch with nature observe them. The Catholic aspect of the Christian faith, which is its most occult aspect, scrupulously observes the seasons of the Christian year, which is really a sun-worship year; but the Protestant aspect has no realization whatsoever of what it is doing, and drags itself through the fifty-two Sundays with one set of altar-frontals and a plain white surplice.

The Four Elements, the seven planets, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac are prime factors of the cosmos. Each of these have their tides and seasons of ascendancy, and each have their appropriate symbols and rites developed in one or another of the great pagan systems of nature worship. Nature worship be it noted, is not idolatry, but the adoration of God made manifest in nature, and is an exceedingly important aspect of both our faith and our psychology, though one but little understood in the Christian system and Western countries.

The different gods and archangels of the different systems, Egyptian, Greek, Chaldean, Norse, which are native to our culture, are the racial thought-forms built up to act as vehicles of these primary cosmic forces. Being the primitive faith of our racial culture, their symbols lie deep hidden in the subconscious mind of each of us, utterly ineradicable, and capable of evocation to conscious activity by the use of the appropriate means.

All the pagan pantheons contain the same factors because they all have to minister to the needs of a human nature that does not vary very much as to its ingredients from race to race and age to age, but merely in the proportion in which these are on the average compounded. The north has more head and the south more heart; the east more intuition and the west more will; but neither head nor heart are entirely absent from any race on the earth's surface. Systems, consequently, are built up and specialized according to the temperament of the people they minister to.

Consequently, when we want to perform a rite of any given type we find it convenient to choose a method which is most closely fitted to the needs of the moment and our own temperamental bias.

The Chaldean magic of the Qabalah appeals to those who are imbued with a strict monotheism and regard all objects of adoration with unfamiliar names as devils. Egyptian magic appeals to those who are metaphysically minded, and Greek Mystery methods to the artistic, because the Greek invocations depend upon music and movement for their efficacy.

These three systems form the primary basis of our Western Tradition; they also represent its most highly developed aspects. But for all practical purposes they present many difficulties in

the employment, and people who try them usually get only partial effects unless they are very advanced workers, or have a special natural aptitude and affinity for the particular tradition according to which they are operating.

The reason for this is not far to seek. None of these methods have been naturalized in our islands, and we cannot therefore find a holy place at which to pick up the contacts in a prepared atmosphere where the veil is thin and the foot of Jacob's ladder rests upon earth. Moreover, the racial subconsciousness, although it contains all the elements represented by the exotic gods and goddesses, (for we are not made of special and peculiar clay, different from the rest of mankind), does not contain the symbols that evoke them in the form in which they have been built up in the racial subconsciousness of the races that were habituated to their daily use as objects of adoration. It is only because these races are dead and gone and their cultures have passed away that we can use their symbols at all; for if the system were a living system, it would automatically exclude us from its penetralia unless right of entry had been conferred upon us. It is for this reason that we can never operate a living system of magic effectually unless its degrees have been conferred upon us. The Voodoo and the Tantric systems are closed systems to the European, but the Egyptian and the Chaldean are open systems, which anyone may operate who can, because their priests are dead and their temples stand open to sun and wind and there is no one to guard their mysteries from profanation save the intrinsic powers of those mysteries themselves. These, however, are a quite effectual guard for all practical purposes, for though they cannot prevent the blasphemers from having his first bite, as it were, he seldom has a second, for the powers he has evoked and profaned destroy him.

But why should we esteem an outraged deity a devil? Because a misused force reacts on the user, it is not necessarily a force of evil. Has no one ever taken a poisonous overdose of a drug? Or received a shock when he touched the wrong switch? Or miscalculated the temperature of an object and burnt his fingers? If we banished from human use as dangerous every object or substance that had ever under any circumstances proved noxious, we should exist in a vacuum.

These powers, however, duly approached with reverence and understanding, and after the purification demanded for their worship, can still exert their ancient influence over the worshipper, blessing and illuminating him according to their nature and his capacity for response.

These great potencies, thus approached, have infinite possibilities for good to exercise upon human consciousness and social life; and especially is this the case in our modern urban civilization where the nature contacts have been lost and forgotten, and in consequence the subconscious minds of men and women are as foul as uncleansed stables. We need the light and air of conscious attention to be directed to our subconscious fastnesses, and the clean broom of spiritual sanctification to make a clean sweep of their accumulated rubbish and refuse. There is nothing in human nature which is intrinsically unclean, St Augustine notwithstanding, but there is a very great amount which will go septic and putrefy if we thrust it below the level of consciousness and sit upon the lid. It is a false concept of human nature which has developed so much that is worst in human nature.

When we deny the natural side of our natures, we are like a woman who will not clean a stopped sink because it is too dirty to touch. It is only dirty on account of the way she has kept it. It may be unpleasant to handle when first it is taken in hand and cleared up, but once clean, it need never be allowed to get into that condition again; but it will certainly be a source of poison to the whole household until it is taken in hand.

The pagans were right when they deified and sanctified all aspects of nature and of human nature. The Romans even adored Cloaca, the goddess of sewers and scavengers, and they were far cleaner and more sanitary in their habits than the generations who succeeded them, and whose saints refrained from washing out of love for God.

We need to bring back reverence for natural things, and respect for the body and its functions, and adore God made manifest in nature, even in the form of the goddess Cloaca, if we are to have any real health of mind, body or estate, and return as prodigals to the bosom of our Great Mother, where alone is to be found healing for the diseases that arise from too much civilization and too little sun and air.

II. Sacred Centres

*"... For lead and tin are not produced from the earth ...
It is a fountain that produces them, and an angel stands therein."*

BOOK OF ENOCH.

I DON'T think that it will be disputed that certain places exert a powerful influence on human beings.

Egypt seems to be the best known one, for most people return from there having had an experience of some kind. *It* is said that this is caused by *the electricity* generated by *the* ever-moving sands of the great Sahara desert, which so changes the normal rate of vibration, that an extension of consciousness is the result. This must naturally depend on the individual; a purely material person would be affected in a very different way from one who is psychic. Unfortunately we are seldom given the ordinary man's experience, which might, in many cases, be of more interest and use to humanity than the vague visionings of the psychically inclined.

In every country there are these centres, but unfortunately, since the Christian era, they have been appropriated by the Church; and some of the most vital have been prefixed by the title of "Saint", when perhaps the influence exerted might not be at all of a saintly character. Thus, the old name, that might have given a clue to the particular influence, is submerged, and in this way much of the ancient lore is lost, because the Church recognizes only one kind of experience—that of the purely religious ecstasy, which is the most emotional and primitive, and therefore to the ordinary mind, the most wonderful, for it is a state of intoxication, and is therefore a purely selfish and personal experience, entirely to do with individual development along a particular line, and from the physical point of view is nearly always abortive because undirected. I emphasize the physical effect, because what its mysteries are on another plane, or state of consciousness, one can only dimly sense, or understand the effect on the journeyings of the soul.

There is little, if any, guidance given by the Church to those who open these doors, for it is not given to all to experience the higher religious emotion; and instead of a readjustment of values—a further vision or extension of consciousness and a breaking through some of the veils of matter—the effect is, as I have said, abortive, for the experience is so shattering to the untrained and unprepared mind, that it disturbs the normal outlook on life.

There is also another side to these experiences, and of this we hear but little. Those who enter the dark portals which lead to the dread subterranean palaces of the Qliploth, and whose way is no longer that of the normal individual, return from this journey with their bias towards evil intensified.

In the Mystery Schools each initiate was carefully watched and guided, so that the experience should not be lost or allowed to destroy instead of to reconstruct. We go to these places, and are not told *what* kind of experience to expect, beyond that it will be of a religious order, or contact with nature, (a vague term) and therefore we go in a negative condition of mind, with will and intellect unprepared, and so the real value is completely lost in an emotional storm.

As I said before, I believe that in the old names lie the secret of the influence exerted, and these have to do with the physical, or rather the contact that lies deep in the earth.

In the magical writings we read that each metal has its particular planet, that each human being is under the influence of a planet; and it may be that a scientific fact lies in this statement which in the future will be explained in scientific language by scientific men.

During the eclipse of the sun in 1928, some experiments were made by a Dr Kolisko with solutions of gold, silver, lead, and tin; pictures that were taken of these before, during, and after the eclipse showed remarkable changes in activity, indicating that the celestial phenomenon had an effect, and a very marked one on these solutions.

It would be interesting to study geologically these centres, their ancient names and qualities, apart from those attributed to them by the Church, and see if we could get at the particular energizing force, and so direct it consciously to our purpose.

By working along these lines man could co-operate with the celestial powers who have their physical focuses in the earth, and so gain much in health, power, and intellect.

In every country is the Head and Heart centre, or shall we say the Spiritual centre, and these are linked to similar centres in other countries, and sometimes form interesting diagrams. We can all spot the Head centre for that is naturally the capital of the country, but the Heart or Spiritual centre is more obscure and only known to comparatively few. It is quite possible that in a country there may be as many centres as there are in a human body, for a country has a definite life and soul of its own.

Just to give an example on purely religious lines:—The great cathedrals of England—Durham, Chester, Lincoln, Wells, Winchester, and Canterbury form the double triangle or hexagram, but these centres are very old, and were the sites of pagan temples in pre-Christian times, and to recover the type of influence one would have to seek their old names or meaning of the names. Such diverse sites cannot all exert the same influence fundamentally, though it is possible that those only in tune to Christian influences and going no deeper than that level, might only contact that particular vibration.

The mineral and metallic world is the oldest and densest, and in it must lie many secrets; could we contact its consciousness much might be recovered for the benefit of mankind.

That the ancient Druids knew of the connection of planetary with physical matter is proved by their circles. In the south of England, taking Silbury Hill as the Earth, they have worked out correctly the orbs of the planets in relation to it. The orbit of Venus being the circle of stones at Winterbourne Bassett; the temples of the Sun and Moon are just north of the hill, the orbit of the Sun encircling it. The orbit of Mars is at Marsden; the orbit of Mercury at Walken Hill; of Jupiter at easterly Camp, and that of Saturn at Stonehenge. There are also the seven churches in Ireland; the five churches of Stowting, Kent, (though tradition tells of seven), and there are many others. These were all pagan temples.

When St Augustine wrote in a.d. 597 to Pope Gregory for advice concerning the many pagan places of worship he found, the answer he received was—"To use them when possible, in order that the people may the more familiarly resort to the places to which they have been accustomed."

All over the United Kingdom are these places, for the Druids built nothing without knowledge, and one hopes that an endeavour will be made to recover their ancient wisdom, the proof of which is so ably put forth in Mr Lewis Spence's *Mysteries of Britain*.

I am convinced that they had some method of contacting the great subconscious of the world, where the Past, Present, and Future lie ready to be unfolded. That their training was a long and arduous one is certain, for that an ordered training does develop powers latent in everyone is proved by those who have been fortunate enough to be in touch with a teacher

who is also an initiate and initiator; but I am sure that not only the teacher, but the time and place are to be taken into account.

We walk in this wonderful world of ours as if we were not of it, but a creation apart; but we are the world, and have within our bodies every part of it, and therefore must be affected by all that concerns it. The magnetic qualities of its stone and mass of metals, the generating life of animal and vegetable nature, all play their part, but could we bring our intellect to help us, I feel sure that we could attain a result beyond our expectations.

The magician of old had to work in secret for he was more or less an outcast, unless he allied himself with others such as the Druid did, and later the Rosicrucians, so forming a strong body.

The modern magician specializes and is a freelance—men like those who have attained such tremendous speed in the air, doctors, and men of science with their microscopes and electrical appliances. All these are trained occultists, and far on the path to Adeptship. They are highly trained specialists and efficient parts of a whole, which, united will bring to us knowledge of the world we live in, for they have reached an extension of consciousness far beyond that of the ordinary man, and their training has been as hard as, if not harder, than that of their predecessors of old.

SACRED CENTRES II

"Other sheep have I that are not of this fold." John X. 16.

There are many planes interpenetrating our world, inhabited by beings like, and yet unlike ourselves, invisible and unknown to each other and to man. This is due to their different rates of vibration. I will give a very crude example—that of the electric fan. When revolving slowly, its propellers are seen distinctly, increase its rate and nothing is seen but a blur.

This example only holds with regard to one sense, namely that of sight, but intensify and extend to all senses in an ascending and descending scale, and we could imagine how several cycles of life could, at the same time, occupy the same space, unknown to each other.

That will also show the reason why different people have such diverse experiences at the same place, and in psychometry, with the same object.

We all have our own particular rate of vibration, so that every one of us must be in close tune with one at least of these elemental ratios, and it is possible that the day may come, indeed may not be so very far distant, when, by an act of will we shall be able to change our own ratio to that of whatever cycle of life we wish to contact. That such a thing will be possible in the future is foreshadowed in an article by Professor Low, where he says in regard to telepathy that "Thought is an electrical process and must be capable of transmission; it may be centuries before we are able to effect the transmission...but it is certainly bound to come."

