

AN APPROACH TO CONTEMPORARY QUESTIONS
IN THE LIGHT OF ANTHROPOSOPHY

The
Golden Blade

- AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ... *Rudolf Steiner*
- THE PERSONALITY OF RUDOLF
STEINER AND HIS DEVELOPMENT *Edouard Schuré*
- 76* THE SPIRITUAL INDIVIDUALITIES OF
THE PLANETS *Rudolf Steiner*
- THE STARS AT THE TIME OF THE
MYSTERY OF GOLGOTHA ... *Adam Bittleston*
- ON "MECHANICAL OCCULTISM"... *Georg Unger*
- POTENTIZATION AND THE PERIPHERAL
FORCES OF NATURE *George Adams*
- THE DYNAMICS OF NUTRITION ... *Grange Kirkcaldy*
- THE GRAIL STORIES AND THEIR
INTERPRETERS *John M. Wood*
- COMMUNION, COMMUNITY AND
COMMUNISM *A. G. Brice*
- 78* DRUGS AND CONSCIOUSNESS ... *Daniel Bittleston*
- ANTHROPOSOPHY AND THE WRITER:
A SYMPOSIUM *Joy Mansfield*

Poems by *E. L. Grant Watson* and others

Books noticed include *The Sufis*, by Idries Shah, reviewed
by Dr. A. P. Shepherd; *Sensitive Chaos*, by Theodor
Schwenk, reviewed by Ralph Brocklebank; and *Rudolf
Steiners musikalische Impulse*, by Karl von Baltz, reviewed
by F. Rauter

Edited by *Arnold Freeman* and *Charles Waterman*

1966

PUBLISHED ANNUALLY

PRICE TEN AND SIX

The Golden Blade

1966

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ...	<i>Rudolf Steiner</i>	1
THE PERSONALITY OF RUDOLF STEINER AND HIS DEVELOPMENT	<i>Edouard Schuré</i>	8
THE SPIRITUAL INDIVIDUALITIES OF THE PLANETS	<i>Rudolf Steiner</i>	20
THE STARS AT THE TIME OF THE MYSTERY OF GOLGOTHA ...	<i>Adam Bittleston</i>	29
ON "MECHANICAL OCCULTISM"...	<i>Georg Unger</i>	42
POTENTIZATION AND THE PERIPHERAL FORCES OF NATURE	<i>George Adams</i>	57
THE DYNAMICS OF NUTRITION ...	<i>Grange Kirkcaldy</i>	74
THE GRAIL STORIES AND THEIR INTERPRETERS	<i>John M. Wood</i>	83
COMMUNION, COMMUNITY AND COMMUNISM	<i>A. G. Brice</i>	99
DRUGS AND CONSCIOUSNESS ...	<i>Daniel Bittleston</i>	104
ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE WRITER: A SYMPOSIUM	<i>Joy Mansfield</i>	113

Poems by *E. L. Grant Watson* and others

Books noticed include *The Sufis*, by Idries Shah, reviewed by Dr. A. P. Shepherd; *Sensitive Chaos*, by Theodor Schwenk, reviewed by Ralph Brocklebank; and *Rudolf Steiners musikalische Impulse*, by Karl von Baltz, reviewed by F. Rauter

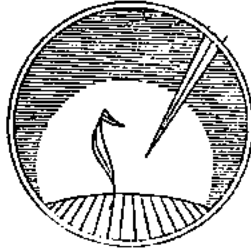
Edited by Arnold Freeman and Charles Waterman

Price 10/6 (11/4 post paid) from the Rudolf Steiner Bookshop,
35, Park Road, London, N.W.1, and the Rudolf Steiner Centre
and Library, 38 Museum Street, W.C.1.

Autobiographical Sketch

Rudolf Steiner,

Written for Edouard Schuré at Baar in Alsace
on September 9, 1907¹



Anthroposophy, a way of thought rather than a body of dogma, springs from the work and teaching of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). He spoke of it as "a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe."

The aim of this Annual is to publish writings which bring the outlook of Anthroposophy to bear on questions and activities relevant to the present time.

The title derives from a reference by Rudolf Steiner to an old Persian legend. "Djemjdid was a king who led his people from the north towards Iran, and who received from the God, whom he called Ahura Mazdao, a golden dagger, by means of which he was to fulfil his mission on earth. . . . It represents a force given to man whereby he can act upon and transform external nature."

I WAS directed very early to Kant. In my fifteenth and sixteenth years I studied Kant intensively, and before entering the Vienna college (*Hochschule*) I occupied myself intensively with Kant's orthodox followers, belonging to the beginning of the nineteenth century, who are entirely forgotten by the official history of learning in Germany and are hardly mentioned any more. Then was added a thorough study of Fichte and Schelling. Into this period fell—and this belongs already to the external occult influences—full clarity about the conception of Time. This knowledge was in no way connected with my studies and was directed entirely from occult life. It was the knowledge that there is an evolution going in a backwards direction, interfering with that which goes forwards; the first is the occult, astral evolution. This knowledge is the condition for spiritual perception.

Then came the meeting with the representative of the M. (*dem Agenten d.M.*).

Then an intensive study of Hegel.

Then the study of more recent philosophy, as it had developed in Germany since the fifties, and in particular the so-called theory of knowledge in all its branches.

My boyhood passed, without this being intended externally by anyone, in such a way that nobody brought to me any superstition; and if in my environment anyone spoke of superstitious matters, it was never otherwise than with an emphatic rejection. I came indeed to know the ritual of the Church, as I was brought into ritual acts as a so-called server; but there was nowhere real piety or religious feeling, even among the priests I met. On the contrary, I saw continually certain shadow-sides of the Catholic clergy.

I did not at once meet the M., but first someone sent by him who was completely initiated into the mysteries of the effects of all plants and their connection with the universe and with man's nature. For him, converse with the spirits of nature was a matter of course, which he described without enthusiasm, thereby awakening enthusiasm all the more.

¹ Translated by permission from *Nachrichten der Rudolf Steiner-Nachlassverwaltung*, Dornach, No. 13, Easter, 1965. The genesis of this "Autobiographical Sketch" is described by Dr. Robert Friedenthal in a postscript (p.6).

My official studies were concerned with mathematics, chemistry, physics, zoology, botany, mineralogy and geology. These studies offered a much surer basis for a spiritual conception of the world than I could have gained, for instance, from history or literature, which in the German academic world of that time had no definite method and no significant prospects. During my first years at the college in Vienna I came to know Karl Julius Schröder. First I heard his lectures about German poetry from the time of Goethe's first publications onwards, about Goethe and Schiller, about the history of German poetry in the nineteenth century, and about Goethe's *Faust*. Then I took part in his "exercises in lecturing and composition." This was a special seminar, resembling that instituted by Uhland at Tübingen. Schröder had worked at German linguistics, and had made significant studies in the German dialects of Austria; his research was done in the style of the brothers Grimm, and in literary research he revered Gervinus. He had been, earlier, a director of the evangelical schools in Vienna. His father was the poet and outstanding educationalist, Christian Oeser. At the time when I came to know him, he was entirely concerned with Goethe. He wrote a widely read commentary on Goethe's *Faust*, and also on Goethe's other plays. Before the decline of German Idealism he had studied at the universities of Leipzig, Halle, and Berlin. He was a living incorporation of the finest German culture. His humanity attracted people to him. Soon I grew into friendship with him and was often in his house. With him one found an idealistic oasis in the dry desert of German materialism. In external life this period was filled with the struggle of the nationalities in Austria. Schröder himself was remote from the sciences concerned with nature.

I worked from the beginning of 1880 onwards at Goethe's studies in natural science.

Then Joseph Kürschner founded the comprehensive collection, "German National Literature," for which Schröder edited Goethe's dramas, with introductions and commentaries. Kürschner, on Schröder's recommendation, gave me the task of editing Goethe's scientific writings.

For this Schröder wrote a foreword, introducing me to the literary public.

For this collection I wrote introductions to Goethe's Botany, Zoology, Geology and Theory of Colour.

Anyone who reads these introductions can find in them theosophical ideas in the vesture of a philosophic Idealism. A discussion of Haeckel's ideas is also in them. My "Theory of Knowledge," worked out in 1886, is a philosophic rounding off of these.

Then I was introduced, through my acquaintance with the Austrian poetess, M. E. delle Grazie, who had a fatherly friend in

Professor Laurenz Müllner, into the circle of theological professors in Vienna. Marie Eugenie delle Grazie wrote an epic, "Robespierre," and a drama, "Shadows."

At the end of the eighties I became for a short time editor of the "German Weekly" in Vienna. This gave an opportunity for an intensive concern with the folk-souls of the different Austrian nationalities. A leading thread for a spiritual-cultural policy had to be found.

In all this there could be no question of the publication of occult ideas. The occult powers standing behind me gave me only the counsel: "Everything in the clothing of Idealistic philosophy."

Simultaneously with all this my work as a teacher and private tutor went on, lasting for more than fifteen years.

The first contact at the end of the eighties with theosophical circles in Vienna had to remain without any external effect.

During my last months in Vienna I wrote my short essay, *Goethe as the Father of a New Aesthetics*.

Then I was called to the Goethe and Schiller Archives in Weimar, which had then been founded, in order to edit Goethe's scientific writings. I had no official position at the Archives; I was simply one of those working at the great Sophie edition of Goethe's works.

My next aim was to give out the foundation of my understanding of the world in a *purely philosophical* form. This was done in the two books, *Truth and Science*, and *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*.

The Goethe and Schiller Archives were visited by a long series of learned, literary and otherwise outstanding personalities of Germany and other countries. I came to know many of these personalities, because I soon became friendly with the director of the Goethe and Schiller Archives, Professor Bernhard Suphan, and was often in his house. When Suphan had visitors to the Archives, he often invited me. On one such occasion I met Treitschke.

A close friendship developed at that time with a German mythologist, Ludwig Laistner, author of *The Riddle of the Sphinx*, who died soon afterwards.

I had many conversations with Hermann Grimm, who spoke often to me of his work which was never carried out, a "History of the German Imagination."

Then came the Nietzsche episode. I had actually written, not long before, opposing Nietzsche.

My occult powers directed me to introduce into contemporary development in an inconspicuous way that which would lead towards the truly spiritual. One does not attain to knowledge by insisting absolutely on one's own point of view, but through willingness to immerse oneself in alien spiritual streams.

So I wrote my book about Nietzsche, entirely adopting Nietzsche's point of view. For this reason it is perhaps the most objective book about Nietzsche written inside Germany. Nietzsche's opposition to Wagner, and to Christianity, is given its due there.

For a time I was regarded as an unconditional follower of Nietzsche.

At this time the "Society for Ethical Culture" was founded in Germany. This Society wished for a morality entirely unconcerned with any conception of the world. A complete cloud-castle, and a threat to education. I wrote *against* this foundation a critical article in the weekly journal, "The Future."

Strongly critical replies followed. And my previous concern with Nietzsche brought the consequence that a pamphlet appeared against me: "Nietzschean Idiots."

The occult point of view requires: "No unnecessary polemics," and "Where possible, do not defend yourself."

I wrote in peace my book, *Goethe's World Conception*, which formed the conclusion of my time at Weimar.

Immediately after my article in "The Future," Haeckel approached me. Two weeks later he contributed to "The Future" an article in which he publicly adopted my view that ethics can develop only on the ground of a conception of the world.

Not long afterwards was Haeckel's sixtieth birthday, which was celebrated as a great festivity in Jena. Haeckel's friends invited me. I then saw Haeckel for the first time. His personality is enchanting. He is personally the entire opposite of the tone of his writings. If Haeckel had ever studied philosophy, even a little (in this he is not only a dilettante, but a child), he would certainly have drawn the highest spiritual conclusions from his epoch-making phylogenetic studies.

In spite of all German philosophy, and in spite of all the rest of German culture, Haeckel's conception of phylogenesis is the most significant fact of German spiritual life in the second half of the nineteenth century. There is no better scientific foundation for occultism than Haeckel's teaching. The teaching of Haeckel is great, but Haeckel is the worst commentator upon it. One does not help civilisation by pointing out Haeckel's weaknesses to his contemporaries, but by demonstrating to them the greatness of his ideas about phylogenesis. This I did in the two volumes of my *Conceptions of the World and of Life during the Nineteenth Century*, which are dedicated to Haeckel, and in my booklet, *Haeckel and his Opponents*.

In fact, the time of German spirituality *lives* on only in Haeckel's conception of phylogenesis. Philosophy is in a condition of the most miserable infertility; theology is a network of hypocrisy without the remotest conception of its own untruthfulness; and the

sciences, in spite of their great empirical development, have fallen into the bleakest philosophical ignorance.

From 1890-1897 I was in Weimar.

In 1897 I went to Berlin to edit the "Magazine for Literature." The writings, *Conceptions of the World and of Life in the Nineteenth Century* and *Haeckel and his Opponents*, belong to my time in Berlin. My next task was to be: to bring into being an effectual spiritual stream in the literature of the time. I put the Magazine in the service of this task. It was an old, respected organ, having existed since 1832 and passed through very different phases.

Gently and gradually I led over into esoteric paths. Carefully but definitely: while for Goethe's 150th birthday I wrote an essay, *Goethe's Secret Revelation*, containing no more than I had already indicated in a public lecture in Vienna about Goethe's fairy-story, *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*.

In the nature of the case, a readership gathered only slowly for the direction I was giving to the Magazine. It gathered indeed—but not quickly enough for the publisher to find the financial prospects satisfactory. I wanted to give spiritual foundations to the young writers' movement, and was indeed in the most lively contact with the most promising representatives of this movement. But on the one hand I was let down; on the other this movement soon sank into nothingness or naturalism.

Meanwhile a connection with working men had developed. I had become a teacher at the Berlin Workers' Educational Institute. I taught history and also natural sciences. My thoroughly idealistic historical method and my way of teaching soon became acceptable and well understood among the workmen. The number of students increased. I had to lecture almost every evening.

The time came when I could say to myself, in harmony with the occult powers which stood behind me:

You have provided a philosophical foundation for your conception of the world;

You have shown understanding for contemporary thought, treating it as it could be treated only by someone who accepted it fully;

No-one will be able to say: this occultist speaks about the spiritual world, because he does not know the philosophical and scientific achievements of the age.

Now I had reached my fortieth year, before which no-one should appear publicly as a teacher of occultism, according to the intention of the Masters. (Everywhere, when someone taught earlier, a mistake was made.)

Now I could devote myself publicly to Theosophy. The first consequence was that on the insistence of some leaders of German Socialism a general meeting of the Workers' Educational Institute was called, with the task of deciding between Marxism and me. But

I was *not* ostracised. In the general meeting all the votes except four were in favour of retaining me as a teacher.

But the attacks of the leaders brought the consequence that after three months I had to resign. In order not to compromise themselves, they made the excuse that the Theosophical Movement claimed so much of my attention that I had not enough time for the Workers' Institute.

Almost from the beginning of my Theosophical activity Fräulein von Sivers was at my side. She saw, too, the last phases of my relationship with working men in Berlin.

A Note on the "Autobiographical Sketch"

THE foregoing document is important for knowledge of the course of Rudolf Steiner's life. It is here published in full for the first time. Rudolf Steiner wrote this sketch when he and Marie von Sivers were staying with Schuré in September, 1907. It was at Barr in Alsace, where Schuré lived in summer; his home was otherwise in Paris. The sketch was written because Schuré wanted to write a lengthy introduction for his own French translation of *Christianity as Mystical Fact*.¹ For this he needed information about Rudolf Steiner. So Rudolf Steiner wrote the foregoing text by hand on ten pages. It was not intended for publication as it stood, but only as a basis for Schuré's work. Schuré already knew a good deal through his correspondence with Marie von Sivers, and must have learned much from Dr. Steiner by word of mouth as well, since his Introduction covers sixty-three printed pages—though these are indeed partly his own comments. This Introduction is a significant work and of considerable value, in spite of some inexactitudes and mistakes. Surprisingly, it has never appeared in German.

The pages of the document are headed, in Schuré's own handwriting: "Autobiographical Account of the Life and Spiritual Development of Rudolf Steiner (born in Upper Austria, 1861,) written by himself at Barr, Alsace, September, 1907."

The text contains most important things in a pregnant form. Of the exceedingly rare consecutive accounts by Rudolf Steiner about himself and his life, this is the first. For a second time he gave a description of his youth and his spiritual development, following in many points the foregoing text, in a lecture of

¹ Schuré's Introduction does not appear in English editions of *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. It was, however, translated into English by Max Gysi and used (in a slightly shortened form) to introduce his translation of the first part of Rudolf Steiner's *Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der höheren Welten*, published under the title of *The Way of Initiation*, soon followed by the second part, called *Initiation and its Results*. Eventually both parts were combined in one volume, called *Knowledge of Higher Worlds and its Attainment*, and Schuré's Introduction was omitted. Since this Introduction is probably unknown to many readers today, we are reprinting Max Gysi's translation of it as the next article in this issue.

February 4, 1913, in Berlin, which has been printed in the first volume of his *Letters*. The occasion was then the need to reply to slanderous statements. Rudolf Steiner spoke for the third time about himself in his autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, which he wrote at the very end of his life. It breaks off at the year 1907; its completion was prevented by his death.

It is noteworthy that Rudolf Steiner mentions, as one of the earliest discoveries in spiritual knowledge which came to him, the perception of the retrograde movement of time in the Astral. Indications about this problem continue through his entire life, and the fact of the two streams is illuminated from ever new sides in numerous lectures.

The other particularly significant point is that he writes here about the "Master," who is otherwise mentioned only in the Berlin lecture. The "agent" or "envoy" of this Master was the herb-gatherer who appears in the Mystery plays as Felix Balde and whose conventional name was Felix Koguzki. Emil Bock has reported interesting things about him in his book, *Rudolf Steiner: Studien zu seinem Lebensgang und Lebenswerk* (Stuttgart, 1961).² In the above-mentioned lecture Rudolf Steiner says of the Master: "He knew how to stimulate in the soul of the boy, who stood indeed within the spiritual world, those regular and systematic things of which one must be aware in the spiritual world." This "outstanding man," whose outer calling was just as inconspicuous as that of Felix, directed him to Fichte. His name is unknown.

Besides the autobiographical sketch printed here, there are two other so-called Barr documents. One, which is quite short, deals with the origins of Rosicrucianism. This had the purpose of creating a balance between the initiation of the East and that of the West. Rosicrucianism was founded in the first half of the fifteenth century and had to preserve spiritual truths in secret until external science had reached a preliminary solution of certain problems. These were: the material unity of the universe; the natural evolution of living beings; conditions of consciousness other than the ordinary waking day consciousness. Since these discoveries were made in the nineteenth century, certain Rosicrucian principles which had been held secret could be made public. The general content of this document is reproduced by Schuré. The third document contains a history of the Theosophical Movement with reference to the occult powers standing behind it, not unlike the later account given by Rudolf Steiner in his 1915 lecture-course, "The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century."

The fortieth anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's death on March 30, 1965, provides an occasion for making the Autobiographical Sketch known. Further, the three documents will be published in the Collected Edition at an appropriate time.

Robert Friedenthal.

² See "The Search for Felix," in the *Golden Blade*, 1961.

The Personality of Rudolf Steiner and His Development *

Edouard Schuré

MANY of even the most cultivated men of our time have a very mistaken idea of what is a true mystic and a true occultist. They know these two forms of human mentality only by their imperfect or degenerate types, of which recent times have afforded only too many examples. For the intellectual of today, the mystic is a kind of fool and visionary who takes his fancies for facts; the occultist is a dreamer or a charlatan who abuses public credulity in order to boast of an imaginary science and of pretended powers. Be it remarked, to begin with, that this definition of mysticism, though deserved by some, would be as unjust as erroneous if one sought to apply it to such personalities as Joachim del Fiore of the thirteenth century, Jacob Boehme of the sixteenth, or St. Martin, who is called "the unknown philosopher," of the eighteenth century. No less unjust and false would be the current definition of the occultist if one saw in it the slightest relevance to such earnest seekers as Paracelsus, Mesmer, or Fabre d'Olivet in the past, or to William Crookes, de Rochat, or Camille Flammarion in the present. Think what we may of these bold investigators, it is undeniable that they have opened out regions unknown to science, and furnished the mind with new ideas.

No, these fanciful definitions can at most satisfy that scientific dilettantism which hides its feebleness under a supercilious mask to screen its indolence, or the worldly scepticism which ridicules all that threatens to upset its indifference. But enough of these superficial opinions. Let us study history, the sacred and profane books of all nations, and the latest results of experimental science; let us subject all these facts to impartial criticism, inferring similar effects from identical causes, and we shall be forced to give quite another definition of the mystic and the occultist.

The true mystic is a man who enters into full possession of his inner life, and, having become cognisant of his subconscious, finds in it, through concentrated meditation and steady discipline, new faculties and enlightenments. These instruct him as to the innermost nature of his soul and his relations with that impalpable element which underlies all, with that eternal and supreme reality which religion calls God, and poetry the Divine.