So that in the future we may actually, and with all our senses be aware of these denizens of a hitherto unknown and invisible world.

It is unlikely that man should be the only form of life to be attracted to the source of energy that is generated in these places, but that other beings would also, and for the same reason, seek them.

There are in this world many tides of varying length, which are called in Eastern terminology "Tatwas", and these range in length from thousands of years to a few minutes. The greater ones we are only aware of by looking back on the rise and fall of civilizations and the changes on the face of the globe. These are under the dominion of one of the great Northern Constellations, but there are many lesser ones, and to these we can attribute the falling into

disuse of some of our centres, and the gradual reopening of others. In the last hundred years or so there has been the uncovering of many buried cities and even great civilizations with their many Gods and creeds.

Whenever a place has had prayers and concentrated desires directed towards it, it forms an electrical vortex that gathers to itself a force, and it is for a time a coherent body that can be felt and used by man. It is round these bodies of force that shrines, temples, and in later days churches are built; they are the Cups that receive the Cosmic downpouring focused on each particular place.

There is very little teaching on these matters, and I think it advisable now to speak of the dangers that may be encountered from the *lesser known and more primitive psychic centres*. That there was a danger was recognized by the Druids and Romans, for they raised altars and offered sacrifices to these woodland peoples, and it was an act of propitiation, for if *you* don't give, *they* take, and what they take is unfortunately something that you cannot spare. It is life-force, for they seek ever to come closer to man, to mingle with him and to take on his ratio, for it is said therein lies their hope of immortality.

Should we wish to help these "Sheep of another fold", we can do so by a wish to understand their needs and by bringing to them a knowledge of the finer ideals of our later times, and in that way the sacrifice need not be one that is hurtful to our health and sanity.

We must remember, however, that they are of an older and more elemental race, that they belong to another country, and that their laws are quite different, so that we might be seriously injured in mind and body by such encounters, for our bodies are not adapted to bear the brunt of the violent impact of those who differ in almost every way from ourselves.

It is said that there are fairy marriages, but these can only happen between those whose ratio is the same, but therein generally lies sadness and heartbreak, unless entered into with understanding.

Pan and his fellows are still to be seen and heard, though these encounters are not so spectacular as story would have us believe, and are generally disagreeable and frightening, and not to be encouraged or wished for. We may enter these unknown regions lightheartedly, but to get away from them and rid oneself of unpleasant attachments is not easy, and help is not always at hand when required.

III. Christianity and Reincarnation

WHY is it that there is no teaching concerning Reincarnation in the Christian doctrine? Is there not even an implied denial of this fundamental doctrine of esoteric philosophy? These questions are frequently asked, and it is exceedingly important that they should be satisfactorily answered if our claim that Christianity is a Mystery religion is to be justified. If we cannot show that the doctrine of reincarnation, so fundamental to esoteric science, is not only not antagonistic to Christ's teaching, but actually implicit therein, we shall be obliged to admit that no Christian can be an occultist and no occultist a Christian.

The doctrine of reincarnation has been lost to European thought since the days of ancient Greece, when it was taught in the Mystery Schools under the name of Metempsychosis and profoundly influenced the outlook of Grecian thinkers. It was also a fundamental doctrine of both the Gnostics and Neo-Platonists, and formed an integral part of the attempted blend of the Ancient Wisdom and the New Revelation.

The Mystery Schools in the days of the early Church were open to grave objection. They had fallen upon decadence; phallic rites, blood sacrifices, and black magic generally had crept into them, and though no doubt there were individual groups of initiates who retained their purity, the movement as a whole was justifiably suspect. Christianity spread at first among unlettered folk, and these, already imbued with decent men's horror of the decadence of the popular religion, unable from lack of letters to understand the viewpoint of the philosophers, condemned all learning as of the devil because so many of the learned had given themselves over to evil. Thus it came about that the rise of Christianity saw the decline of learning, and although the worst of the pagan vices were undoubtedly swept away with the abolition of the corrupt religions, yet if we are honest we must admit that these vices were not inherent in paganism but in human nature, and that the abolition of the ancient faiths has not abolished human frailty.

There came about a divorce between learning and religion; metaphysics was abandoned to the philosophers, and the Christian concerned himself with ethics and a dogmatic theology based upon an interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures to which certain keys were lacking—the key of the Qabalah, possessed by the writers of the Old Testament books, and the key of the Gnosis, possessed by the writers of the New Testament books. In consequence, many of the technical terms of the philosophy of both these Mystery Schools have passed unrecognized and been so gravely mistranslated that they have been completely wrested from their meaning, and whole passages perverted or rendered incomprehensible. Would that there were a translation of the Scriptures by an initiate!

The gulf between Christianity and philosophy became wider when the Emperor Constantine made use of the Church for political purposes. Men were placed in high positions whose qualifications lay in their political views rather than their spiritual vision. Its lofty mystical spirit was lost to the Church as well as its metaphysics. The Dark Ages ran their gloomy course, and it was not until the Renaissance came to free and inspire the human spirit that mysticism again lifted its head in the Christian fold.

With the Renaissance came a sudden day-spring of activity in every department of human life after the long inertia of the Dark Ages; but the connecting-link with the Mystery Schools had been broken, and when men came to the study of the ancient philosophers, they approached them from without the gate, not from within. These philosophers, were, to a man, initiates of one school or another of the Mysteries, and they used the technicalities of those rites. Without

this key their writings are largely incomprehensible. Uninitiated students, trying to deal with the ancient philosophers by the light of pure scholarship, are in the position of a modern intelligent reader who tries to master a textbook of physics without any previous acquaintance with mathematics. Many of the technical terms employed will be familiar to him, but he will understand them in their popular, not their technical sense, and will be unable to follow the argument.

European thought, raising its battered head after the Renaissance, knew nothing of the Mystery teaching, and the doctrine of reincarnation was lost to Europe with the fall of the classical civilization.

But the inner spiritual life of the soul went on; and whether it is behind convent walls, or in the illuminations of Jacob Bohme and other unorthodox mystics, knowledge of the Unseen and its powers was recovered piecemeal by direct revelation. What secret knowledge is guarded within the innermost circle of the Roman Catholic Church today, those outside that circle do not know; they can only judge by the “signs following”; what mystical illuminations follow upon the silent meditations and fervent prayers of the encloistered orders of Christendom are seldom told.

It may be of interest in this respect to quote from a letter which was sent by the great Cardinal Mercier, the scholarly Archbishop of Malines, to Professor Lutoslavski, the Polish philosopher, in answer to his query as to the ruling of the Roman Church concerning the doctrine of reincarnation, in which he states that “the doctrine of reincarnation has never been formally condemned by the Roman Church as heretical.”

The exoteric Church of Christ may have forgotten reincarnation, and ceased to teach it, but when reminded of it, it does not condemn it.

If reincarnation is such an important part of the Mystery teaching, from which it is claimed that all religions take their rise, why was it that Our Lord did not teach it explicitly? The explanation of this problem is two-fold; firstly, it lies in the nature of the people to whom He came, and secondly, in the manner in which His work had to be carried out.

Our Lord came to a people, the great majority of whom were exclusively preoccupied, as far as their religious life was concerned, with the formal observances of the Temple and the righteousness inculcated by the Mosaic Law. Among these people were a small minority who were interested in mystical speculations. Of these the most notable body were the Essenes—men and women highly respected in Israel, some of whom lived community lives while others shared in the life of the world. They might not inaptly be called the Quakers of Judaism. The doctrine of reincarnation was part of the teaching of the Essenes, and an important part. It is believed by many that the boy Jesus was educated in an Essenian community after His greatness had been recognized by the elders when He taught in the Temple. Schure, in his very interesting book, *The Great Initiates*, has gathered together the evidence in support of this view.

In all His teaching Our Lord makes a clear distinction between that which He would say to His chosen and trusted disciples in the Upper Chamber, to whom it was given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom, and the populace whose sick He healed and whose sorrows He comforted.

Our Lord stood forth against a mystical background; He spoke as one coming from behind the Veil. The modern divine knows very little about the ancient mysticism of Israel, the Qabalah; but the Qabalah is the key to the mystical interpretation of the Old Testament and of many passages in the New Testament. Take for instance the closing passage of the Lord’s Prayer, “For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.” What

does this convey to the Qabalist? A picture of the lower triangle of the Sephirothic Tree of Life, whereon in their appointed pattern are ranged the mystical stations of the Ten Divine Emanations that formed the worlds—Netzach, victory or power; Hod, glory; Malkuth, the kingdom. On the Tree of Life is based the mighty invocation of Qabalistic magic with which every magus seals his aura before commencing any magical operation, “A teh Malkuth, ve Gedulah, ve Geburah, Ie Olahm. Amen.” “For to Thee is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, to the ages, Amen”.

No one can hope to understand Christianity who does not understand the mysticism of the Qabalah in which the above quotation proves that Our Lord was trained, and in the Qabalistic doctrine we shall find among its most important tenets, that of reincarnation.

It is in the Qabalah we find the cosmology and mystical doctrine of the soul and its initiation in which exoteric Christianity is so lamentably weak as compared with the great Eastern faiths. An abundance of esoteric material can be found in both the Old and the New Testament; and what there was before it underwent editing at the hands of generations of scholars who were Churchmen first and last, who can say?

There are many teachings of Our Lord, many passages of Scripture which can only be understood in the light of the, doctrine of reincarnation. John the Baptist’s message to Jesus, is a case in point. Our Lord taught to His disciples in the Upper Chamber a doctrine of which we have no direct record, but many echoes.

From the esoteric point of view it is readily seen why Our Lord did not stress the doctrine of reincarnation in His mission. Each Christos Who comes to the world has a special mission to fulfil in relation to the evolution of humanity. Osiris taught his people the arts of civilization, Krishna taught them philosophy, Buddha taught the way of escape from the bondage of matter, Abdul Baha taught social morality. If there are those who object to these Great Ones being ranked with Our Lord as manifestations of God and Saviours of mankind, then esoteric science must agree to differ from them, for it has always taught that all these be brethren, the Elder Sons of God, showing forth His Glory in human form for the guidance of mankind. On the other hand, initiates of the Western Tradition will not agree to Our Lord being swept aside as merely a good man who taught according to his lights, nor yet a medium who was used by the Christ. The anti-Christian bias of Mme Blavatsky is regrettable, for it has led to a belittling of Christianity among students of occultism which is not justified by the facts and leads to disastrous results in practice.

No man who reads history without prejudice can escape from the fact that there has never been any truth once for all delivered to mankind. This doctrine went its way together with the catastrophic concept of geology. It is the doctrine of evolution alone which has stood the tests of time and facts, and we shall be wise if we accept the conclusion that the law of evolution applies to the spiritual life of mankind as well as its physical life.

Our Lord built upon the foundation of His predecessors, and brought to the Temple His own specific contribution. He had a particular task to do in the cosmic polity, and He is called in the Mysteries the Lord of the Personality.

The older faiths, which also had their Divine Founders, each had for their task the development and illumination of a different layer of consciousness. The very primitive cults, such as Voodooism, were initiators of the sub-consciousness; loftier cults, such as Hinduism, were initiators of the Higher Self; Our Lord’s task was to bring regeneration within reach of the common man and to initiate the Personality, using that word in its technical esoteric sense as the aspect of consciousness which is built up out of the experiences that fall to our lot

between birth and death. It was this lower, temporal self that He had to bring into line with spiritual life, and link up with the eternal Self.

This lower self is not immortal. No one who is adequately instructed in esoteric philosophy believes in the reincarnation of the present personality, nor of any historic personality in the past. It is the Higher Self alone which is immortal and which survives bodily death and is the vehicle of Karma. Our Lord therefore, having for His task as Saviour to His epoch the making of a Way of Salvation for the personality, naturally did not teach reincarnation as part of His mission because it does not apply to the personality.

The illuminati of His epoch knew this doctrine, whether they were the Essenian mystics of Israel or the initiates of the Greek or Egyptian Mysteries. They needed no instruction on this point, being already familiar with it. But the common man needed to be told that he was the son of God and that God loved him, for this was a thing that had never been known to the world before.

It has been said that Our Lord was well content to allow the doctrine of reincarnation to be forgotten during His epoch because when over-stressed, it is productive of much evil, for it tends to inculcate a *laissez-faire* which is disastrous to human progress. The results of the universal acceptance of the doctrine of reincarnation with all its implications are shown in the pages of Katharine Mayo's much discussed book, *Mother India*. Europeans, eating, drinking and making merry because tomorrow they die, taught of their philosophy to seize the passing day, have become habituated to a remorseless drive of life which has accomplished most of the world's work to date. The doctrine of reincarnation is the most illuminating of teaching when rightly understood, but it is a disastrous doctrine for the ignorant, for unless it is used as a means of evolution, it becomes a folding of the hands in sleep, and bankruptcy of all physical things comes as a thief in the night.

To sum up, the esoteric attitude concerning the doctrine of reincarnation in Christianity may be defined as follows. Reincarnation was part of the Mystery teaching of Israel of which Our Lord and His inner group of disciples were initiates. It was part of the inner teaching of the Christian faith until mysticism became divorced from orthodoxy. It is not repudiated by the Roman Catholic Church. Our Lord did not enlarge upon the doctrine of reincarnation in His public mission because that mission concerned the salvation of the Personality, which does not reincarnate.

IV. The Astral Plane

THE Astral Plane has very rightly been called the Plane of Illusion, for people have such varied ideas concerning it. In studying the technique of the planes one may fall into the error of regarding them only as separate and distinct modes of consciousness; whereas, on closer consideration we shall see that they are interrelated and actually function in pairs.

The words “Kill out desire”, as translated by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Voice of the Silence*, are frequently misinterpreted to mean that the Astral Plane, which correlates with desire and emotion, shall be inhibited from function as far as is practicable. Taking, however, the full context of that teaching it is evident that the killing out of desire is a very lofty ideal of the soul when it shall have risen above the planes of the Personality, but while functioning on the mundane plane in the physical senses, we must first kill out the desire for vice and use the forces of emotion and desire for good purpose. It is this point of view that I wish to put before you.

Much of the information concerning the Astral Plane is gathered from psychics and spiritualistic sources with varying degrees of reliability, but the teaching I am giving here has come to us from a Master on the Inner Planes.

“Do you understand the purpose of the plane of illusion? (the astral plane). It serves more purposes than working out the frustration of desires. It is the plane of the manifestation of power for the physical plane. You need to realize that the astral plane is a plane of ‘force’ and the physical plane is a plane of ‘form’. That gives you the clue to a great deal if you think out its implications.

“Do you realize that there is no force on the physical plane and no form on the astral? Do you further realize that a thought-form is a correct description? Then you will see that the cube of manifestation falls into two divisions—the physical half and the mental half and the astral plane divides them. One half having mind for a background and one half matter for a background. You may conceive, therefore, two planes of form with a plane of force connecting them. And you have, therefore, the ‘three’ which is essential for function—the positive ‘form’ of mind and the negative ‘form’ of matter, and the emotional ‘force’ flowing and returning which connects them.”

Perhaps this will be clearer if We tabulate it thus:

Spiritual Plane — Force.

Mental Plane — Form.

Astral Plane — Force.

Physical Plane — Form.

We are taught that duality is necessary for manifestation, and we see here the duality of form and force which are essential to manifestation. Therefore we must consider the astral forces in relation to physical and mental forms.

We are also accustomed to regard the laws of polarity as on one plane—horizontal, but the esoteric teachings show that the same principle may be applied vertically, and the mental, positive stimulus may polarize with the physical, negative aspect, and that the astral forces ensouling those forms with life complete the trinity of function. (This may be better

understood by students of the Qabalistic *Tree of Life*, where we have the side pillars in polarity and the central pillar representing the flow of Life forces direct.)

“Now what you want to realize is this—that there is upon that plane of pure force a population of forms which do not derive from that plane at all. They derive firstly in evolutionary order from the plane of mind. Pure mind supplies the first thought-forms, and these forms, being in relation to feelings, serve as vehicles of expression for the feelings. They are all symbolic and geometrical in form. These are the primary forms of the astral. They are the oldest and the highest and the purest form-types. They are the bases of physical form.

“Then, in contradistinction to these, are those astral forms which are evolved in consciousness out of physical sensation. They have matter for a background.

“If you want to understand the astral plane, think of the true astral plane as consisting of streaming rays of light without form at all, and the ‘forms’ of the astral, whether derived from mind or matter, as distinct from the pure emotional forces as are the human beings from the land they walk about on. You have, therefore, the plane and its inhabitants.

“Now the inhabitants of the astral plane are creatures of mind. The life and function of the astral goes on behind them and through them, but it is not they. The astral thought-form is a creation of the mind, whether it be a primary creation of mind working direct on emotions, or whether it be a secondary creation of mind working on emotions stimulated by sensation (physical).

“The ordinary untrained human mind functions only when stimulated by sensation, therefore all its thoughts are determined by the nature of the sensation which stimulates them. But the mind of the occultist knows that the primary form is the mental form, and it can make those forms independently of physical sensation. A form on the astral plane acts as a channel for and determines the configuration of the astral forces, and therefore all manifestations of force in matter depend upon the astral thought-form and are determined by it.

“Matter adheres to type because the forces function through thought-forms derived from matter. So that matter gives rise to the form and the form to matter in a never-ending and stereotyped circle. It is fixed and defined. But although no variation can take place from the plane of matter, variation is possible from the plane of mind; and if a new thought-form be created on the astral, a new form would appear on the physical. The physical form will give rise to the appropriate sensation, and the sensation will reinforce the thought-form, and so the cycle will become stereotyped in its turn.

“You have, then, the thought-form on the astral and the physical form on the material plane—soul and body—of whatever object, or organism, or organization, or happenings may be under consideration. You have, in fact, the cause and the effect. The astral cause giving rise to the physical effect, and the physical effect re-creating the astral cause. You will realize from this that the forms of the astral are all mental images, and some are the product of sensation, and some are the product of imagination. It is by availing yourself of the powers of the image-forming faculties of the mind that you can set the astral causes in motion. Whatever image you can make in the imagination—provided it be in accordance with Cosmic Law and therefore possible of manifestation—if you make it sufficiently clearly in all its parts to have a workable mechanism, and if you hold it long enough and steadily enough and pour in the force of the will strongly enough—will come to pass on the physical plane in manifestation, or upon whatever plane it shall be directed to.

“But in all your making, remember this—that you will have to face the consequences of your creation whatever it may be; and good intentions will not protect you from the results of an

error of judgment; and when you elect to use the powers of the human mind you take risks. But remember also this—that those who serve God always take risks because they know them to be worth taking. And the expression of the Logoidal Mind can only be brought through into the plane of manifestation by those who are prepared to take the risk of endeavouring to perceive the abstract and concrete it as best they may.

“The spiritual forces cannot work themselves out on the plane of form now that the form is so highly organized, without the use of intermediaries, and so some have to be found who will take the risk of endeavouring, with the finite consciousness, to discern the Mind of God and to express it on the planes of form.”

There is an interesting corroboration of the intermediaries who work out the Mind of God on its passage from Spirit to Matter in the Communications received from the astral plane by the Rev. G. Vale Owen, which has reference to the co-operation of thought and emotion:

“No emotion no thought, here is without its outer manifestation. All you see around you from your place upon the earth is the manifestation of thought ... The Source of all thought is He from Whom it proceeds and to Whom it returns in never-ending cycle.

“Between times this thought-stream passes through the mentality of personalities of varying degrees of authority, and also of loyalty or oneness with Him. This thought-stream, passing through these Princes, Archangels, Angels, and Spirits, becomes manifest through them externally in Heavens, Hells, Constellations of Suns, Sun-Systems, Races, Nations, Animals, Plants, and all those entities which you call things.

“All these come into existence by means of persons thinking from themselves outward, when their thoughts take on expression, tangible to the senses of those who inhabit the sphere in which the thinkers dwell or with which they are in touch,”

To resume the teaching, the following remarks on the difficult subject of astral shells are illuminating:

“When the time comes for the initiate to claim his freedom from incarnation, he asks for and obtains the task of concreting the Cosmic idea. If, as very rarely happens, he succeeds in concreting it perfectly, he is not destroyed by it, but undergoes that liberation which is known in Christian theology as translation. ‘He walks with God and is not.’ But if, as more often happens, he does but bring a contribution to the building of the Temple, the imperfection of the work destroys him. That is to say, it breaks up the personality.

“Now the Individuality which has a Personality broken in this way, is karma free, because when a Personality is thus shattered by the Cosmic forces, death on all the planes takes place simultaneously, and there is therefore no karma. All that is left to the immortal spirit is the mental picture which is sometimes called the seed-atom of the concrete. That mental picture abides in the atmosphere of the upper astral or the akashic records and is the sole link between the spirit and the plane of form. The spirit then has for its vehicle the abstract mind stored with the garnered riches of the evolution of that entity. It has also the simulacrum on the astral, but that simulacrum is only the shadow it threw in the past on the plane of form.

“The entity that elects to function in relation to the advancement of the human race galvanizes that simulacrum into a transient life in order to communicate with those whose consciousnesses cannot rise above forms. When once the consciousness of a human being has become aware of the galvanized simulacrum, the same cycle of cause and effect as that already described takes place in his consciousness until his imagination builds up a clear image of the Master, and into that image the powers of that entity flow and function.

“The difference between the man who touches astral imagination only and the man who, by astral imagination touches spiritual actualities, is that the former in his concepts can rise no higher than the astral imagination, and the latter has in his soul spiritual realization and aspiration which he brings through into brain consciousness by means of the astral imagination.”

From these teachings it will be seen how important the astral plane is. When we think, we create astral images, and when in meditation we seek inspiration, it comes through astral imagination.

There are other and more subconscious ways in which the astral forces work; for instance—in deep sleep when consciousness is dissociated from the physical senses, the body will be recuperated by astral power. The physical-etheric body is fed, as it were, by the astral forces, and the astral force is controlled by the “form” aspect of the mental body, for without “form” the astral would be diffused and without function. The earth, sun, moon, vegetation and all life-forces which derive from the OneSource of Life—God— have their astral aspect and reach us through the etheric body. We must therefore learn to give proper value to the astral plane and not strive to repress its power, for if we do, those powers may flow forth into various conditions of astral pathologies, and have their physical reaction.

The forces of the lower astral plane are directed towards the personal and physical well-being, whereas the forces of the upper astral state of consciousness, with their aspiration and uplifting powers, have a background of universal wellbeing. A healthy astral condition manifests itself on the physical plane in orderliness, good-feeling, love of art, music and things that appeal to the better feelings; and unhealthy astral conditions will open the door to undesirable contacts arising from unworthy thoughts and desires, dirt and disorder.

Death does not change our astral consciousness, for we are assured that what we are now, so shall we be when we awaken on the astral plane free from the limitations of the physical senses. Let us then prepare for that state here and now, so that by realization we shall hasten our progress towards the spiritual goal which we can only reach by way of the astral plane.

V. The Worship of Isis

ALL the gods are one god; and all the goddesses are one goddess, and there is one initiator.

In the beginning was space and darkness and stillness, older than time and forgotten of the gods. Movement arose in space: that was the beginning.

This sea of infinite space was the source of all being; life arose therein as a tide in the soundless sea. All shall return thereto when the night of the gods draws in. This is the Great Sea, Marah, the Bitter One; the Great Mother. And because of the inertia of space ere movement arose as a tide, She is called by the Wise the Passive Principle in Nature and is thought of as Water, or Space that Flows. But there is no flowing in space till the power stirs; and this power is the Active Principle of creation. All things partake of the nature of the Active or the Passive Principle, and are referred thereto.

Thrice-greatest Hermes graved on the Smaragdine Tablet, "As above, so below." Upon earth we see the reflection of the play of the heavenly principles in the actions of men and women. The virgin in her passivity is even as primordial space ere the tides arose. The male is the life-giver. These in the making of life play the active and passive parts. By him she is made creative and fertile; but hers is the child, and he, though the giver of life, passes empty-handed. He spends himself, and nothing remains that is his, save as she calls him mate.

His life is between her hands; his life, that was, and is, and shall be. Therefore should he adore the Passive Principle, for without her he is not. Little knoweth he his need of Her in all the ways of life. She is the Great Goddess.

All the gods are one god, and all the goddesses are one goddess, and there is one initiator.

She is called by many names by many men; but to all she is the Great Goddess, space and earth and water. As space she is called Rhea, mother of the gods that made the gods; she is more old than time: she is the matrix of matter; the root-substance of all existence, undifferentiated, pure. She is also Binah, the Supernal Mother, that receiveth Chokmah, the Supernal Father. She is the giver of form to the formless force whereby it can build. She is also the bringer-in of death, for that which has form must die, outworn, in order that it may be born again to fuller life. All that is born must die; but that which dies shall be reborn. Therefore she is called Marah, bitter, Our Lady of Sorrows, for she is the bringer-in of death. Likewise she is called Ge, for she is the most ancient earth, the first formed from the formless. All these is she, and they are seen in her, and whatsoever is of their nature answers unto her, and she hath dominion over it. Her tides are its tides; her ways are its ways; and whoso knoweth the one, knoweth the other.

Whatsoever ariseth out of nothingness, she giveth it; whatsoever sinketh down into nothingness, she receiveth it. She is the Great Sea, whence life arose, to which all shall return at the end of an aeon.

Herein do we bathe in sleep, sinking back into the primordial deep, returning to forgotten things before time was: and the soul is renewed, touching the Great Mother. Whoso cannot return to the primordial, hath no roots in life, but withereth as the grass. These are the living dead, they who are orphaned of the Great Mother.