* This is the Introduction written originally for the French translation of *Christianity as Mystical Fact* and referred to by Dr. Friedenthal in his postscript to the preceding article.

The occultist, akin to the mystic, but differing from him as a younger from an elder brother, is a man endowed with intuition and a power of synthesis, who seeks to penetrate the hidden depths and foundations of Nature by the methods of science and philosophy: that is by observation and reason, methods invariable in principle, but modified in application by being adapted to the descending kingdoms of Spirit or the ascending kingdoms of Nature, according to the vast hierarchy of beings and the alchemy of the creative Word.

The mystic, then, is one who seeks for truth and the divine directly within himself, by a gradual detachment and a veritable birth of his higher soul. If he attains it after prolonged effort, he plunges into his own glowing centre. Then he immerses himself in, and identifies himself with, that ocean of life which is the primordial Force.

The occultist, on the other hand, discovers, studies and contemplates this same Divine outpouring, given forth in diverse portions, endowed with force, and multiplied to infinity in Nature and in Humanity. According to the profound saying of Paracelsus, *he sees in all beings the letters of an alphabet, which, united in man, form the complete and conscious Word of life.* The detailed analyses that he makes of them, the syntheses that he constructs with them, are for him as so many images and forecastings of this central Divine, of this Sun of Beauty, of Truth and of Life, which he sees not, but which is reflected and bursts upon his vision in countless mirrors.

The weapons of the mystic are concentration and inner vision; the weapons of the occultist are intuition and synthesis. Each responds to the other; they complete and presuppose each other.

These two human types are blended in the Adept, in the higher Initiate. No doubt one or the other, and often both, are met with in the founders of great religions and the loftiest philosophies. No doubt also they are to be found again, in a less but still very remarkable degree, among a certain number of persons who have played a great part in history as reformers, thinkers, poets, artists, statesmen.

Why, then, should these two types of mind, which represent the highest human faculties, and were formerly the object of universal veneration, usually appear to us now as merely deformed and travestied? Why have they become obliterated? Why should they have fallen into such discredit?

That is the result of a profound cause bound up with an unavoidable necessity of human evolution.

During the last two thousand years, but especially since the sixteenth century, humanity has achieved a tremendous work, namely, the conquest of the globe and the setting up of experimental science, in what concerns the material and visible world.

For this gigantic, herculean task to be successfully accomplished, it was necessary that there should be a temporary eclipse of man's transcendental faculties, so that his whole power of observation might be concentrated on the outer world. These faculties, however, have never been extinct or even inactive. They lay dormant in the mass of men; they remained active in the elect, far from the gaze of the vulgar. Today, they are showing themselves openly under new forms. Before long they will assume a leading and directing importance in human destinies.

I would add that at no period of history, whether among the nations of the ancient Aryan cycle, or in the Semitic civilisations of Asia and Africa—whether in the Græco-Latin world, or in the Middle Ages and in modern times, have these royal faculties, for which Positivism would substitute its dreary nomenclature, ever ceased to operate at the beginning and in the background of all great human creations and of all fruitful work. For how can we imagine a thinker, a poet, an inventor, a hero, a master of science or of art, a genius of any kind, who is not touched by a potent ray from those two master-faculties which make the mystic and the occultist—the inner vision and the sovereign intuition?

*

Rudolf Steiner is both a mystic and an occultist. These two natures appear in him in perfect harmony. One could not say which of the two predominates over the other. In intermingling and blending, they have become one homogeneous force. Hence we have to recognise a special development, in which outward events play but a secondary part.

Dr. Steiner was born in Upper Austria in 1861. His earliest years were passed in a little town situated on the Leytha, on the borders of Styria, the Carpathians, and Hungary. From childhood his character was serious and concentrated. This was followed by a youth inwardly illuminated by the most marvellous intuitions, a young manhood encountering terrible trials, and a maturity crowned by a mission which he had dimly foreseen from his earliest years, but which was formulated only gradually in the struggle for truth and life. His time of youth, passed in a mountainous and secluded region, was happy in its way, thanks to the exceptional faculties that he discovered in himself. He was employed in a Catholic church as a server. The poetry of the worship, the profundity of the symbolism, had a mysterious attraction for him; but, as he possessed the innate gift of *seeing souls*, one thing frightened him. This was the secret unbelief of the priests, entirely engrossed in the ritual and the material part of the service.

There was another peculiarity about him: no-one, either then or later, ventured to talk of any gross superstition in his presence,

or to utter any blasphemy, as if those calm and penetrating eyes compelled the speaker to serious thought. In this child, almost always silent, there grew up a quiet and inflexible will to master things through understanding. This was easier for him than for others, for he possessed from the first that self-mastery, so rare even in the adult, which gives mastery over others. To this firm will was added a warm, deep, and almost painful sympathy; a kind of pitiful tenderness for all beings and even for inanimate nature. It seemed to him that all souls had in them something divine. But in what a dense crust is hidden the gleam of gold! In what hard rock, in what dark shadows, lay dormant the precious essence! Vaguely as yet did this idea stir within him—he was to develop it later—that the divine soul is present in all men, but in a latent state. It is a sleeping captive that has to be *awakened from enchantment*.

To the sight of this young thinker human souls became transparent, with their troubles, their desires, their paroxysms of hatred or of love. And it was probably because of the terrible things he saw that he spoke so little. And yet, what delights, unknown to the world, sprang from this involuntary clairvoyance! Among the remarkable inner revelations of this youth, I will instance only one which was extremely characteristic.

The vast plains of Hungary, the wild Carpathian forests, the old churches of those mountains in which the monstrosity glows brightly as a sun in the darkness of the sanctuary, were not there for nothing; they were helpful to meditation and contemplation.

At fifteen years of age, Steiner became acquainted with a learned herbalist who was visiting the district. The remarkable thing about this man was that he knew not only the species, families, and lives of plants in their minutest details, but also their secret virtues. One would have said that he had spent his life in conversing with the unconscious, fluid souls of herbs and flowers. He had the gift of seeing the vital principle of plants, their etheric body, and what occultism calls the elementals of the vegetable world. He talked of it as of a quite ordinary and natural thing. The calm, coolly scientific tone of his conversation served only to enhance the curiosity and admiration of the youth. Later on, Steiner knew that this strange man was a messenger from the Master, as yet unknown to him, who was to be his real initiator, and who was already watching over him from afar.

What the curious, second-sighted herbalist told him, young Steiner found to be in accordance with the logic of things. This confirmed an inner feeling of long standing, which more and more forced itself on his mind as the fundamental Law and as the basis of the Great All. That is to say: *the two-fold current which constitutes the very movement of the world, and which might be called the flux and reflux of the universal life.*

We are all witnesses and are conscious of the outward current of *evolution*, which urges onward all beings of heaven and of earth—stars, plants, animals, and humanity—and causes them to move forward towards an infinite future, without our perceiving the initial force which impels them and makes them go on without pause or rest. But there is in the universe an *inverse current*, which interposes itself and perpetually breaks in on the other. It is that of *involution*, by which the principles, forces, entities, and souls from the invisible world and the kingdom of the Eternal infiltrate and ceaselessly intermingle with the visible reality. No evolution of matter would be comprehensible without this occult and astral current, which, with its hierarchy of powers, is the great propeller of life. Thus the Spirit, which contains the future in germ, *involves* itself in matter; thus matter, which receives the Spirit, *evolves* towards the future. While, then, we are moving on blindly towards the unknown future, this future is approaching us consciously, infusing itself in the current of the world and man who elaborate it. *Such is the two-fold movement of time, the out-breathing and the in-breathing of the soul of the world, which comes from the Eternal and returns thither.*

From the age of eighteen, young Steiner possessed a spontaneous consciousness of this two-fold current—a consciousness which is the condition of all spiritual vision. This vital axiom was forced upon him by a direct and involuntary seeing of things. Thenceforth he had the unmistakable sensation of occult powers which were working behind and through him for his guidance. He gave heed to this force and obeyed its admonitions, for he felt in profound accordance with it.

This kind of perception, however, formed a separate category in his intellectual life. This class of truths seemed to him something so profound, so mysterious, and so sacred, that he never imagined it possible to express it in words. He fed his soul thereon, as from a divine fountain, but to have scattered a drop of it beyond would have seemed to him a profanation.

By the side of this inner and contemplative life, his rational and philosophic mind was developing powerfully. From sixteen to seventeen years of age, he plunged deeply into the study of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. When he came to Vienna, some years later, he became an ardent admirer of Hegel, whose transcendental idealism borders on occultism; but speculative philosophy did not satisfy him. His positive mind demanded the solid basis of the sciences of observation. So he deeply studied mathematics, chemistry, mineralogy, botany, and zoology. "These studies," he wrote, "offered a much surer basis for a spiritual conception of the world than I could have gained, for instance, from history or literature, which in the German academic world of that time had no definite method and no significant prospects." Inquiring into everything,

however, enamoured of high art, and an enthusiast for poetry, Steiner did not neglect literary studies. As a guide therein he found an excellent professor in the person of Julius Schröer, a distinguished scholar of the school of the brothers Grimm, who strove to develop in his pupils the arts of speaking and of writing. To this distinguished man the young student owed his wide and discerning literary culture. "In the desert of prevailing materialism," says Steiner, "his house was for me an oasis of idealism."

But this was not yet the Master whom he sought. Amidst these varied studies and deep meditations, he could as yet discern the building of the universe only in a fragmentary way; his inborn intuition prevented any doubt of the divine origin of things and of a spiritual Beyond. A distinctive mark of this extraordinary man was that he never knew any of those crises of doubt and despair which usually accompany the transition to a definite conviction in the lives of mystics and of thinkers. Nevertheless, he felt that the central light which illumines and penetrates the whole was still lacking in him. He had reached young manhood, with its terrible problems. What was he going to do with his life? The sphinx of destiny was facing him. How should he solve its problem?

It was at the age of nineteen that the aspirant to the mysteries met with his guide—the Master—so long awaited.

It is an undoubted fact, admitted by occult tradition and confirmed by experience, that those who seek the higher truth from an impersonal motive find a Master to initiate them at the right moment: that is to say, when they are ripe for its reception. "Knock, and it shall be opened to you," said Jesus. That is true with regard to everything, but above all with regard to truth. Only, the desire must be ardent as a flame, in a soul pure as crystal.