The daughter of the Great Mother is Persephone, Queen of Hades, ruler of the kingdoms of sleep and death. Under the form of the Dark Queen men also worship her who is the One:

likewise is she Aphrodite. And herein is a great mystery, for it is decreed that none shall understand the one without the other.

In death men go to her across the shadowy river, and she is the keeper of their souls until the dawn. But there is also a death in life, and this likewise leadeth on to rebirth. Why fear ye the Dark Queen, O men? She is the Renewer. From sleep we rise refreshed; from death we rise reborn; by the embraces of Persephone men are made powerful.

For there is a turning-within of the soul whereby men come to Persephone; they sink back into the womb of time; they become as the unborn. They enter the kingdom where Persephone rules as Queen; they are made negative and await the coming of life.

And the Queen of Hades cometh in unto them as a bridegroom, and they are made fertile for life, and go forth rejoicing for the touch of the Queen of the kingdoms of sleep hath made them potent.

And even as the Queen of Hades is the daughter of the Great Mother, so from the Great Sea riseth golden Aphrodite, giver of love. And she also is Isis after another manner.

She is the Awakener. That which is latent she calleth forth into potency. She is the attraction of outer space, making the centre to manifest. That which is the centre, the all-potent, waiteth, and acheth, unable to brim over and outpour into manifestation until the attraction of outer space draweth upon him.

Equilibrium is fixed in inertia until outer space overset the balance and the All-father pours forth to satisfy the hunger of space. Strange and deep are these truths; verily, they are the keys to the lives of men and women, and unknown to those who worship not the Great Goddess.

Golden Aphrodite cometh not as the virgin, the victim: but as the Awakener, the Desirous One. As outer space she calls, and the All-father commences the courtship. She awakeneth him to desire, and the worlds are created. Lo, She is the Awakener.

That which is potent in the outer is latent in the inner, awaiting the Awakener, unable to brim over until that touch be given; striving in travail as one who cannot bring forth until the Great Goddess changeth the latent into the potent.

How powerful is she, golden Aphrodite the awakener of manhood!

Our Lady is also the Moon, called of some Selene, of others Luna, but by the wise Levanah, for therein is contained the number of Her name. She is the ruler of the tides of flux and reflux. The waters of the Great Sea answer unto her; likewise the waters of all earthly seas, and she ruleth the nature of women.

But there is likewise in the souls of men a flowing and an ebbing of the tides of life, which no one knoweth save the wise. And over these tides the Great Goddess presides under her aspect of the moon. As she passeth from her rising to her setting, so answer these tides unto her. She riseth from the sea as the evening star, and the waters of earth rise in flood. She sinketh as Luna in the western ocean, and the waters flow back into the inner earth and are still in that great lake of darkness wherein are the moon and stars reflected. Whoso is still as the dark underworld lake of Persephone shall see the tides of the Unseen moving therein and shall know all things. Therefore is Luna also called giver of visions.

But all these things are one thing. All these goddesses are one goddess, and we call her Isis, the All-woman, in whose nature all things are found; virgin, and desirous by turn; giver of life and bringer-in of death. She is the cause of creation, for she awakeneth the desire of the All-father and for her sake he createth. Likewise the wise call all women Isis.

She it is who as the Great Sea biddeth him return unto her, sink into her depths, spend himself, and sleep in utter negation. She it is who as Isis of the Underworld awakeneth him with her kisses in the darkness, and he cometh forth by day all-potent as Osiris. She it is who rises from the sea as a star and calleth him to come forth; and he answereth unto her, and the earth grows green with grain. All these things is she, and many more; changing from one to another with the tides of the moon, and the needs of men's souls answer unto her.

In the outer, he is the male, the lord, the giver of life. But in the inner he taketh life at her hands as she bendeth over him, he kneeling. Therefore should he worship the Great Goddess, for without Her he hath no life, and every woman is Her priestess. In the face of every woman let him look for the features of the goddess, watching her phases through the flow and return of the tides to which his soul answereth; awaiting her call, as he needs must, aching in his barrenness.

Each woman is a priestess of the goddess. She is the potent queen of the underworld, whose kisses magnetize and give life. In the inner she is all-potent, she is the fertiliser. She causeth the male to create, for without desire, life goes not forth.

It is her call in the darkness that awakeneth: for in the inner, the male is inert. Not of his own life does he arise, but for desire of her. Until her hands touch him, he is as the dead in the kingdom of the shades; he is death-in-life.

O daughters of Isis, adore the goddess, and in her name give the call that awakens and rejoices. So shall ye be blessed of the goddess and live with fulness of life.

The wise of old beheld all created things as the luminous garment of the Creator: and in the ways of Nature they discerned the ways of God: and they adored God made manifest in Nature, saying, In Nature is God made manifest; therefore let Nature be unto me the manifestation of God.

Isis is the All-woman, and all women are Isis. Osiris is the All-man, and all males are Osiris. Isis is all that is negative, receptive, and latent. Osiris is all that is dynamic and potent. That which is latent in the outer is potent in the inner; and that which is potent in the outer is latent in the inner. Therefore is Isis both Persephone and Aphrodite; and Osiris, the giver of life, is likewise the Lord of the realms of death. This is the law of alternating polarity, which is known to the wise.

Man should not for ever be potent, but should lie latent in the arms of Persephone, surrendering himself. Then she who was dark and cold as outer space before the creative Word, is made queen of the underworld, crowned by his surrender, and her kisses become potent upon his lips.

Awakened by her kisses he shall arise, the all-potent, and his desire shall call golden Aphrodite unto him. But without the kisses of Persephone, he sleepeth in Hades for ever.

And she who is priestess of Isis ruleth over the subtle, inner tides of the hearts of men as Levanah, the moon. As Persephone she draweth him down into the darkness that he may be receptive, negative; as Aphrodite she awakeneth him to light and life. She answereth with her changing phases to the needs of his secret life, and he, fulfilled of her, is made glorious in his strength. And she, so awakening, so calling, so answering, is filled with fullness of life, for she is beloved of the goddess.

VI. Some Helps to Meditation

MEDITATION may be defined as the practice of concentrated and directed thinking designed to build up an attitude of the mind. It is an exceedingly important part of the discipline that awakens the mind to higher consciousness. Without the regular practice of meditation according to a sound technique, any real achievement is impossible. There are innumerable books upon the subject from many different points of view. Each of these viewpoints has its value, and we shall incline to one or another according to the bias of our characters and the needs of our lives.

Meditation may be considered from four different standpoints. Firstly, that of the development of the personality as such, with a view to a happier and more successful life and the enhancement of the capacities. Secondly, from what may be termed generically the New Thought standpoint, wherein the aim is, broadly speaking, to bring the soul into harmony with God.

Thirdly, from the occult or yoga standpoint. And fourthly, from the mystical standpoint, whether Christian or Non-Christian, wherein the aim is to enable the soul to make the unreserved dedication and unite itself to the Godhead.

It is my belief that the concentration upon any one of these methods to the exclusion of all others, even though this is strenuously recommended by the exponents of the different systems, does not yield the best results in human life-values. It is quite true that the greatest efficiency in the system chosen is gained by such concentration, but the sense of proportion is lost, and the development is one-sided. Consciousness has more than one level, and the development of all the levels in harmonious proportion is needed for the perfection of humanity. None of these systems, left to itself, does this; therefore none of these systems contains the complete curriculum of the perfection of humanity. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And is he much better off if he open up the higher aspects of mystical consciousness and lose his physical health? Or achieve the greater power of yoga and sacrifice his mental balance?

I would counsel everyone who takes up the intensive practice of meditation to devise for themselves a discipline which shall include all four aspects, so that the tremendous powers awakened by yoga methods may be disciplined and dedicated by the mystical contacts, and the harmonizing and soothing influence of the New Thought reiterated autosuggestions may inspire and stabilize the mind, and the commonsense dicta of plain character-building and faculty-development may help to maintain a sense of just proportion.

Meditation is by no means a thing easy of achievement. It is the calisthenics of the soul, and leads on to its acrobatics and athletics. When we first embark upon its practices we shall find that when the first enthusiasm wanes, the mind itself will resist the practices as if with a deliberately willed antagonism. This corresponds to the stiffness of the muscles of an athlete who is out of condition. We all know, however, that the best way to get rid of that painful stiffness is to move the muscles until they warm up and become limber. Such stiffness is best worked off, to try and rest it off is worse than useless. So it is with the mind, we must summon up all our resources of will and perseverance to get through the initial resistance of the mind. Once this has been successfully accomplished, and the habit of meditation established, the very resistant inertia of the mind that made the practice of a discipline so difficult will help to maintain it when once the habit has been acquired. We shall be as uneasy and discomforted if we miss our meditation-time as if we miss a meal.

A regular meditation period, with which nothing is allowed to interfere is absolutely essential. A good time is immediately after dressing and before breakfast. The absence of food in the stomach makes meditation much easier, and the activity of dressing ensures that we are sufficiently wide awake not to drift off into dream-land instead of following a train of thought with concentration. For many people, too, the early morning, before the demands of the day take hold upon them, is the only time they can with surety call their own. The mind, fresh from sleep and undistracted, is at its best for the contemplation of inner things. There is no better investment we can make towards spiritual or mental progress than this half hour of sacrificed sleep.

It is not a good plan to practise meditation lying in bed before rising, for only a superhuman will can keep us awake under such circumstances, and we shall in all probability deceive ourselves as to the extent to which we are awake, but it is a very good plan to make a habit of turning the thoughts to invocation of the Masters for a few moments immediately on awakening, while consciousness is still on the frontiers of sleep. Such a practice very speedily becomes habitual, and we shall find that we regularly awaken from sleep to find ourselves subconsciously invoking the Masters. Such thought, which often escapes from the limitation of waking consciousness, is very potent.

It is also an excellent plan to go to sleep in contemplation, directing the mind towards some idea or ideal, and allowing the thoughts to circle gently round it until the mind drifts out on the tide of sleep. Concentration should not be attempted. Intruding thoughts should merely be inhibited, and the mind encouraged to brood quietly and almost at random on the chosen idea. After a few nights' practice it will be found that almost before the thoughts are called home and directed to the chosen idea, we have sunk into the most peaceful and refreshing sleep imaginable. And even if sleep does not-immediately supervene, and we lie awake for a time, as often occurs with highly-strung people, we are nevertheless resting, for the mind is at peace, and at low tension, and is not thrashing itself to pieces with the bugaboos of anxiety and over-vivid imagination.

There is no better way of going to sleep than in tranquil contemplation of a spiritual ideal, nor is there any surer way of bringing it to birth in our nature.

This should be our routine procedure, night by night, for it is healthful and helpful. It should not be our constant practice to attempt occult feats in sleep, such as telepathy, going up to the Halls of Initiation, or projecting the Astral body. If we do these things too frequently, disturbance of the function of sleep is apt to ensue. These are matters for the trained initiate, who is properly equipped with the necessary Words of Power, symbols, and technique. These things cannot be learnt from books, and should never be attempted except under the proper conditions. And even among initiated adepts it is usual to observe times and seasons in these things, and not to practise them unceasingly.

Another useful practice is that of the Midday Salutation, in which the thoughts are raised to the God of Nature at high noon, the symbol employed being the Sun in Midheaven. This practice soon attunes us to the spiritual essence of nature, and has some very important effects upon consciousness. It is vitalizing and joy-bringing, and harmonizes the whole being, correlating its different aspects, mental, emotional, instinctive, and spiritual, like the notes in a chord.

It is very advantageous, if it can be managed, always to meditate in the same place; but even if we cannot manage always to do our meditation at the identical spot, we can have some symbol which we take out from its covers and set up as the focus of our meditation. We should always have such a meditation symbol. It is the greatest possible help. The student

who tries to acquire the habit of meditation without recourse to such extraneous aids is giving himself much unnecessary trouble. Until use is made of such a symbol, its effect will not be believed, moreover, the more it is used, the more potent it grows, for thought-forms are building up around it with every meditation that is performed.

It is essential, for a symbol to develop its full potency, that it should always be kept reverently covered up when not in use, and that we should be extremely discrete as to whom we allow even to look upon it, and no one save the owner should ever lay a finger upon it, and even he should take it in his hands with reverence, saluting it with the appropriate sign, either by crossing himself if the symbol is Christian, or with the sign of his grade if he be an initiate. By these precautions the magnetism which the symbol acquires is prevented from dispersing, and so develops with every meditation performed. For not only is the chosen symbol connected by every law of mental association with the ideal of meditation, but an actual atmosphere is built up around it, and this atmosphere is even more than a thought-form, it is an actual magnetic aura, and its influence is according to its nature.

Its inestimable value lies in its power to recall the wandering thoughts and tune them to the key-note with which it is imbued. The meditations we have performed in its presence during periods of spiritual insight act as mentors during periods of spiritual dryness. It is a storage battery of spiritual force, and like a similar battery on a car, provides the spark that enables the engine to make a start.