The Master of Rudolf Steiner was one of those men of power who live, unknown to the world, under cover of some inconspicuous occupation, to carry out a mission unsuspected by any but their fellows in the Brotherhood of self-sacrificing Masters. They take no ostensible part in human events. To remain unknown is the condition of their power, but their action is only the more efficacious. For they inspire, prepare, and direct those who will act in the sight of all. In the present instance the Master had no difficulty in completing the first and spontaneous initiation of his disciple. He had only, so to speak, to point out to him his own nature in order to arm him with his needful weapons. Clearly did he show him the connection between the ordinary and the secret sciences; between the religious and the spiritual forces which are now contending for the guidance of humanity; the antiquity of the occult tradition which holds the hidden threads of history, which mingles them, separates, and re-unites them in the course of ages.

Swiftly he made him traverse the successive stages of inner discipline, in order to attain conscious and intelligent clairvoyance. In a few months the disciple learned from oral teaching the depth and incomparable splendour of the esoteric synthesis. Rudolf Steiner had already sketched for himself his intellectual mission: "To re-unite science and religion. To bring back God into science, and Nature into religion. Thus to re-fertilise both art and life." But how to set about this vast and daring undertaking? How conquer, or rather, how tame and transform, the great enemy, the materialistic science of the day, which is like a terrible dragon covered with its carapace and couched on its huge treasure? How master this dragon of modern science and yoke it to the car of spiritual truth? And, above all, how conquer the bull of public opinion?

Rudolf Steiner's Master was not in the least like himself. He had not that extreme and feminine sensibility which, though not excluding energy, makes every contact an emotion and instantly turns the suffering of others into a personal pain. He was masculine in spirit, a born ruler of men, looking only at the species, and for whom individuals hardly existed. He spared not himself, and he did not spare others. His will was like a ball which, once shot from the cannon's mouth, goes straight to its mark, sweeping away everything in its path. To the anxious question of his disciple he replied in substance:

"If thou wouldst fight the enemy, begin by understanding him. Thou wilt conquer the dragon only by penetrating his skin. As to the bull, thou must seize him by the horns. It is in the extremity of distress that thou wilt find thy weapons and thy brothers in the fight. I have shown thee who thou art: now go—and *be thyself!*"

Rudolf Steiner knew the language of the Masters well enough to understand the rough path that he was thus commanded to tread; but he also understood that this was the only way to attain the goal. He obeyed, and set forth.

*

From 1880 the life of Rudolf Steiner becomes divided into three quite distinct periods: from twenty to thirty years of age (1881-1891), the Viennese period, a time of study and of preparation; from thirty to forty (1891-1901), the Weimar period, a time of struggle and combat; from forty to forty-six (1901-1907), the Berlin period, a time of action and of organisation, in which his thought crystallised into a living work.

I pass rapidly over the Vienna period, during which Steiner took the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He afterwards wrote a series of scientific articles on zoology, geology, and the theory of colours, in which theosophical ideas appear in an idealist clothing.

While acting as tutor in several families, with the same conscientious devotion that he gave to everything, he conducted as chief editor a weekly Viennese paper, the *Deutsche Wochenschrift*. His friendship with the Austrian poetess, Marie Eugénie delle Grazie, cast into this period of heavy work a warm ray of sunshine, as it were, with a smile of grace and poetry.

In 1890 Steiner was called to collaborate in the Goethe-Schiller archives at Weimar, to superintend the re-editing of Goethe's scientific works. Soon after moving to Weimar, he published two important works, *Truth and Science* and *The Philosophy of Freedom*. "The occult powers that guided me," he says, "forced me to introduce spiritual ideas imperceptibly into the current literature of the time." But in these various tasks he was but studying his ground while trying his strength. So distant was the goal that he did not dream of being able to reach it as yet. To travel round the world in a sailing vessel, to cross the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Indian Ocean, in order to return to a European port, would have seemed easier to him. While awaiting the events that would allow him to equip his ship and to launch it on the open sea, he came into touch with two illustrious personalities who helped to determine his intellectual position in the contemporary world.

They were the celebrated philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, and the no less famous naturalist, Ernst Haeckel.

Rudolf Steiner had just given an impartial lecture on the author of *Zarathustra*. In consequence of this, Nietzsche's sister begged the sympathetic critic to come and see her at Naumburg, where her unhappy brother was slowly dying. Madame Foerster took the visitor to the door of the apartment where Nietzsche was lying on a couch in a comatose condition, inert, stupefied. To Steiner there was something very significant in this melancholy sight. In it he saw the final act in the tragedy of the would-be "superman."

The author of *Beyond Good and Evil* had not, like the realists of Bismarckian imperialism, renounced idealism, for he was naturally intuitive; but in his individualistic pride he sought to cut off the spiritual world from the universe, and the divine from human consciousness. Instead of placing the "superman," of whom he had a poetic vision, in the spiritual kingdom, which is his true sphere, he strove to force him into the material world, which alone was real in his eyes. Hence, in that splendid intellect arose a chaos of ideas and a wild struggle which finally brought on softening of the brain. To explain this particular case, it is needless to bring in atavism or the theory of degeneracy. The frenzied combat of ideas and of contradictory sentiments, of which this brain was the battlefield, was enough. Steiner had done justice to all the genius that marked the innovating ideas of Nietzsche, but this victim of

pride, self-destroyed by negation, was to him none the less a tragic instance of the ruin of a mighty intellect which madly destroys itself in breaking away from spiritual intelligence.

Madame Foerster did her utmost to enrol Dr. Steiner under her brother's banner. For this she used all her skill, making repeated offers to the young publicist to become editor and commentator of Nietzsche's works. Steiner withstood her insistence as best he could, and ended by taking himself off altogether, for which Madame Foerster never forgave him. She did not know that Rudolf Steiner bore within him the consciousness of a work no less great and more valuable than that of her brother.

Nietzsche had been merely an interesting episode in the life of the esoteric thinker, on the threshold of his battlefield. His meeting with the celebrated naturalist, Ernst Haeckel, on the contrary, marks a most important phase in the development of his thought. Was not the successor of Darwin apparently the most formidable adversary of the spirituality of this young initiate, of that philosophy which to him was the very essence of his being and the breath of his thought? Indeed, since the broken link between man and animal has been re-joined, since man can no longer believe in a special and supernatural origin, he has begun altogether to doubt his divine origin and destiny. He no longer sees himself as anything but one phenomenon among so many phenomena, a passing form amidst so many forms, a frail and chance link in a blind evolution. Steiner, then, is right in saying: "The mentality derived from the natural sciences is the greatest power of modern times." On the other hand, he knew that this system merely reproduces a succession of external forms among living beings, and not the inner and active forces of life. He knew it from personal initiation, and from a deeper and vaster view of the universe. Hence he could exclaim with more assurance than most of our timid spiritual teachers and startled theologians: "Is the human soul then to rise on the wings of enthusiasm to the summits of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, only to be swept away into nothingness, like a bubble of the brain?" Yes, Haeckel was the adversary. It was materialism in arms, the dragon with all his scales, his claws, and his teeth.

Steiner's desire to understand this man, to do justice to all that was great in him and to fathom his theory as far as it was logical and plausible, was only the more intense. In this fact one sees all the loyalty and all the greatness of his comprehensive mind.

The materialistic conclusions of Haeckel could have no influence on his own ideas, which came to him from a different science; but he had a presentiment that in the indisputable discoveries of the naturalist he would find the surest basis of an evolutionary spiritual outlook and a rational theosophy.

He began, then, to study eagerly the *History of Natural Creation*. Haeckel gives here a fascinating picture of the evolution of species, from the amoeba to man. He shows the successive growth of organs, and the physiological process by which living beings have raised themselves to organisms more and more complex and more and more perfect. But in this stupendous transformation, which implies millions and millions of years, he never explains the initial force of this universal ascent, nor the series of special impulses which cause beings to rise step by step. To these primordial questions, Haeckel was never able to reply except by admitting spontaneous generation,¹ which is tantamount to a miracle as great as the creation of man by God from a clod of earth. To a theosophist such as Steiner, on the other hand, the cosmic force which elaborates the world embraces in its concentric spheres the myriads of souls which crystallise and incarnate ceaselessly in all beings. He who saw the *underside* of creation could but recognise and admire the extent of the all-round gaze with which Haeckel surveyed its surface. It was in vain that the naturalist denied the existence of a divine Author of the universal scheme: he proved it, in spite of himself, in so well describing His work. As to the theosophist, he greeted, in the surging of species and in the breath which urges them onward—Man in the making, the very thought of God, the visible expression of the planetary Word.

While thus pursuing his studies, Rudolf Steiner recalled the saying of his Master: "To conquer the dragon, his skin must be penetrated." While stealing within the carapace of present-day materialism, he had seized his weapons. Henceforth he was ready for the combat. He needed but a field of action to give battle, and a powerful aid to uphold him therein. He was to find his field in the Theosophical Society, and his aid in a remarkable woman.

In 1897 Rudolf Steiner went to Berlin to edit a literary magazine and to give lectures. On his arrival, he found there a branch of the Theosophical Society. The German branch of this Society was always noted for its great independence, which is natural in a country of transcendental philosophy and of fastidious criticism. It had already made a considerable contribution to occult literature through the interesting periodical, *The Sphinx*, conducted by Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, and Dr. Carl du Prel's book, *Philosophie der Mystik*. But, the leaders having retired, it was almost over with the group. Great discussions and petty wranglings divided the theosophists beyond the Rhine. Should Rudolf Steiner enter the Theosophical Society? This question forced itself urgently upon him, and it was of the utmost gravity, both for himself and for his cause.

¹ A speech delivered in Paris, 28th August, 1878. See also Haeckel's *History of Natural Creation*, 13th lecture.

Through his first Master, through the Brotherhood with which he was associated, and by his own innermost nature, Steiner belongs to another school of occultism, I mean to the esoteric Christianity of the West, and most especially to the Rosicrucian initiation.

After mature consideration he resolved to join the Theosophical Society, of which he became a member in 1902. He did not, however, enter it as a pupil of the Eastern tradition, but as an initiate of Rosicrucian esotericism who gladly recognised the profound depth of the Hindu Wisdom and offered it a brotherly hand to make a magnetic link between the two. He understood that the two traditions were not meant to contend with each other, but to act in concert, with complete independence, and thus to work for the common good of civilisation. The Hindu tradition contains, in fact, the greatest treasure of occult science as regards cosmogony and the prehistoric periods of humanity, while the tradition of Christian and Western esotericism looks from its immeasurable height upon the far-off future and the final destinies of our race. For the past contains and prepares the future, as the future issues from the past and completes it.

Rudolf Steiner was assisted in his work by a powerful recruit and one of inestimable value in the propagandist work that he was about to undertake.