The simplest form of symbol for use under unfavourable conditions, such as when travelling, or where privacy is lacking, is a suitable picture or post-card, of some work of art expressive of the aspiration of the soul; or the card may be a plain one of similar size, on which such symbols as are known to the student may be drawn. Little travelling photograph frames of leather or paper cloth, with a piece of talc in place of glass as protection to the picture, and folding flat like a pocket-book, make an excellent little shrine-case. It is a good plan to make an envelope of black silk into which it can be fitted, as this helps to preserve the little shrine from psychic contamination and physical wear and tear.

Where conditions are more favourable, a more elaborate shrine can be constructed, and the most suitable thing for the purpose is a small medicine cupboard that can be fastened to the wall at a convenient height for contemplation. The door of this can be shut when not in use, and when opened out, reveals the interior with its symbolic decoration and objects hallowed by their association with the prayer and aspiration of the soul.

To keep a perpetual light burning before the little shrine costs from three to four shillings a week, because only the purest oil is any use for the purpose, any other kind cakes upon the floating wick and chokes the flame. The proper kind of oil, called sanctuary oil is sold by any shop that specializes in church furniture or Catholic books and pictures. There too can be obtained the wicks that are used to float on the oil. Any small glass receptacle will do to hold the oil, but these shops also sell the proper sanctuary lamps, which vary from a few pence to beautiful examples of the silversmith's art, costing many pounds. They can be chosen either to stand like a vase, or hang on chains from a bracket arm. Even if it is not feasible to keep a perpetual light burning before the shrine, it is helpful to have a little lamp to light when meditation is in progress.

Incense also is helpful to the making of an atmosphere which aids concentration. It can be bought either in long joss sticks from any shop that goes in for Oriental goods, or in cones from a chemist. A little experimenting will prove which kinds are suitable and which are not. There is an elaborate science of aromatics in relation to states of consciousness, but we cannot enter upon it here. For all practical purposes, any sweet smelling substance, even if it

be only smouldering pine cones or lavender stalks, which serves to change the physical atmosphere of a room from that to which we are habituated, will be of assistance in enabling the mind to shift its level from the outer to the inner world.

The ideal incense to use is, of course, that which is sold for use in ritualistic churches, and which is specially compounded of fragrant gums. The drawback to its use for daily meditation is the difficulty of its manipulation, for it has to be burnt upon smouldering charcoal, and the whole affair takes some time to get going, and unless burnt in a swinging censer, goes out capriciously.

There is one thing, however, that can be maintained before even the simplest shrine, or where the tendency of incense to advertise itself all over the house renders its employment inadvisable, and that is the little vase of flowers. There should be something in every shrine that demands daily attention, whether it be the little guarded flame or the little floral offering. There should be some small sacrifice offered daily to keep the spirit of the shrine alive.

A meditation robe is also a great help. It is best formed of thin black silk, or failing that, of some thin cotton stuff, such as mercerised lawn, and should be voluminous enough to swathe the entire figure in ample draperies, including long loose sleeves to fall over the hands and a monk's cowl to pull over the head. When not in use it should go into a black silk case and be put away apart from the ordinary clothes. The whole idea underlying the material precautions taken to protect sacred things from profanation or demagnetization, which is the same thing, is based upon the analogy of electricity. The subtle force which is woven into intangible forms by the power of the mind, and which is the link between mind and matter, is electromagnetic in nature, and if we work by electrical analogies when dealing with its subtle manifestations, we shall not go far wrong. The most effective material for insulation is black silk.

All this paraphernalia may seem strange to any one accustomed to the simplicities of Protestant prayer, but if experimented with, its efficacy will soon be realized. We are not under any delusion that it has any effect upon the disposition of God, to incline Him favourably towards the user, nor upon spiritual forces, to cause them to flow in fanciful channels, but it has a very marked effect upon the consciousness of those who employ it, and it is for this reason that we recommend its use to those commencing upon the practice of meditation. The experienced meditator may be independent of all such devices, but the beginner in what is actually an art of no small difficulty, will find them of great assistance.

VII. Teachings Concerning the Aura

THE aura is a less simple structure than is often supposed. It may be conceived of as an ovoid sphere extending to arm's length beyond the physical body. The aura's size and clarity vary according to its owner's development.

The ovoid sphere usually consists of a magnetic field containing three concentric levels or layers which in fact interpenetrate each other but which are clairvoyantly perceived as bands of different colours. Permeating and conditioning this magnetic field is a dual circuit of Force—the Cosmic Current of the microcosm—which develops throughout evolution and which links the Divine Spark to the magnetic core of the earth during each incarnation.

The central circuit of this Current gives the human being his energy and the peripheral circuit (which arises out of the central) is concerned with the organization of that energy. In the central circuit also is that part of the aura which is in contact with the Great Unmanifest.

As seen by clairvoyance the vehicles of the human being emanate bands of auric force which appear as coloured strata of different types. The aura is not necessarily observed by clairvoyance each time in its entirety. Sometimes only one band is seen at a time and the rest is either dim or invisible. The three bands, when the aura is seen in its entirety, may be described as follows.

I. *The magnetic or health aura.* This is the innermost band of the auric field, since it is clairvoyantly seen to emanate from the physical body and its condition indicates that body's health. This emanation varies from a faint greyish cloud to a strong silvery light. It has been sometimes asserted that the aura is electric and if this is true there may be means found for detecting it since scientific instruments already exist such as the electro-cardiograph and the electroencephalograph for discovering the body's electricity. Long ago a claim was made by Kilner that the aura could be thus registered but prejudice and over-statement disqualified the pretensions of the Kilner Screens.

II. Next to the health aura, clairvoyance perceives an area suffused with colours denoting the predominating mood or temperament. This is the astral aura. In this section there will be a preponderance of yellow if the person be intellectual or of blue if he be musical. Art, materialism, love, lust, fear and depression are equally observed in their corresponding tints in these astral emanations.

“Chakras”, “Lotuses” or “Wheels” of force are really in all levels of the aura but those popularized in text-books usually refer to the astral section and are at seven important points therein which correlate with the nervous system.

III. The outermost band of auric substance stretching out beyond the astral links up with the Individuality. This band seen clairvoyantly, is composed of rainbow colours and of rays of light. It holds contacts with the Essential Self, nonhuman beings and other Cosmic Potencies as well as with Esoteric Guides of past and present lives. It is here also that indications of spiritual connection with esoteric groups can be discerned.

These three “sections” of the aura represent the etheric, astro-mental and spiritual levels of consciousness which are “seen” to be developed or otherwise according to the brilliancy and size of the bands of light portraying them clairvoyantly. Auras of Masters can extend to a much greater degree than those of less evolved men and if a Master is working in conjunction

with his pupil, the latter's aura is often enclosed within the Master's as well as being itself much expanded.

An exercise said to be useful to help in seeing the aura is to focus the eyes on space, gazing through the person being studied. Then imagine him as a nude astral figure round which the three bands of the aura spontaneously build up.

For such work you will use the pineal gland or centre of awareness between the eyebrows. As is well known, all psychic experiments must be kept under the control of the will and must not be tried when tired or emotionally disturbed. It should also be unnecessary to emphasize here that such visions only take place subjectively. It will be found that when the third band of the aura (linking with the Higher Self) is being inspected, consciousness will be spiritually exalted and tend to diffusion into the Higher Self; whereas when the astral and etheric bands of the aura are being studied, personal consciousness will be magically concentrated on those planes.

The Tree of Life should be built up in the aura and much realization as to character and development can be experienced by the manner in which the Sephiroth and Pillars appear. It is also helpful to build up in the same way the astrological chart and observe the influences which this chart may suggest. It is however well to bear in mind that astrology should be treated neither as "an exact science" nor as a superstition, but as an illuminative method of analysis and philosophy.

There are various books on the aura which will repay study. Specially recommended are those by C. W. Leadbeater and his pupil A. E. Powell. Further teaching on this subject of auras by Dion Fortune is here appended. This concerns the aura in relation to Polarity.

The central circuit of magnetic force in the aura, passing between the Divine Spark and the soul of the earth, is the basic factor of individual manifestation. It may be conceived of as emanating from the Divine Spark, looping round the magnetic core of the earth, and returning to the Divine Spark again. It is the passing of the current through the magnetic core of the earth that determines incarnation. The secondary magnetic circuit in the aura, the Peripheral Circuit, arises out of the emanations of the primary circuits, interacting with environmental factors. This circuit is sensitive to the changing play of these factors; whereas the primary, central circuit is immune to all external influences. Between the two is a magnetic field, the aura itself. Within the aura are different forms of activity, and these give rise to the multicoloured bands described by clairvoyants.

The central circuit remains unaffected by all extraneous conditions, its voltage rising and falling, and the direction of the flow of the current changing according to esoteric constant factors. The peripheral circuit, however, is highly sensitive, the centres in it corresponding to the external factors reacting to every change in these factors—such changes being due to the permutations and combinations of the cosmic factors, reinforcing, modifying or counteracting each other as is described in the judging of a horoscope.

The available energy in an aura is derived from its central magnetic circuit, but the organization of that energy within the aura is affected by the influences to which the peripheral circuit is exposed. These set up currents within the magnetic field of the two circuits. These cross-currents establish equilibrium in the course of time, and become stabilized centres and systems, as described in the *Cosmic Doctrine*. Although that teaching refers actually to the genesis of the universe, it is equally applicable to the development of the aura of the individual. The Tree of Life is a cross-section of the aura. What is true of it is also true of the universe.

The more highly developed the aura, the greater what may best be described as its surface tension—a kind of skin of resistance formed by the interweaving of magnetic circuits. These arise from outgoing rays of emanation obeying the law of the curvature of force and returning upon themselves at their point of emanation. The tension gradually increases, causing, as it were, a shrinking and tightening of the circuits, until finally a tensely resistive surface of magnetic loops is established. This constitutes the exterior envelope of the aura.

This phase having been reached, the tension within the magnetic field rises steadily because force is no longer being lost, the Rays being re-entrant. Now comes the time when openings can be made in the aura and rays of force projected, for sufficient force has now been accumulated for such projections to be possible. But be it observed that these emanations are from the magnetic field and not from the central circuit. This fact explains certain discrepancies that may have appeared in the teaching. All exchange of magnetism takes place from the field of induction, not from the central circuit, which is the source of the energy. The primal source of all force, the Divine Spark in the Great Unmanifest, possesses infinite energy, and is therefore unaffected by such emanations or losses, but the potential of the magnetic field is affected by them, just as it is changed in its modes and distribution by the influences affecting the peripheral circuit.

The more highly evolved the surface organization of the aura, however, the less is it affected by external influences, save where centres for the reception of different types of force are developed. In the course of the evolution of an aura, then, it goes through the following phases:—a primary phase of complete unresponsiveness to all influences save the flux and reflux of the central magnetic current which corresponds to the pre-natal life of the Personality or Lower Self; a developing phase during which sensitivity is increasing which corresponds to the youth of the incarnated Personality; a mature phase during which the receptivity of the periphery is being brought into equilibrium with the resistiveness of the central core and thus under the control of the Divine Spark; and a final phase during which receptivity is lessening and the activity of the now highly developed aura is concentrating around the fluctuations of the central circuit.

These phases take place in the course of an evolution. Each incarnation sees the resumption of the different forms of activity which characterize the different planes of manifestation; each discarnation sees the discontinuance of such forms of activity, but the activity of the central core never ceases during the whole course of evolution, and it is its perpetual flux, reflux and permutations which constitute the ever-changing pattern of existence. All things are reducible to these terms and when thus reduced become explicable and predictable. By an understanding of the nature and interplay of these factors, the control of the forces manifesting within the auric sphere can be attained. The Personality, which builds up out of the emanations of the peripheral circuit, is negative to its environment and conditioned thereby; but the Individuality or Higher Self is organized around the central magnetic core, and is responsive to the influence of the Divine Spark which obeys laws that are beyond our comprehension as incarnate beings, and are comprehensible only in terms of the consciousness that can rise to the plane where they operate. This knowledge, however, can be translated and transmitted by reflection and deduction in consciousness suitably conditioned, and it is the work of the Mysteries to effect such conditioning, and also to teach the Lore of the Peripheral Circuit in its relationship to the universe.

Upon this theoretical basis all practical occult tradition is built up, and it should be thoroughly grasped by those who would make of the occult arts a science. The practical teaching is based upon, and explicable by, the principles outlined in these teachings upon the aura. It must always be borne in mind that the aura is fundamentally a self-contained unit

unaffected by external conditions; that it starts its evolution in this state, and returns to it, after passing through a phase of susceptibility to modifications in its activities by external influences, but immune from any alteration in its basic organization and existence. After a certain point in its development is reached, it becomes increasingly independent of external influences, but up to that point, though not dependent upon such influences for its existence, it is dependent upon them for the stimulation of its activities, and can equally be subject to the inhibiting or deforming of its development through their unbalanced or adverse influence—adverse, that is to say, to a given phase of activity.