Mlle. Marie von Sivers, a Russian by birth, and of an unusually varied cosmopolitan education (she writes and speaks Russian, French, German, and English equally well), had herself also reached Theosophy by other roads, after long seeking for that truth which illumines all because it illumines the very depths of our own being. The extreme refinement of her aristocratic nature, at once modest and proud, her great and delicate sensitiveness, the extent and balance of her intelligence, her artistic and mental endowments, all made her wonderfully fitted for the part of mediator and apostle. The Oriental theosophy had attracted and delighted her without altogether convincing her. The lectures of Dr. Steiner gave her the light which convinces by casting its beams on all sides, as from a brilliantly glowing centre. Independent and free, she, like many Russians in good society, sought for some ideal work to which she could devote all her energies. She had found it. Dr. Steiner having been appointed General Secretary of the German Section of the Theosophical Society, Mlle. Marie von Sivers became his assistant. From that time, in spreading the work throughout Germany and the adjacent countries, she displayed a real genius for organisation, maintained with unwearied activity.

As for Rudolf Steiner, he had already given ample proof of his profound thought and eloquence. He knew himself, and he was master of himself. But such faith, such devotion, must have

increased his energy a hundredfold, and given wings to his words. His writings on esoteric questions followed one another in rapid succession.

He gave lectures in Berlin, Leipzig, Cassel, Munich, Stuttgart, Vienna, Budapest, etc. All his books are of a high standard. He is equally skilled in the deduction of ideas in philosophical order, and in rigorous analysis of scientific facts. And when he so chooses, he can give a poetical form to his thought, in original and striking imagery. But his whole self is shown only by his presence and his speech, private or public. The characteristic of his eloquence is a singular force, always gentle in expression, resulting undoubtedly from perfect serenity of soul combined with wonderful clearness of mind. Added to this at times is an inner and mysterious vibration which makes itself felt by the listener from the very first words. Never a word that could shock or jar. From argument to argument, from analogy to analogy, he leads you on from the known to the unknown. Whether following up the comparative development of the earth and of man, according to occult tradition, through the Lemurian, Atlantean, Asiatic, and European periods; whether explaining the physiological and psychic constitution of man as he now is; whether enumerating the stages of Rosicrucian initiation, or commenting on the Gospel of St. John and the Apocalypse, or applying his root-ideas to mythology, history, and literature, that which dominates and guides his discourse is ever this power of synthesis, which co-ordinates facts under one ruling idea and gathers them together in one harmonious vision. And it is ever this inward and contagious fervour, this secret music of the soul, which is, as it were, a subtle melody in harmony with the Universal Soul.

Such, at least, is what I felt on first meeting him and listening to him two years ago. I could not better describe this undefinable feeling than by recalling the saying of a poet-friend to whom I was showing the portrait of the German theosophist. Standing before those deep and clear-seeing eyes, before that countenance, hollowed by inward struggles, moulded by a lofty spirit which has proved its balance on the heights and its calm in the depths, my friend exclaimed: "Behold a master of himself and of life!"

The Spiritual Individualities of the Planets

Rudolf Steiner

A Lecture given at Dornach, July 27, 1923¹

I WANT to add to what has previously been said some explanation of certain deeper foundations of world-mysteries of which in modern civilisation all knowledge has been lost. To realise the loss we need think only of the modern conception of the planetary system: that it originated in some kind of rotating, primeval nebula, from which the various planetary bodies were dispersed. The speculations derived from this picture have led merely to the idea that there are no fundamental differences between these heavenly bodies, and this is the prevailing attitude towards them.

If the whole planetary system is comprised in the picture of a rotating nebula, out of which the heavenly bodies gradually separated, what essential difference is there between, for example, the Moon and Saturn? It is of course true that very important researches carried out during the 19th century into earthly substances—particularly the minerals—have been able to say a great deal about the material composition of the heavenly bodies, and have worked out a certain kind of physics and chemistry for them. This has made it possible for ordinary text-books to give specific details about Venus, Saturn, the Moon, and so on. But all this amounts to no more than making an image of—let us say—the physical organism of man, leaving out of account altogether the fact that he is a being of soul and spirit. With the help of Initiation-science we must again learn to realise that our planetary system, too, is permeated with soul and spirit. And today I want to speak of the “individualities” and the individual characters of the several planets.

We will think, to begin with, of the planet nearest the Earth, the planet with whose history the Earth's history—though only in a certain sense—is bound up, and which once played an entirely different part in earthly life from the part it plays today. You know from my book *Occult Science—an Outline*² that there was once a cosmic age—relatively speaking not in a very remote past—when

¹ From a shorthand report, unrevised by the lecturer. Published by permission of the Rudolf Steiner-Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Switzerland.

² New translation by George and Mary Adams, 1963. Rudolf Steiner Press, London.

the Moon was still united with the Earth. The Moon then separated from the Earth and now circles around it.

When we speak of the Moon as a physical body in the heavens, its physical nature is only the external, the most external, revelation of the Spiritual behind it. To those who have knowledge of both its outer and its inner nature, the Moon in our universe presents itself to begin with as a gathering of spiritual Beings living in great seclusion. Outwardly, the Moon acts as a mirror of the universe; the fact that it reflects the light of the Sun is evident to the most superficial observation. So we can say: What comes from the Moon is the light of the Sun which has shone upon it and is then reflected. First and foremost, then, the Moon is a mirror of the Sun's light. Now, as you all know, we see what is outside or in front of a mirror but we do *not* see what is behind it.

The Moon is not the mirror of the Sun's light only, for it reflects everything that radiates upon it—the radiations of the solar light being, of course, by far the strongest. All the heavenly bodies in the universe send their rays towards the Moon, and the Moon—as a mirror of the universe—then radiates them back in every direction.

It can be said, therefore, that the universe is before us in a twofold aspect. It reveals itself in the environment of the Earth and is radiated back by the Moon. The Sun's rays work with tremendous power in themselves and also in their reflection from the Moon. But every other radiation in cosmic space is also reflected by the Moon. There is the manifested universe and there is also its reflection from the Moon.

Anyone capable of observing the mirror-pictures thrown back by the Moon in all directions would have the whole universe before him in reflection. Only that which is *within* the Moon—that and that alone remains, if I may so express it, the Moon's secret; it remains hidden, just as what is behind a mirror remains hidden. What is behind the outer surface of the Moon, in the innermost sphere of the Moon, is significant above all in its *spiritual* aspect.

The spiritual Beings peopling this innermost sphere of the Moon are Beings who shut themselves off in strict seclusion from the rest of the universe. They live in their Moon “fortress.” And only someone who, by developing certain qualities connected with the human heart, succeeds in relating himself to the Sun's light in such a way that he does not see the reflection from the Moon—only for such a man does the Moon become as it were inwardly transparent and he can penetrate into this Moon fortress of the universe. He then makes the significant discovery that through the utterances, through the teachings, of those Beings who have withdrawn into seclusion in this Moon fortress, certain secrets can be revealed that

were once in the possession of the most advanced spirits on the Earth but have long since been lost.

The farther we go back in the evolution of the Earth, the less do we find the abstract truths that are the pride of present-day humanity. More and more we find *pictures*, truths expressed in pictures. We wrestle our way through the deeply significant truths still preserved as a last echo of oriental wisdom in the Vedas and the Vedanta philosophy; we press on to the primal revelations hidden behind the myths and sagas, and we realise with wonder and awe that a glorious wisdom was once possessed by men who received it without intellectual effort as grace from the spiritual worlds. And finally we come to all that was once taught to primeval humanity on Earth by the Beings who have now withdrawn into the Moon fortress in the universe, after leaving the Earth together with the Moon. A certain memory was preserved of what these Beings had once revealed to the peoples of a remote past—to men whose nature was quite different from human nature as it is today.

If we succeed in fathoming this mystery—I will call it the Moon-mystery of the universe—we realise that these Beings who have now entrenched themselves in the Moon fortress were once the great Teachers of earthly humanity; but all consciousness of the realities of spirit and soul hidden in this fortress has been lost. What is still transmitted to the Earth from the heavens represents only what the outer surface, the walls, as it were, of the Moon fortress radiate back from the rest of the universe.

This Moon-mystery was one of the deepest secrets in the ancient Mysteries, for it is the primal wisdom that the Moon enshrines within itself. What the Moon is able to reflect from the whole universe forms the sum-total of the forces which sustain the animal world of the Earth, especially the forces that are connected with the sexual nature of animals; these forces also sustain the animal element in man and are connected with his sexual nature in its physical aspect. So the lower nature of man is a product of what radiates from the Moon, while the highest wisdom once possessed by the Earth lies concealed within the Moon fortress.

In this way one comes gradually to a knowledge of the "individuality" of the Moon, to knowledge of what the Moon is in reality, whereas all other knowledge is only like information we could glean about a human being from a pasteboard image of him displayed in some exhibition. Such an image would tell us nothing whatever about the man's *individuality*. Equally it is not possible for a science that refuses any approach towards initiation to know anything about the individuality of the Moon.

*

We turn now to Saturn. In earlier times Saturn was regarded as the outermost planet of our system, Uranus and Neptune having been added much later. We will leave them out of consideration now and think of Saturn as a kind of antithesis to the Moon.

The nature of Saturn is such that he receives many diverse impulses from the universe but allows none of them to stream back—at all events not to the Earth. Saturn too, of course, is irradiated by the Sun, but what he reflects of the solar rays has no significance for earthly life. Saturn is an entirely self-engrossed heavenly body in our planetary system, raying his *own* being into the universe. When we contemplate Saturn, he tells us always what *he* is. Whereas the Moon—contemplated in its external aspect—tells us about everything *else* in the universe, Saturn tells us nothing at all about the impulses he receives from the universe. He speaks only of himself, tells us only what he himself is. And *what* he is reveals itself gradually as a kind of memory of the planetary system.

Saturn presents himself to us as the heavenly individuality who has steadfastly participated in whatever has come to pass in our planetary system and has faithfully preserved it in his cosmic memory. He is silent about the cosmic Present. He receives the things of the cosmic Present into himself and works upon them in his life of spirit and soul. True, the hosts of Beings indwelling Saturn lend their attention to the outer universe, but mutely and silently they receive the happenings in the universe into the realm of soul, and they speak only of *past* cosmic events. That is why Saturn is like a kaleidoscopic memory of our planetary system. As a faithful informant concerning what has come to pass in the planetary system, he holds its secrets of this kind within himself.