Once a state of independence of external influence has been reached by the development in centres within the aura corresponding to the external factors—centres that can specialize the activities of the primary energy of the central circuit in the same way as the cosmic centres so specialize it—the entity can, by closing all outgoing emanations, raise the voltage of its magnetic field and so have energy available for the projection of emanations. It can determine the type of these emanations, as distinguished from a general radiation of energy, if it is able to close its sphere to all external influences and generate energy of a specific type by the concentration of the basic energy in a given centre. This is the method of the adepts.

When complete immunity from external influences is achieved, the entity is completely self-acting. During the intermediate phases of acquiring sensitivity and achieving the control of, and determining immunity to sensitivity, the skilful use of stimuli is a valuable technique of function; likewise the skilful use of the art of immunization which is its corollary. Sensitivity to stimuli is achieved by concentration on the peripheral circuit; immunization by the concentration on the central circuit. To achieve these techniques, the imagination visualizes the circuits as diagrammatic glyphs with the aid of the Tree of Life and that simplified chart of the heavens which is used for astrological purposes. The Tree of Life is used in relation to the central circuit; and the chart of the heavens in relation to the peripheral circuit. The adept builds these up as clearly visualized pictures, the former of his aura, and the latter of his environment. For simplicity's sake they are highly stylised pictures, symbolic, and charged with mythical meaning. The story of Guinevere is such a myth related to the Glyph of Yesod, Hod, and Netzach. The myths relate to the force aspect and the glyphs to the form aspect of manifestation.

VIII. Pitfalls of Spiritual Healing

THE question of healing has always been of prime interest to students of occultism. Discovering the great increase of our knowledge that comes through the doctrines of esoteric science, they cannot fail to realize that it has a practical application in the field of therapeutics. The idealist is especially drawn towards mystical and transcendental studies, and his strong compassionate impulse leads him to desire above all things to lift the burden of suffering from the world. He is acutely conscious of the limitations of the orthodox methods and keenly anxious for a way of escape from those limitations. The humanitarian impulse and the zeal of the discoverer have between them made of the occult field a prolific breeding-ground for all manner of new ideas in therapeutics and hygiene.

The Fraternity I work with, being a society for the study of esotericism in all its branches, is frequently asked whether it has any healing circles among its students, or any classes wherein spiritual healing is taught; and when it replies that it has none of these things, it is asked whether it condemns spiritual healing and advises its students against its practice. It may be well, therefore, to define its position lest misunderstanding arises upon the one side or the other.

It is not possible in this matter to give an unqualified yes or no. It is necessary to clear the ground and classify the subject-matter before we can do justice to it. But we may briefly indicate our attitude by saying that we believe in spiritual healing but disbelieve in spiritual healers. Does this mean that we are not interested in spiritual healing? No, it does not. Being a Fraternity of the Tradition which recognizes Aesculapius and Paracelsus, we can hardly reckon the question of therapeutics as alien to us. It means that we take the matter so seriously that we are disinclined to play with it, or suffer it to be played with if it is within our power to prevent it. While we are fully alive to the possibilities of spiritual healing, we cannot shut our eyes to the unsatisfactory and even disastrous results that ensue when it is ignorantly or inadequately employed. We desire to see spiritual healing done, but we want to see it done in the right way and under the right conditions so that the patient shall have the best possible chance that can be afforded him, and that chance is not afforded him when the person who takes charge of his case is ignorant of the problems presented by his condition.

Good intentions are no substitute for sound knowledge. Just as the materialists are wrong when they hold man to consist of his physical body and nothing else, so are the mystics wrong when they act as if man were a spirit and nothing else. Man is a sevenfold being, and it is not possible to separate one aspect of his nature from another for any practical purpose, for they are interacting.

The only satisfactory healer is the one who has an adequate knowledge of the fourfold nature of man, can diagnose in terms of each of the aspects of manifesting life and treat each level of manifestation according to its needs. Each plane of manifestation has its own laws and conditions; the spiritual plane is governed by spiritual law; the mental plane by the laws of the functioning of mind; the astral plane has its own laws, and so have the etheric sub-planes of matter; dense matter itself is also a kingdom which has a constitutional government.

This does not mean, however, that each plane is autonomous. Each level is ruled and ensouled by the next subtlest level, the physical by the etheric, the etheric by the astral, the astral by the mental, and the mental by the spiritual. But although the subtler levels rule and ensoul each its denser neighbour, they rule as constitutional monarchs according to the laws of the country, and not as arbitrary autocrats. Mind can influence matter profoundly, and yet

it cannot do just as it pleases with matter. It must always rule by availing itself of the inexorable laws of the physical plane. Even the most extreme school of spiritual healing does not expect a man to grow a new limb; it is content if the repair processes take place naturally by the gradual and normal reconstruction of tissue. In fact, it is content to focus the *vis medicatrix naturae* at the required spot and let the healing take place by natural means.

The great mistake which the spiritual healers make is to refuse to recognize the fact that each plane has its own laws, and that these laws are both the means and the limitations of their art. The great mistake which the materialistic school of medicine makes is to refuse to recognize the fact that each level of manifestation is operated and directed from a subtler plane and that the happenings and reactions of that subtler plane have got to be reckoned with. The practitioner of orthodox medicine is the heir of generations of systematized research into the nature of the physical machine and has a pretty comprehensive understanding of it. He knows what to do if the systems of levers and pulleys we call our limbs come off their rollers; in other words, he can reduce a dislocation. If the length of piping which is the human intestine gets a kink in it, he knows the only thing to do is to open up the casing of the machine and disentangle it. If this is not done, the soul withdraws from its useless instrument because no amount of spiritual force is going to drive material substance through a kinked tube, as many a spiritual healer has learnt to his cost. The mundane practitioner, in fact, thoroughly understands the mechanics of the body.

Concerning its chemistry he has a certain amount of understanding, but his knowledge is by no means so complete. He can reproduce in a test-tube the processes of digestion; he can mix chemical ingredients and produce an artificial digestive juice which is just as good as the natural one. But here he is trenching upon the life-processes, and he does not understand the nature of life. He cannot tell why it is that under the influence of painful emotion, such as fear, hate or grief, the stomach will change the nature of the digestive juices it secretes so that they become useless or even actually poisonous. He may be able to reproduce in his test-tube the secretions, but he cannot reproduce the influences of emotion upon those secretions.

The spiritual healer, on the other hand, can influence the emotions, calm, transmute, and direct them. He and he alone can cure the dyspepsia which comes from a chronic perversion of the digestive juices by chronic emotional distress.

But just as that hydra-headed complaint called stomach ache may have its origin in a disturbance of the subtle, emotional aspect of man which acts as the regulator of metabolism, so it may have its origin in a disturbance of the mechanics or hydraulics of digestion. The one case calls for spiritual methods, the other for surgical methods, and that quickly. Who is to decide which it is to be? The only person who is competent to make a diagnosis is the man who has been trained in a general hospital and has seen every variety of disease in the living and the dead; the man who has a clear-cut mental picture of the hidden machinery of the body and the appearances, gross and microscopical, of the processes of disease. He alone knows what is happening and can form a just estimate, for he alone can read the significance of the physical signs.

It is for this reason that, although as occultists we have a theory of disease and of therapy, we are diffident concerning the practice of spiritual healing. It is not because we dispute the validity of spiritual healing when applied to a suitable case, but because we distrust the power of diagnosis of the spiritual healer and recognize his liability to get hold of an unsuitable case and make a most lamentable mess of it. It is all very well for the fanatical adherent of spiritual healing to say that God is omnipotent and that spirit is all and matter nothing; I am not prepared to argue the metaphysics of the case; the final court of appeal must always be experience, and experience, unfortunately, does not bear out their contention. Spiritual

healing has its limits, whether spiritual healers admit it or not. They are far from being uniformly successful, as they would be if their hypothesis were correct.

Because God is omnipotent does not mean that He is as arbitrary and incalculable as an Eastern despot. May we not conceive that He works through law, and that His omnipotence lies in the inviolable nature of His laws? Are not the laws and limitations of matter just as much His ordinances as the laws of spirit? When a so-called spiritual healing results in the cure of bodily ills, it has, *ipso facto*, become a physical healing. A spiritual healing that remained literally a spiritual healing would never take effect on the plane of matter at all. Spiritual force must be transmuted down the planes and manifest in matter in order that a change of physical condition may take place.

Equally, may it not be that the successful result of medical treatment or of an operation should really be accounted a spiritual healing? If it is our karma to die, we die, despite anything that can be done for us; if it is our karma to recover, why should not the spiritual forces manifest through the skill of the surgeon as well as through the mind of the healer? Why do we rope off any section of the healing art and say that here God does not operate? All healing is spiritual, when rightly understood, because life itself, in essence, is spirit.

It is this unhappy antagonism between the materialist and mystic exponents of the healing art that is to be deplored. The patient needs both, for it is not possible for any level of the composite man to be afflicted without the disturbance spreading up and down the planes, and repair is never a process of one plane only.

In judging the suitability of a case for spiritual healing there is another factor to be considered as well as the physical nature of the complaint, and that is the spiritual status of the patient. Is it justifiable to use spiritual forces to restore a physical sense of well-being to a materially-minded man suffering from over-indulgence? Is it justifiable to accept as a subject for spiritual healing a person who cares nothing whatever for spiritual things and merely wants to be relieved of his discomfort?

Before we can answer this question we must answer another. What is a spiritual healing? For there are several kinds of non-physical healing, and not all of them are spiritual.

True spiritual healing is really character-healing whereby karma is ab-reacted and the patient freed from the aftereffects of forces he himself has set going in the past. By far the greater part of what is loosely called spiritual healing is really mental healing wherein the power of the mind over the body is exploited, and it has no more real claim to be called spiritual than has Coué's method of auto-suggestion to which it is closely akin. Baudouin, making his marvellous analysis of Coué's method in his most valuable book, *Suggestion and Auto-suggestion* reveals the *modus operandi* of all non-physical healing, showing exactly how the subconscious mind manipulates the body. It is always emotion, not will, which is the driving force. In the case of a spiritual healing, it is a spiritual emotion derived from mystical experience. In the case of mental healing by suggestion, which is what the greater proportion of non-physical healing really is, it is the emotion of faith and hope induced by the prestige of the healer which is the motive power of the change of consciousness that effects the healing.

When the healer is alleged to be a discarnate spirit, this contention is not invalidated, for surely if we have learnt anything from occult science, we have learnt that death makes no difference to us, we have only shed our bodies. The spirit healer merely has to his advantage the added prestige of being something unusual.

Though the force that heals may be purely spiritual in its inception, it nevertheless has to be translated down the planes before it can take effect on this physical body. Mind cannot manipulate matter, but mind can manipulate the etheric double which is the matrix of matter.

But as Baudouin has shown, the level of the mind which is in touch with the etheric double is beyond the reach of the will, we must therefore, in seeking to manipulate it, find a substitute for the directing influence of the conscious will; we find this in the spontaneous effect of emotion working through an image in the imagination.

Genuine emotion, and none other has adequate motive power cannot be produced at will. Coue realized this, and found his substitute for emotion in long-continued attention, hence his introduction of the knotted piece of string and the repetition of a formula. In true spiritual healing the alterative emotion is evoked by mystical experience. In the average mental healing it is evoked by the prestige of the practitioner. In psychic healing it is produced by telepathic suggestion. In all cases the *modus operandi* is the same, the automatic mind of the patient, the lowest level of subconsciousness which controls the etheric double, is manipulated and is the vehicle of the healing.

As soon as we touch the subconscious mind we touch the hidden springs of the personality, and whoever does this exceedingly potent thing needs to know what he is about. Nothing is more misleading than the obvious in this sphere. The subconscious mind, when disturbed, turns itself upside down, transfers its emotions from their real object to a symbol, and tangles the trail beyond all disentangling by any one but an expert psychologist. Nowhere are fools more ready to rush in than in the sphere of comforting emotional disturbance. Someone tells them a pathetic and plausible tale and they accept it unquestioningly. Little do they realize what is at work below the surface.

Take the following case as an example, it is typical of many. A man possessing a good deal of personality and magnetism finds that he is able to help people, to cheer them when depressed, to vitalize them when weary, and even relieve pain by his touch, and he sets up as a spiritual healer; he may or may not, in addition to these primary qualifications, study naturotherapy or manipulative treatment; his chief stock-in-trade, however, is his personal influence. He has what is called in the orthodox healing profession, a good bedside manner. He is probably able to help a great many people in various ways; his chief asset being that he gets them to help themselves in a way that the medical practitioner who relies solely on his pharmacopoeia, is unable to do. He probably has in him the makings of a first-class doctor, but the opportunity to qualify has been denied him. His natural intuitiveness and shrewdness are soon reinforced by practical experience, and he probably reads medical books as well and acquires a smattering of ideas on the subject. All goes well for a time, he does some good and no lasting harm, as the naturopath remedies are not drastic. One can play a great many coloured lights on people without doing them any damage and put them on to some very queer diets without giving them anything worse than the hiccoughs. Mental and spiritual methods of treatment in normal people, are at worst ineffectual, and do not produce drastic reactions.