Whereas in endeavouring to fathom the mysteries of the universe we should turn to the Moon in vain, whereas we must win the confidence of the Moon Beings if we are to learn anything from them about cosmic mysteries, this is not necessary with Saturn. With Saturn, all that is necessary is to be open to receive the spiritual. And then, to the eyes of spirit and of soul, Saturn becomes a living historian of the planetary system. Nor does he withhold the stories he can tell of what has come to pass in the planetary system. In this respect Saturn is the exact opposite of the Moon. Saturn speaks unceasingly of the past of the planetary system with such inner warmth and zest that intimate acquaintance with what he says can be dangerous. For the devotion with which he tells of past happenings in the universe arouses in us an overwhelming love for the cosmic past. Saturn is the constant tempter of those who listen to his secrets; he tempts them to give little heed to earthly affairs of today and to immerse themselves in what the Earth once was. Above all, Saturn speaks graphically about what the Earth was before it became Earth, and for this reason he is the planet who

makes the past unendingly dear to us. Those who have a particular inclination towards Saturn in earthly existence are people who like to be gazing always into the past, who are opposed to progress, who ever and again want to bring back the past. These indications give some idea of the individuality, the individual character, of Saturn.

*

Jupiter is a planet with a different character. Jupiter is the Thinker in our planetary system, and thinking is the activity cultivated by all the Beings in his cosmic domain. Creative thoughts received from the universe radiate to us from Jupiter. Jupiter contains, in the form of thoughts, all the formative forces for the different orders of cosmic Beings. Whereas Saturn tells of the past, Jupiter gives a living portrayal of what is connected with him in the cosmic present. But what Jupiter reveals to the eye of spirit must be grasped with thoughtful intelligence. If a man does not himself make efforts to develop his capacities of thinking, he cannot, even if he is clairvoyant, approach the mysteries of Jupiter, for they are revealed in the form of thoughts and can be approached only through a genuine activity of thinking. Jupiter is the Thinker in our universe.

When efforts to bring clarity of thought to bear upon some weighty problem of existence are unsuccessful because of physical, etheric, and especially astral hindrances, the Jupiter Beings come to the help of mankind. A man who has tried hard to apply clear thinking to some problem but cannot get to the root of it, will find, if he is patient and works inwardly at it, that the Jupiter powers will actually help him during the night. And many a one who has found a better solution for some problem during the night, as though out of dream, than during the previous day would have to admit, if he knew the truth, that it is the Jupiter powers who imbue human thinking with mobility and vigour.

Saturn, then, is the preserver of the Memory of our universe; Jupiter is the Thinker in our universe. To Jupiter man owes all the impulses he is able to receive from the spiritual present in the universe. To Saturn he owes all the impulses of soul and spirit he can receive from the cosmic past.

It was out of a certain intuition that such great veneration was paid to Jupiter in the days of ancient Greece, when the human spirit lived so intensely in the present.

A stimulus to the whole development of the human being is given also through the part played by Jupiter in the cycle of the year. You all know that as far as his apparent movement is concerned, Saturn moves slowly, very slowly, round his orbit, taking some 30 years. Jupiter moves faster, taking about 12 years. Because of this quicker movement Jupiter is able to bring satisfaction to

man's need for wisdom. And when, at the cosmic hour of destiny in the life of a human being, a certain relationship is established between Jupiter and Saturn, there flash into human destiny those wonderful moments of illumination when many things concerning the past are revealed through thinking.

If we look in history for occasions in the time of the Renaissance—particularly during its last period—when there was a great renewal of ancient impulses, we shall find that this was directly connected with a certain relationship between Jupiter and Saturn.

But, as already said, Jupiter is in a certain respect impenetrable and his revelations remain in the unconscious if a man does not bring to them clear and active light-filled thoughts of his own. And that is why in ancient times, when active thinking was still at a very early stage of development, the progress of humanity was in truth always dependent upon the relation between Jupiter and Saturn. When Jupiter and Saturn together formed a certain constellation, many things were revealed to our ancestors in those days. Modern man has to depend more upon receiving the memory of Saturn and the wisdom of Jupiter separately in the course of his spiritual development.

*

We now come to Mars. It is difficult to find appropriate expressions for these things, but Mars may be called the great "Talker" in the planetary system. Unlike Jupiter, who withholds his wisdom in the form of thoughts, Mars is constantly blurting out to the souls in his sphere whatever in the cosmos is accessible to him—which is not everything. Mars is the most talkative planet in our system, and he is particularly active when human beings talk in sleep or in dream. Mars has a great longing to be always talking, and whenever some quality in human nature enables him to make a man loquacious, he stimulates this tendency.

Mars does little thinking. He has few thinkers, but many talkers, in his sphere. The Mars Spirits are always on the watch for what arises here or there in the universe and then they talk about it with great zest and fervour. Mars is the planetary individuality who in the course of the evolution of humanity instigates human beings in manifold ways to make statements about the mysteries of the cosmos. Mars has his good and his less good sides—he has his Genius and his Demon. His Genius works in such a way that men receive from the universe the impulses for speech; the influence of his Demon results in speech being misused in many and various ways. In a certain sense Mars may be called the Agitator in our universe. He is always out to persuade, whereas Jupiter wants only to convince.

*

The planet Venus is again different. In a certain way—how shall I put it?—Venus wards off the universe. She is difficult to approach; she does not want to know anything about the universe. Her attitude is that if she were to expose herself to the external universe, she would lose her virginal nature. She is deeply shocked when any impression from the external universe attempts to approach her. She has no desire for the universe and rejects every would-be partner. It is very difficult to express these things, because the circumstances and conditions have to be described in terms of earthly language. On the other hand, Venus is highly responsive to everything that comes from the Earth. The Earth is, so to speak, her lover. Whereas the Moon reflects the whole surrounding universe, Venus reflects nothing at all of the universe, wants to know nothing of it. But she lovingly reflects whatever comes from the Earth. If with the eyes of soul we are able to glimpse the mysteries of Venus, the whole Earth with its secrets of the life of soul is there before us once again.

The truth is that human beings on Earth can do nothing in the secrecy of their souls without it being reflected back again by Venus. Venus gazes deeply into the hearts of human beings, for that is what interests her, that is what she will allow to approach her. Thus the most intimate experiences of earthly life are reflected again from Venus, in a mysterious and wonderful way. In the reflection she transforms everything, just as a dream transforms the happenings of physical existence. Venus transforms the occurrences of earthly life into dream-pictures. In reality, therefore, the whole sphere of Venus is a world of dream. The secrets of men in their earthly existence are transformed by Venus into dream-pictures of infinite diversity. She has a very great deal to do with poets, although they are not aware of it.

I said before that Venus wards off the rest of the universe. She does not, however, repel everything in the same way. In her heart, Venus repels what approaches her from the universe but *not* what comes from the Earth. As I said before, she declines every would-be suitor, but for all that she listens attentively to the utterances of Mars. She transforms and illumines her dreamlike experiences of earthly things with what is communicated to her from the universe through Mars.

All these things have their physical side as well. Impulses go out from these sources into what is done and what comes into existence in the world. Venus receives into herself everything that comes from the Earth and she listens always to Mars—but without any desire that he shall be aware of having her attention. And from this process—only of course the Sun is there to regulate it—spring the forces which underlie the organs connected with the formation of human speech.

If we want to understand the impulses in the universe connected with the formation of human speech, we must turn our gaze to this strange life that weaves between Venus and Mars. When destiny wills it, the relationship of Venus to Mars is therefore a factor of great significance in the development of the speech or language of a people. A language is deepened, imbued with the quality of soul, when, for example, Venus is square to Mars. On the other hand a language tends to become superficial, poor in qualities of soul, when Venus and Mars are in conjunction, and this in turn has an influence upon the people or nation concerned. Such are the impulses which originate in the universe and then work into the earthly world.

*

We come next to Mercury. In contrast to the other planets, Mercury is not interested in things of a physical, material nature as such, but in whatever is capable of co-ordination. Mercury is the domain of the Masters of co-ordinative thinking; Jupiter, the habitation of the Masters of wisdom-filled thinking.

When a human being comes down from pre-earthly life into earthly existence, it is the Moon impulse that provides the forces for his physical existence. Venus provides the forces for the basic qualities of heart and temperament. But Mercury provides the forces for capacities of intellect and reason, especially of intellect. The Masters of the forces of co-ordinative knowledge and mental activity have their habitation in Mercury.

There is a remarkable connection between these planets and the life and being of man. The Moon, which enshrines the Beings living in strict seclusion, and reflects only what is first radiated to it from the universe, builds and fashions the outer form, the body of man. It is therefore by the Moon that the forces of heredity are incorporated in his bodily constitution. The Moon is the cosmic citadel of those spiritual Beings who, in complete seclusion, muse upon what is transmitted in the stream of heredity flowing from generation to generation by way of the physical.

It is because the Moon Beings remain so firmly entrenched in their fortress that modern scientists know nothing essential about heredity. From a deeper insight, and in terms of cosmic language, it could be said that when at the present time heredity is discussed in one or another domain of science, the latter is "Moon-forsaken" and "Mars-bewitched." For science speaks under the influence of the demonic Mars-forces and has not even begun to approach the real mysteries of heredity.

Venus and Mercury bring into the human being the karmic element that is connected more with the life of soul and spirit and comes to expression in his qualities of heart and in his temperament. On the other hand, Mars, and especially Jupiter and Saturn when a

man has a right relationship with them, act as *liberating* factors. They wrest man away from what is determined by destiny and make him into a free being.

Biblical words in a somewhat changed form might be used as follows. Saturn, the faithful custodian of cosmic memory, said: Let us make man free in the realm of his own memory. Thereupon the influence of Saturn was forced into the unconscious; man's memory became his own possession and therewith he acquired the sure foundation of his personal freedom.

The inner will-impulse contained in acts of free thinking is due to grace vouchsafed by Jupiter. It would be in Jupiter's power to rule over and control all the thoughts of men. He is the one in whom we find the thoughts of the whole universe if we are capable of gaining access to them. But Jupiter too has withdrawn, leaving men to think as free beings.

The element of freedom in speech is due to the fact that Mars too has been gracious. Because Mars was obliged as it were to acquiesce in the resolution made by the other outer planets and could not exercise any greater coercion, man is free, in a certain respect, in the realm of speech too—not entirely, but in a certain respect free.

From another point of view therefore, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn may also be called the liberating planets; they give man freedom. On the other hand, Venus, Mercury and the Moon may be called the destiny-determining planets.

In the midst of all these deeds and impulses of the planetary individualities stands the Sun, creating harmony between the liberating and the destiny-determining planets. The Sun is the individuality in whom the element of necessity in destiny and the element of human freedom interweave in a most wonderful way. And no-one can understand what is contained in the flaming brilliance of the Sun unless he is able to behold this interweaving life of destiny and freedom in the light which spreads out into the universe and concentrates again in the solar warmth.