There are, however, certain pitfalls in his path which he is not in a position to avoid, as will be clearly seen when they are explained. Among his patients are certain cases complaining of exactly the same symptoms; they are easily tired, depressed, out of sorts, and with feelings of ill-defined malaise; not really ill, yet never well, with, perhaps, various odd symptoms thrown in as make-weights. Anyway, whatever may be the matter with them, the human machine is running badly. He applies approximately the same treatment to all of them; treatment which has benefited many other cases with similar symptoms. Now let us consider their history, and let me say that these cases are not imaginary, I have seen many of each type.

Case No. I reacts to the treatment by exploding like a bomb. It is a case of sex repression and the dammed-up forces are let loose upon the unfortunate healer, his magnetism having proved all too effective; and as hell knows no fury like a woman scorned, she tells all her friends that

he has attempted to outrage her, and they probably believe her, for a more fiercely virginal person could not possibly be imagined; she may ultimately go to the police with her tale, but here she will get a less sympathetic reception, for it is an old story here, and the police are wise in human nature.

Now what would the qualified medical man do with such a case? He does not put much faith in symptoms that are unaccompanied by signs. He knows that if the patient complains of feeling unusual sensations there will be something to show for it somewhere; it may be in the blood seen under the microscope; it may be in an electro-cardiograph of the heart; one or another of the innumerable modern methods of diagnosis will reveal something abnormal somewhere. The qualified man has at his disposal resources which are denied to his unorthodox rival, and with their aid he is able to explain the abnormality in terms of physiological function, which is the only real solution of any problem of disease. He quickly detects the hysterical case because he knows that the symptoms she complains of ought to be accompanied by corresponding signs. When these are lacking he does not attempt to treat the physical condition, which is probably not in need of treatment, but sends his patient for psychological treatment and the specialist who deals with the case never sees her alone because he knows what is at the bottom of her trouble.

Surely it is obvious, when one understands the mechanism of such a case, that to pour more life-force into a person who is already suffering from congested life-force is to provoke a catastrophe?

Now let us consider case No. 2. The symptoms are much the same. Treatment is given, and an improvement, possibly considerable improvement, results. The patient is able to take up activities that have had to be given up. The case is hailed as a cure. The healer's reputation and self-confidence go up. Presently, however, the case begins to go downhill again gradually; treatment is renewed; improvement results. Cured again. Then once more the trouble starts. Treated again, cured again. Does it occur to anybody to notice that the exacerbations take place at the rise of the sap and the fall of the leaf and ease off when the change of season is established?

Then one day something occurs which cannot be ignored, the patient suddenly collapses with blood pouring from the mouth to the horror of everyone, and the healer most of all. Most people know what that means. A doctor is called in and says, "If I had seen this case when the trouble first showed itself, it could have been cured; now it is only a matter of time till the end."

But that is not all. The doctor will want to examine what he calls "contacts", the people who have been in close touch with the patient, and when he does so he will find some of the adults and most of the children have been infected, for tuberculosis is infectious and children are especially susceptible.

And now for case No. 3. We have much the same tale, vague ill-health and some slight local symptoms. It does not yield to spiritual treatment, but the treatment is persevered with. A home-made diagnosis is arrived at and various nature-cure remedies are tried, without result. When the case finally comes into medical hands the diagnosis is cancer too far gone for operation.

Finally, let us consider the lesson case No. 4 has to teach us. The same history as before. Nothing much to show for it, but chronic ill-health. Then things become worse, the symptoms declare themselves obviously as paralysis, heart trouble, kidney trouble, anything. The spiritual healer recognizes the nature of the complaint all right, it stares him in the face. And what is the ultimate diagnosis in this case? The doctor is not quite so ready with it as the

spiritual healer, though he does not deny his interpretation of the symptoms; the heart or the kidneys are involved right enough, that is agreed. Nevertheless, he takes a specimen of the patient's blood for examination. Presently he prescribes a course of treatment which will last two years. The case clears up rapidly, and yet the doctor will not let his patient go, but insists that the treatment continue. He also says there must be no more children till the end of the two years, and when we see what the child is like who is born before the treatment commenced, we are not surprised. Why is it that the doctor can cure this patient and God cannot? Perhaps God does not particularly want to under the circumstances. When Our Lord healed one of the sufferers who came to Him, he said, "Go, and sin no more". But I do not suppose it ever occurred to the spiritual healer to say this to his patient, nor did he think to ask questions concerning a long-forgotten moral lapse.

There are three diseases which between them are responsible for more ill health than all the others put together; they are all three insidious in their onset, multiform in their symptoms, striking any structure in the body and producing different effects in different cases; they are all amenable to treatment at the outset and incurable when well established; and they all three need to be diagnosed by means of laboratory tests, and two of the three can be given to other people by the sufferer. Is the spiritual healer in a position to recognize the incipient stages of tuberculosis, cancer and syphilis? I have spent all my life in circles that went in for unorthodox healing of one kind or another, and I have seen so many of the resistant cases which turned out in the end to be one or another of these three that although I am not prepared to say that spiritual forces cannot heal them, I think we are justified in concluding that they are extremely resistant to spiritual healing and that far better results are obtained by physical methods if they are applied in the early stages. But in saying these hard things of spiritual healing, I do not wish to discredit it *en bloc*.

I have seen cases of serious illness in which the diagnosis was as well established as it was possible to be, healed by spiritual means when all physical resources had failed; and I have seen cases that were healings right enough in that the patient was cured of hysteria, though these were not the cures of dire physical maladies that they were reputed to be; but these two types of cure form but a small percentage of a most deplorable morass of sheer foolishness, credulity and charlatanry.

The weakness of spiritual healing lies in two things; firstly in the inability of the spiritual healer, whatever may be his healing powers, to make a diagnosis and determine what cases are suitable for his ministrations and what are not; and while he is trying his methods and finding out, the time may have gone by when a cure was possible in the case of the three dread scourges referred to. Relying on the power of God, the spiritual healer, at the beginning of his career, will take on anybody who has still got the breath of life in them. In fact I have myself seen several cases of attempts to raise the dead. Later in his career, however, he is usually more cautious unless he is a charlatan, and then he diagnoses, not his patient's disease, but his credulity and his purse. It is this refusal of the spiritual healer to recognize his limitations which does so much harm, for spiritual healing can be very valuable when used in its proper sphere.

Secondly, although there are practitioners of spiritual healing who obtain results in suitable cases, it is my experience that the general run of people who come to me and tell me that they want to take up spiritual healing have got two things in common, a complete innocence of any scientific knowledge and an equally complete ignorance of life's problems. They rush in where angels fear to tread, and in all too many cases the poet's classification of them is correct. They are either well-meaning and rash, or mercenary charlatans. The few, the very few, who fall into neither of these classifications, are not among those who advertise their

wares in the many trashy little periodicals that cater for the spiritual equivalent of the get-rich-quick and gold brick industries.

I do not think it is possible for a spiritual healer to make a profession of his powers, taking all comers like a panel doctor. Real spiritual healing is a thing that goes very deep and there are very few cases to which it can rightly be applied, and the choice of these cases does not depend upon the nature of the disease but upon the spiritual condition of the patient.

It is to my mind a lamentable thing that spiritual healing should ever have been allowed to become separated from physical healing, for every sick man needs both, though the proportions in which he needs them vary in different cases. The ideal doctor is one who, like the ancients, is priest as well as physician; but such are rare, and what shall we do to cope with our immediate problems that are pressing for solution? To whom shall we entrust our case in the unhappy state of affairs prevailing among us, in which we have to choose between a doctor who knows nothing about our souls and a spiritual healer who knows nothing about our bodies? The choice is often a difficult one, and it is greatly to be regretted that spiritual and physical healing should thus be divorced, for a patient has both mind and body.

Personally I do not think they should be, nor need they be if neither party were fanatical and each limited himself to his own province. Spiritual healing is, after all, of the kingdom of the spirit, and no doctor interferes with his patient's religious convictions; the spiritual healer, unfortunately, seems to think that although according to his hypothesis, material remedies have no power to cure disease, they have plenty of power to interfere with his treatment and prevent it from being effectual. Nor has he any scruples about passing from the plane where he has knowledge to the plane where he has no adequate experience, and directing the physical regime.

It appears to me that the wisest course, until such time as the ideal shall be available, is to entrust our sick bodies to the man who has the widest experience and the best equipment, that is to say, the qualified medical man, and to supplement his efforts with the ministrations of a spiritual healer if we feel we need them. No reasonable doctor would object to what are, strictly speaking, the ministrations of religion, provided that the spiritual healer restricts his efforts to spiritual matters and leaves the physical plane alone, as he would be well advised to do. If his efforts are successful, the doctor will report the success. When all is said and done, the main thing is that a suffering body should be eased and a suffering soul tranquillized; not the manner in which credit is to be apportioned between rival practitioners and their methods.

Approached in this way, a rapprochement is possible; but no doctor is going to tolerate the interference of a spiritual healer who pulls against him and advises the discarding of his remedies and the disregarding of his advice. The patient will abandon his remedies quickly enough, and with the doctor's consent, when the cure has been effected. It is fanaticism on the one hand, and a not unjustifiable exasperation on the other, which makes the difficulties.

No doubt many of the prejudices we deplore originated in the phases through which medicine went in the course of its history. In mediaeval times, when the Church dominated every detail of society, all healing was spiritual in that its appeal was almost exclusively to faith and imagination and was combined with the most complete disregard of common sense. Ambrose Pare, the father of surgery, might well say, "I dressed his wounds and God healed him", in other words, "I let him alone and gave nature a chance".

When the medical mind shook off not only the dominance of the Church but also the prestige of the ancients and relied exclusively on experiment and observation, progress was extraordinarily rapid, and results so fruitful that the spiritual factor was completely overwhelmed and vanished from the medical purview. The only person who remembered it

was the patient, and his voice got little hearing in the age of reason which saw the development of modern medicine.

With the coming of the New Psychology, however, the mental factor in the human make-up has been forced upon the attention of the medical world and is receiving more and more recognition. It is difficult to pick up the current number of any medical journal and not find, somewhere in its pages, a reference to this factor, and those who give it most weight are among the most prominent men in their profession.

So far, so good, and such recognition of a non-physical factor in physiology is a great gain, but it does not go far enough, as its exponents will soon discover. There is a spiritual as well as a mental factor to be reckoned with in dealing with human beings, and the weakness of psychology lies in the fact that it has no means of measuring or dealing with this factor. Psycho-analysis may take a mind to pieces expertly enough, but it does not very frequently succeed in putting it together again and making it work. To my way of thinking, it is a method of diagnosis rather than of treatment. The only person who ever succeeds in putting a mind together again is the spiritual healer in the true sense of the word, because he alone possesses any knowledge of the only synthetic principle in the nature of man, and that is the spiritual principle around which all the rest is built up, the Divine Spark which is the nucleus of his being.

When the mind is taken to pieces, it is this vital nucleus, the basis of each individualized existence, which is laid bare; and when the mind is put together again it must be reconstructed in relation to this nucleus. When we remember, moreover, that this nucleus does not exist by and of itself, but is of the nature of a ray from the Central Sun of Life, we shall see that no reconstruction can be adequate which takes no account of its relation to its source.

And equally, if man is a fourfold being of body, emotions, mind and spirit, he must dwell in a fourfold environment, of physical, astral, archetypal and spiritual conditions. These must all be understood and taken account of by whosoever would heal the whole man. But where are we to find such physicians as these?

Esoteric science alone holds the key to the situation because the initiate alone has an understanding of the planes of existence and is equipped to cope with them. It is too much to hope that the day will ever come when the medical profession as a whole will be a temple of initiates; the gifts that make the initiated priest-physician are rare, and there is a vast amount of honest spade-work which must be done by less gifted men. But I hope and believe that the day will come when human thought as a whole, and not only that of the medical schools, will recognize the part played by the emotions and imagination in our physical states in both health and disease; when everyone will have some elementary knowledge of the hygiene of right thinking just as school children are taught simple ideas concerning the hygiene of the physical body; and that we shall all recognize that we can poison each other with harmful suggestions, even if kindly meant.

Every medical student ought to be taught the power of the mind over the body and trained to utilize it in his work; every probationer in a hospital ought to be drilled in the psychology of suggestion as she is drilled in the technique of asepsis till it becomes second nature, and she would no more think of ignoring the part played by the imagination and emotional states in the welfare of a patient than she would think of taking unsterilized instruments from one bed to another.