Nor can we grasp anything essential about the nature of the Sun as long as we take in only what the physicists know of it. We can grasp the nature of the Sun only when we know something of its nature of spirit and soul. In that realm it is the power which imbues with warmth the element of necessity in destiny, resolves destiny into freedom in its flame, and if freedom is misused, condenses it once more into its own active substance. The Sun is as it were the flame in which freedom becomes a luminous reality in the universe; and at the same time the Sun is the substance in which, as condensed ashes, misused freedom is moulded into destiny—until destiny itself can become luminous and pass over into the flame of freedom.

The Stars at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha

Adam Bittleston

ONLY in recent centuries has man learned to look out into the world of space beyond the earth as into an immensity that has nothing to do with his own inner being or his own immediate human concerns. It has now become a deeply-rooted conviction that space is something in itself neutral and undifferentiated, through which a variety of objects are moving and going through processes which can be described in physical terms, without anything comparable to human purposefulness or human moral judgment. Questions arise about the possible existence of other intelligent beings elsewhere in space; but that the movement of the heavenly bodies themselves concern only the physicist—and not the theologian, for instance—is taken for granted.

In spite of this, continuations of the ancient astrological traditions are widely cultivated, with varying degrees of earnestness. And here the kind of danger which the scientist has tried so hard to keep away from the development of his knowledge—the disturbance of the mind through wishes and hopes and fears—finds endless opportunities. Often an interest in astrology can be maintained in a separate compartment of the mind, without affecting a man's general ideas and beliefs about the universe around him.

When we approach the work of Rudolf Steiner, we encounter a very different spirit. The origins of all phenomena, whether celestial or terrestrial, are sought by him in worlds of spiritual being which he describes as accessible for organs of perception present, though generally dormant, in every man. Through the study of Rudolf Steiner we can understand both the astrological tradition, as having originated in genuine ancient perceptions, and the necessity for an astronomical science which pushed all this aside.

But our relationship to the world of space does not change all at once when we begin to take Rudolf Steiner's statements seriously. Particularly with all that he says about the stars we may notice a remarkable fact: there is not much sense in learning such things in the way we learn things from an ordinary textbook. There are subjects which may be learned at different stages of our lives, without our having to take much account of where we stand in the fulfilment of our individual destiny. But all that Rudolf Steiner has to say needs time; we cannot compel ourselves to assimilate it. An event in our own destiny may be needed, in order to awaken a real understanding in us for something that may have been read years

earlier. There may be no evident connection; we may only notice that a detail in some description by Rudolf Steiner has come very much nearer to us. It is indeed easier to see why this should be so when he is concerned with something of which we may have immediate practical experience—for example the education of children or the trials of the human soul—than when he is concerned with the planets and the Zodiac. But as we can observe our destiny leading us externally, taking us perhaps on a journey to another country at a particular stage in our lives, so we can see that men are led differently into the varied realms of understanding. One man may be drawn in his early twenties to seek out eagerly everything he can learn from Rudolf Steiner about the stars. Another may feel clearly that he should leave this particular subject for a much later time in his life. A third may take it up, and accept and value much of it, and yet encounter certain problems which may require thirty years for their solution. For we are concerned with a knowledge which is not colourless or morally neutral; it calls for the activity of all that a man has. And we can come to see that it is possible to find a way between the temptations which beset us only when we try to form a new relationship to the starry worlds by drawing upon the inner powers which have been brought to man by Christ through the Mystery of Golgotha. Within us is to be felt the abyss that has opened up between the earthly world and the Divine heavenly reality. And only the power of Christ can sustain the soul in the crossing of this abyss.

Again and again Rudolf Steiner returned to the assertion that the Mystery of Golgotha was not simply an action for the earth, but a cosmic event. It has just begun to strike some men, engaged in the kind of cosmological speculation which considers the possibility of a relationship between man and greater intelligences from other parts of the universe, that such a meeting might have happened at the time of Golgotha. But our conceptions of outer space are in general utterly unhelpful for the comprehension of the Incarnation.

A relationship to space in which man could share with his whole mind and heart and will was sought in the ancient world in the most practical way: by the building of temples. Standing within the temple, or looking towards it from a distance, men felt the holiness of space; up and down, forward and backward, right and left, began to express changes in the aspect of God to man and of man to God. In our time, what we receive from Rudolf Steiner, to begin with only as ideas, can change for us gradually into a diversified sense for the qualities of space, in their relation to our own human form. Our human body is the little temple; Space is the great Temple, the royal Tent.

Within this differentiated space, where every movement has a quality—as of finding or losing, of gaining strength or gaining

light—the planets move as in a ritual dance. The more we study the actual movements of the planets, the less they appear like those of a clock, and the more like an awe-inspiring dance, which the onlooker can never wholly grasp. It is possible indeed to calculate backwards and forwards the movements of each of the planets—particularly those which have long been known to man, the major planets up to Saturn. But because the rhythms of the planets are mutually incommensurable, the solar system never repeats itself as a clock so evidently does. Even each single orbit of a planet is unlike every other. These differences are of course to a very considerable degree calculable, on the basis of gravitational theory; but though in this the solar system seems like a great machine, the difference from human machines, which are based on commensurable ratios, should be remembered.

During the last months of his life, Rudolf Steiner wrote about the calculable element in heavenly movements and earthly processes. He described three different relationships which can exist among spiritual beings towards this calculable element, which has come to exist only in the course of cosmic evolution, and which in a future time will cease to be present. There are Luciferic spiritual beings, for whom all calculability is an alien thing. There are Ahrimanic beings, who greedily attach themselves to the calculable, and hate all freedom. The good spiritual beings, with whom man has been connected from his origin, live themselves in freedom, but accept with loving understanding the necessity of the calculable within the Universe. At the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ in freedom takes upon Himself the celestial and the earthly necessities.

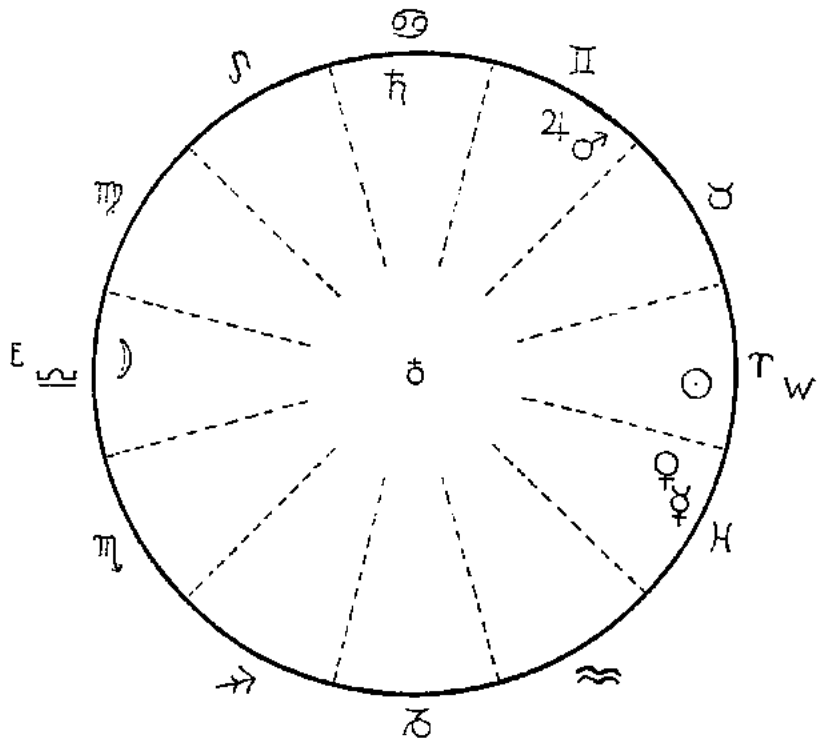
A path therefore which we can take towards an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha is through consideration of that moment in the cosmic dance when the Christ enters earthly history. We should not expect this to be an easy path. But we can hope eventually to be led to an insight into the writing of the heavens that is neither egotistical nor impersonally abstract. Always when we are asleep, a kind of echo of the cosmic rhythms is aroused within our souls; we find a right relationship to what stirs within us in the depths of sleep through what we bring from waking life as an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha.

*

One element in the constellation of Golgotha is indicated in the Gospels by John the Baptist himself. "Behold the Lamb of God, Who bears the sin of the world." At the festival of Passover the sun then stood, and had stood for many centuries, in the constellation of Aries, the Ram. In the sacrifice of the lamb at Passover, instituted by Moses, the significance of this constellation was reflected. The forces of Aries work from the head through the whole being of man to give him his upright stature. But he should not wear

this uprightness proudly; inwardly he is very far from being worthy of it. He can only go forth worthily from the decadence of his inner Egypt if he learns to offer his uprightness to God.

In that Christ becomes Man, the promise of human uprightness is for the first time entirely fulfilled. Christ truly stands, truly walks upright on earth. And He sacrifices Himself, taking upon Himself the burden of all human unworthiness.



Approximate positions of the planets at sunset, 3 April, A.D. 33

When on the evening of Good Friday the sun is setting, the full moon rises in Libra, the Balance. Men have taken the scales as the symbol of justice, even of that human justice which is administered on earth. Before Golgotha, men sat in judgment on the Christ, and condemned Him. But Golgotha is itself the judgment of men, and of the evil which inspired them. The spiritual world would have to condemn man did not Christ now take up man's load of guilt. From Golgotha onwards, the souls will not only enter into the judgment of the moon-sphere; Christ will lead them through judgment towards the spiritual heights.

When the body of Christ Jesus is laid into the earth, there stands high in the southern sky the planet Saturn, in Cancer, the Crab. The forces of Cancer are those which enclose heart and lungs within the fence of the ribs. Living in the immensity of space, we are nevertheless able to have our private world, our inner life of soul. This is liable to seem all too private and self-enclosed. In the ancient Mysteries the pupils learned what this inner being truly is. Within it the effects of long ages of the past reach their completion. A universe dies; another is to come into being. Within the circle of the soul are the seeds of ages to come. All this is expressed in the interpenetrating spirals of the symbol of Cancer.

In the Mystery of Golgotha what had been kept hidden was made manifest. Upon the Cross, in the sight of all, were shown world-ending and world-beginning. The life of the soul depends upon its feeling about this; as is described in the story of the Grail, the wounded soul must feel the sharpest pain when Saturn, who recalls the cosmic past and prepares the cosmic future, stands in Cancer.

West of Saturn, over the Sepulchre, shine Jupiter and Mars in Gemini, the Twins. Through Gemini the form of man receives the symmetry of right and left. From early childhood we feel the wonder of this likeness; and everywhere our thinking begins to delight in the likenesses of things. Socrates, in Plato's account of his death, proves to his pupils that we must have brought the concept of similarity with us from the spiritual world in which we were before birth. Through the concept of likeness we can discern unlikeness as well; each of a kind is also its separate self.