This is the most we can hope for within the realm of practical politics, and it is my belief that this state of things is nearer than might be believed and that the present generation will see its establishment, among the heads of the profession at any rate.

Science is, after all, not a body of arcana, but a method of dealing with any sort of facts, from market-gardening to metaphysics. The essence of science does not lie in knowledge, but in method. It is here that the quack differs from the trained man; he may have acquired a liberal proportion of the trained man's knowledge, but he lacks his method and the disciplined mind which is the basis of his method. Consequently his knowledge will always be a rule-of-thumb affair, having no basic principle.

Speaking for myself, I have little faith in the untrained mind, and little love for the impractical dreamer, however idealistic. I have therefore never attempted to put into practice the knowledge of esoteric medicine which has come down to me as part of the heritage of the Western esoteric tradition; neither have I been willing to impart it to the many spiritual and psychic healers who at one time or another have got into touch with us and asked for this information, for I have seen too much harm result from their untutored efforts to have any faith left in them. The only people who can rightly use this knowledge are the men and women who have already got the necessary basis of scientific training and clinical experience. The therapy of the subtle body must be grafted on to the rootstock of the therapy of the dense body because for all practical purposes they cannot be separated until death parts them permanently.

IX. Power Tides and Cycles

THE very word “tide” implies a rise and fall in time, and in considering the power tides we should have in mind the idea of rise and fall, no matter how vast or how small may be that tide. We are also taught that with regard to evolution “all is cyclic”, and that, in addition to the great cycles of time coming round on their orbits, they also tend to rise as consciousness develops, so we are bidden to “think spirally”.

The Cosmic Doctrine gives us a system “in the nearest approximate metaphor” whereby we trace the Cosmos coming into manifestation cycle by cycle and the great zodiac taking form in unlimited space. These same principles of evolution, based on the Laws of Polarity and Limitation, Equilibrium and Unbalance, are applied when we consider the creation of our Universe and of the planet Earth. These great abstract cycles, in the course of long aeons of time became, as it were, solidified as they approached within the range of our understanding and we on our side, as consciousness evolves, reach out to grasp with the mind some straw to which we can cling, even if it is only the symbol of a reality for the realities themselves are for the most part far beyond our mental capacity.

In the Eastern teachings on Cosmogony there is a very complicated system of planetary chains and rounds, races and sub-races, but in the West, while retaining the principles, the system has been simplified and the double evolution of the Divine Power of God coming down into matter on the one hand, and the development of the consciousness of man, rising up into unity with God on the other may be portrayed in the form of a table as follows:—

Planes 7,6 Spiritual: Abstract, Concrete – 7th and 6th Races

Planes 5,4 Mental: Abstract, Concrete – 5th (Aryan) and 6th (Atlantean) Races

Planes 3,2 Astral: Upper, Lower – 3rd and 2nd Races

Plane 1, Physical – 1st Race

This table may convey some impression of the cycles of human evolution Race by Race. In the 4th or Atlantean Race for instance the *mind* of humanity began to develop; the primitive man of that period was taught by the Manus of previous evolutions; and in the 5th or present Aryan Race we must learn to develop the powers of the abstract mind—to contact our higher nature. It is also taught that the cycle has come round on its orbit so that we are now touching the Atlantean contacts on a higher arc. The work of the 5th Race, however, is far from finished and it will be long before the average man will function freely on the planes of Spirit. There is much talk about the 6th Race which talk is very premature.

Let us now consider the cycle of the Zodiac of our Universe. One round of its orbit, which is called the precession of the Equinoxes, is said to take 26,800 years, or roughly 2,200 years per sign—and again we must think spirally. At present we are nearing the conclusion of the age of Pisces, which dates from about the time of Our Lord’s incarnation. There are already portents of the Aquarian age, for the states of evolution which these symbols represent overlap to a considerable extent. Each House of the Zodiac also stands for a particular type of development according to whether it is a Fire, Air, Water or Earth sign. In the age of Pisces for instance we have a Water sign corresponding to emotional development—the Christian religion is said to be a “Water” religion, its members are admitted by baptism and its mission is Love. The Aquarian age will specialize in the development of the higher mind on the basis of Love, for it is an “Air” sign and Air corresponds to mind. Equally the Zoroastrian religion had to do with Fire and purification by fire, and the Confucian is related to Earth.

As certain of the stations on the Qabalistic “Tree of Life” are also referred to the Elements it is interesting to note how the Zodiac may fit on the “Tree”.

We shall now have to adapt the principle of the Zodiac to a cycle of one year, which is divided by the two Equinoxes on the centre pillar of Equilibrium, and the two Solstices, when Sol or the Sun stands farthest from the Equator. The cycle is then divided into four quarters or two flowing and two ebbing tides.

We know that the Sun is referred to Tiphareth (No. 6), the Moon to Yesod (9), the Nature Forces of the Earth to Netzach (7), and Water to Hod (8).

The Great Archangels, or Rulers of the Quadrants are also assigned to the Tree as follows:—Raphael to the East (6), Gabriel to the West (9), Michael to the South (8), and Uriel to the North (7).

The Sun (6) enters Aries a Fire sign at the Spring Equinox on a flowing tide and the tide changes at the Summer Solstice (8) into a Water sign—Cancer. The Sun enters Libra an Air sign at the Autumnal Equinox (9), and ebbs at the Winter Solstice (7) with Capricorn, an Earth sign.

The Zodiac itself is a very ancient system which relates to cosmic tides, and their flow and return, but the planets correlate with states of consciousness. The Sun for instance symbolizes the Higher Self and the Moon refers more to the Personality and the etheric nature of the Earth, but it will be realized that all states of consciousness are influenced by the Cosmic tides for the Cycles of the Cosmos form the background of all manifestation.

We are also taught that there can be no manifestation without duality and we can see how duality arises from the Law of Opposites. Fire (6) and Air (9) work together; Water (8) and Earth (7) are necessary to each other. The two outer pillars of the “Tree” represent polarizing forces. The flow and ebb of the Summer tides find their complementary opposite in the two Winter tides. Heat and cold; light and dark; form and force; spirit and matter, all is rhythmical and cyclic.

The Summer Solstice is essentially a Nature festival, especially for those who worship the sun, and its opposite—the Winter Solstice or Christmastide is a very human festival, irrespective of religious belief. Whereas the Equinoxes are now much more of the nature of Church festivals, especially Easter, which is based on traditions which have their roots in a knowledge of Cosmic tides. In fact it is very interesting to note how the Early Fathers of the Church were guided to plan the Church’s year on an astrological and cosmic basis.

Speaking generally, the ecclesiastical cycle commences just after the Autumnal Equinox, through Advent and the dark winter season; then we have the purification of Lent and the great uprising of all Nature at Easter, coming to full flood at Ascension and Whitsun; then ebbing through the long period called “after Trinity” when the experiences of the soul are stabilized. The Ember-days also mark the approach of each change of tide. They are called ember after an old Saxon word meaning circuit, and there are three before each respective Equinox and Solstice.

Referring again to the Zodiac on the “Tree” let us trace the nature of the tides from the point of view of the Elements involved in each quarter, remembering that Fire symbolizes spirit; Air—mind; Water—emotions; and Earth—stability. From Autumn (9) when the Sun enters Libra (Air) it is a period favourable for mental work, hence so many new works are commenced then, and *the Church has* fixed that period for its new year—Advent. From the Winter Solstice to Spring it is a period favourable to purification which includes Lent, and we have Aquarius, the Water Bearer, and Pisces, a Water sign. From Spring to Summer we have

the Sun gaining power—the Sun enters Aries, a Fire sign, and this is a period favourable to spiritual enlightenment, which includes the great Festivals of Easter, Ascension and Whitsun. And from Summer to Autumn we gather the fruits of the Earth and usually take our holidays, prior to the commencing of another cycle—again thinking spirally.

The Rays are not strictly cyclic, they represent rather the types of consciousness symbolized by the signs of the planets. The Seven Rays are specialised aspects of the White Christ, which was “before all worlds” and although they are all in manifestation together, yet some may predominate over others, as a particular type of consciousness evolves. The Christian Violet Ray for instance predominates in the West and the Orange robe of Buddha in the East. Broadly speaking they may be thought of as successive manifestations on the arcs of involution and evolution. The Cosmic Christ is an evolving aspect of God, and Man is an evolving aspect of Christ and must experience all the fullness of life in due course. -

The red end of the spectrum is concerned with the development of the individual, and the violet end with Group Minds. The Green Ray is the connecting link—the nadir, and has affinities with both past, present and future. It is the Ray of Beauty. The Blue is the Hermetic Ray with its roots in Egypt and Chaldea; it is the Ray of the Magician. The Indigo is the Gnostic Ray of the abstract mind and of philosophy and science, and the Purple is the Ray of devotion—of healing—of the Lord Jesus.

We must think of man as being influenced by three Rays at least, for man is a triangle of emotion, mind, and spirit, and we must try to trace the relationship of one Ray with another, for instance the Green Celtic Ray is connected with the Purple Ray through such Celtic saints as St Columba and St Bride, and with the Hermetic Ray through the Magician Merlin and the Holy Grail legends. The Indigo Ray will link with the Purple Ray through the speculations of symbolism, and much that is now dark will be brought to light by science and religion working together.

The Magician is a Priest of the Elements. He works with the powers of the Elements and Nature Forces and he is considerably affected by the changing tides. But the Lord of the Violet Ray, under whom all the Masters of the Western tradition serve in this present phase of evolution, is also Lord of the Elements, with power to command the waves and storms, as recorded in the New Testament, and as Priest of the Most High God he is much less influenced by the tides. Where the Magician would contact the Elemental Forces through their Great Regents, the ordinary Christian would do so through the Group Mind of his religion and the Lord Jesus.

Beyond the seven Rays of the spectrum and to complete its cycle there are the three Dark Rays of Destruction or disintegration when the consciousness of the planet undergoes purification and regeneration by the Powers of Darkness. These are not Powers of Evil, but rather of pure Spirit. When God said ‘Let there be Light’, from the darkness there dawned cycle by cycle spiritual perception, mental illumination, astral glory and the sunshine of Earth; and when the twilight sets in we must prepare for a period of evolutionary rest and refreshment before another “Day of Brahma” commences.

Let us now consider how we can use these tides to best advantage and we will try to arrange them in orderly sequence.

There are certain tides known as Tattvas which refer to the Elements and change their aspect every twenty minutes, but their influence is so slight as to be negligible to the ordinary man. They are of value to the Magician.

The day is of course a familiar tide, and the more rhythmical our day is, the more free is consciousness, for the force of habit makes many of our actions subconscious. This is

an important point with those of a contemplative nature who are desirous of contacting the higher realms, apart from the distractions and worries of ordinary life.

The week is a cycle of seven and a special planetary force is assigned to each day:—

Sunday – Sun

Monday – Moon

Tuesday – Mars

Wednesday – Mercury

Thursday – Jupiter (Thor)

Friday – Venus

Saturday – Saturn

Sunday is therefore especially a day of spiritual regeneration and Monday leads us to the next tide.

The Month is a Moon tide, for whereas the Sun refers to the Higher Self, the Moon refers to the Personality and the etheric side of the Earth. The influences of the New Moon differ from those of the Full Moon and those of the increase differ from those of the decrease. Generally speaking the rising and full moon is the more powerful for constructive work and the waning moon for destruction. The Magician is especially careful in regard to these forces.

The Quarterly Tide, from Equinox to Solstice, has a definite influence of its own and comes under its own Elemental Ruler, for each quarter is assigned to an Element as has been shown.

The Half Yearly Tide—from Equinox to Equinox, is very important from an occult point of view, for it is often found that causes set going on the inner planes at one Equinox will take the full tide of six months to work out on the physical plane, and if we realize this we shall be content to exercise patience until the six months are accomplished.

The Year is the full round of the Astrological Signs each with its distinctive influence. These are also gathered together into the four seasons with their triplicities. We are conscious of the rise and fall of Nature each year, even as we are of our own birthday anniversaries recurring, and we adapt ourselves accordingly. We have already noted how the Church's year has been adapted to the ancient Elemental and astrological principles.

As the Year is divided into quarters, so can a Century be divided, and it may be noted, as with the Year, so is the first quarter century the most difficult. Some of our worst wars have taken place in that period. A definite correspondence can be traced in these matters, for the same principle is involved and they vary according to the level of consciousness, whether individual, group, national, international, astral, mental etc. The precession of the Equinoxes is a much vaster period, and a succession of Races, such as the Aryan, or Atlantean, vaster still, in fact they go far beyond the range of recorded history and we are indebted to our scientists for much of the light thrown on the matter by their research work.

Much of the information put forward in this paper has been based on the teachings received from Adepts on the inner planes who tell us that they can co-operate with the Lords of Karma and take advantage of planetary and zodiacal conditions to arrange the circumstances of those who desire to enrol in their service after they have attained a certain stage of detachment.

THE END