For the Greeks, Gemini were usually Castor and Pollux, one brother mortal, the other immortal. At the death of Castor, Pollux asks for it to be granted that they may continue together; either both in the heavenly heights, or both in Hades.

The mystery which this myth touches is fulfilled at Golgotha. Christ is in truth the immortal Brother determined to share the fate of mortality. The wisdom of Jupiter and the courage of Mars are united in this resolve.

But man on earth does not always love when he sees another who bears his likeness. The Romans looked back upon twins of whom one killed the other. And in Genesis we find brothers, capable of being to each other companion and completion, of whom the elder kills the younger. From that time onwards there sound in the depths of every human soul the terrible words "Am I the guardian of my brother?" Every shade of indifference, of jealousy, and of hatred becomes possible for man.

The circling planets are visible tokens for spheres of spiritual being which contain evil powers as well as the good Hierarchies. From the realm of Mars there come indeed impulses of strength and

courage; but the ancient world rightly saw in Mars a cosmic reminder of forces which threaten to destroy all human community, bringing about endless conflicts among men. There is for example the wonderful passage in the *Kalevala* where it is described that at the first smelting of iron the hornet's sting became intermingled with it, in place of honey.

Without the Deed of Christ, humanity on earth would have fallen more and more into the power of debased Mars forces. This danger still exists; and we see the achievements of human mathematics, which is a gift from Gemini (for all mathematics is based upon the counting of like units) devoted to making the greatest weapons of destruction. But Christ gives the development of the earth a new direction; it is to become a Mercury, a realm of healing. The blood and water flowing from the wound of Christ are to free men from an impossible pressure of egotism, to bring into movement again what in man has become hardened, and to bring about new, spiritually enduring relationships among men.

*

Before sunrise on Easter morning, the planets Mercury and Venus stand south of east as morning stars. Venus is beginning a period as morning star; Mercury is near its greatest western elongation. They are close to one another, and converging, in the constellation Pisces, the Fishes. On Good Friday evening, being morning stars, they had set before the sun. On Easter morning they could have been visible to the women on their way to the Sepulchre; and whether or not they were seen by physical eyes, their relationship to the stars and to the earth was of endless significance. Within the realm of earth, the Christ has overcome death. To walk upon the earth, and to touch the things of earth, can now have for men a new sense. The forces of Pisces give us feet and hands, those members of the body which come most directly and constantly into contact with the things of earth. The cosmic thoughts which work in human destiny, that are too quick and subtle for our hardened brains, are often carried into effect by our hands and feet. For Mercury to shine in Pisces can now mean something much greater than those qualities of skill and agility which the Greeks often connected with Hermes; it can mean that an individual destiny is brought into the service of Christ's healing work. Venus in Pisces need not impel men to grasp and to hold fast for themselves what they love most; it can work in the journeying feet of the Disciples. The two qualities converge; henceforth real healing can never be a mere skill without love, or real love only a desiring without healing purpose.

All this is to be found if we listen attentively to the Gospel narratives which describe the women at the Sepulchre on Easter morning. It is women who are first able to grasp the fact of the

Resurrection. Experience and recognition of the Risen Christ come to the men more slowly; for most of the Eleven, only in the evening. St. John's Gospel says that Thomas Didymus did not "see and believe" until eight days later, the following Sunday. But for all who shared in the Easter experience, the meeting with the Risen Christ was the beginning of a period of intensive learning, of the transformation of their whole relationship to the world, continuing up to Pentecost.

About this the four Gospels say very little. Rudolf Steiner sometimes spoke with great solemnity and earnestness about the teachings of the Risen Christ. Through learning something of this, we can understand very much better the words and actions of the Disciples as they are described in Acts, and much else in early Christian history. For during the time between Easter and Whitsun the Disciples learned to know much more completely Who Christ truly is.

In ancient pre-Christian times a knowledge of the Spirit of Christ had also existed. It was cultivated particularly in those sanctuaries which were concerned above all with the mysteries of the Sun. They spoke of the Sun not as a single phenomenon, but as threefold. First came the external sun, felt indeed much more as a living thing than we do to-day. In its dazzling rays Luciferic powers are at work, awakening man to the external world, but drawing him away from his divine origin. But behind this abundant splendour men could find a second Sun, a realm of spiritual beings, which manifest themselves through the forms and processes of nature, but are also akin to all that makes the human soul consistent and purposeful. Those beings of this inner Sun who are concerned with the form of Man, the ancient Hebrew wisdom called Elohim; Rudolf Steiner spoke of them as Spirits of Form. But we can think of all the beings described by Dionysius the Areopagite as the Second Hierarchy—Exousiai, Dynamis, Kyriotetes—and by Rudolf Steiner as Spirits of Form, of Movement, and of Wisdom, as working together in the realm of this second Sun. For them the whole solar system is like a single organism.

But the pupils of the Mysteries were told that they had to seek further, for a third Sun; and only here would they find that being Who gives to man his eternal meaning, Who was called by later times the Christ. In different ways what was known in the Mysteries about the third Sun was imparted in ceremonies and legends to the various pre-Christian civilisations. In Greece, Plato could clothe in philosophical forms what had been conveyed by such teaching; he spoke then of the Idea of the Good, of the Light which shines in the world of reality outside the dark cave in which men must dwell between birth and death. A last great expression of such teaching is to be found in the writings of Julian the Apostate.

That Being Who had once been sought in spiritual heights, towards Whom men had once been able to look back through the gate of birth as the great Companion of their sojourn in the sphere of the Sun, lived in the weeks that followed Easter among the Disciples, bearing a human form in which every trace of death and evil had been overcome. They could learn that He had now made the earth His dwelling-place. And they saw how His power could begin to take hold of man's being in general, beginning with the most delicate processes, to become through the ages more and more evident. They felt how He would work for the redemption of human speech.

During the time from Easter to Whitsun the visible sun moved through the rest of Aries, and through Taurus, to the beginning of Gemini. Taurus, the Bull, is the source of the powers which form the human larynx. In early childhood we see generally the achievement of the upright position followed by the development of articulate speech; Rudolf Steiner described these as gifts of the Christ-power working within the child. And he compares the first three years in the life of the child with those Three Years in which Christ lived as man between the Baptism and the Crucifixion. What follows after Easter is like a great interpretation for the Disciples of all that they had shared in, but had not been able to comprehend, during the Three Years. In our time, too, what we find in the Gospels can often be felt as great questions, which would remain unanswerable without the Resurrection. The words of Christ are expressed indeed in human speech; but how are the ears to be formed, which could hear them?

In one of his accounts of the ancient Mysteries, Rudolf Steiner describes how the asking of questions and the finding of answers were there interwoven with the life of the planets. Deep and earnest questions were entrusted at a particular time to the sphere of a particular planet; and then from another planet in due time the answer would return. Questions which concerned the Archangels, the beings who are active in the development of human language on earth, were entrusted to Jupiter; the answers came from Mercury.

Jupiter completes the circuit of the Zodiac in a little under twelve years. He needs therefore about a year for each constellation. During three years he will thus pass through about a quarter of the Zodiac. Mercury is always near the Sun, and passes through his phases in relation to the Sun three times within a year. Within three months he too, as well as the Sun, can pass through as much of the Zodiac as Jupiter in three years. And we find that this happens during the weeks which follow Easter. Mercury follows just that path, along which Jupiter has come before the Mystery of Golgotha—through Aries and Taurus and part of Gemini—up to Whitsun, A.D. 33.

There is, however, a difference in the movements of the outer and the inner planets. The outer planets, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, during the period when they are long visible in the night sky, make great loops; they are for a time retrograde in the Zodiac, moving in the direction opposite to the annual course of the sun. Jupiter and Saturn do this yearly; Jupiter generally makes one loop in each constellation through which he passes, Saturn two or three. These movements need not be regarded as only apparent; Rudolf Steiner spoke of the real movements of Sun and planets as lemniscates of a kind, of which we see something in the planetary loops. As a result of these movements, Jupiter will often pass three times through the same point in the Zodiac. Thus we find that Jupiter and Saturn had been at the same points in Gemini and Cancer, at which they stood at Golgotha, already in the previous year, at the traditional time of the Transfiguration, August 6. We can understand that at this moment the event of Golgotha was spiritually prepared at that level of being into which the Disciples are enabled to look, when they see Christ Jesus speaking with Elijah and Moses about His "Exodus" (Luke 9, 31).

When the inner planets Venus and Mercury move backwards in the Zodiac for the formation of a loop, this is much less conspicuous, as such movements take place for the most part when Venus and Mercury are too near the Sun to be visible. But Venus on Easter Day is still engaged in such a movement.

From Easter to Whitsun, Mercury moves on a direct course. Halfway through the period, he is in superior conjunction with the Sun (that is to say, directly beyond the Sun) and then becomes an evening star. By Whitsun he has reached deep into Gemini, and stands very close to Jupiter.

During the central period between Easter and Whitsun, both Sun and Mercury work from the realm of Taurus. The Risen Christ implants into human speech the regenerating, redeeming power through which all the dangers that threaten it can be overcome. Without the Deed of Golgotha, the work of the Archangels, the spirits of the Mercury sphere, in the development of human speech would have become impossible. Once speech had been the direct expression of Will; later it was shaped by all the rich variety of man's life of Feeling. But even at the time of Golgotha, and much more in our time, it has become the expression of abstract Thought. This is the death of speech. And it is threatened, just as individual souls can be threatened, by powers of the underworld which would use it for their own purposes. We see to-day how speech can be degraded by systematic double insincerities: used by those who do not believe what they say for those who only pretend to believe what they hear. The age-old work of the Archangels can continue rightly only if they find in human souls genuine pictures, living Imaginations of the divine Trinity. These come about through an

active understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha.

This begins to be expressed to the world when the Disciples "speak with tongues" at Whitsun. Before this happens the Christ has guarded the inner freedom of man by a deed which it is particularly difficult, and particularly important, for us to understand at this time. Forty days after Easter, He is received into the realm of the clouds; the vision of the Disciples can reach him no longer. Only through this separation could that full sense of individual responsibility mature within them out of which they were to proclaim the Gospel. But this did not mean, as can easily be thought, that Christ then left the earth. Rather did He then impress upon the whole aura of the earth His own cosmic majesty. In everything that lives on earth the effects of His Incarnation would henceforth be present. In sacramental actions the Disciples would be able to make this manifest. But for a time He would be seen only seldom.

The freedom which men would feel increasingly within themselves did not necessarily alienate them from Him, or from each other. But only very slowly did it become possible to understand this freedom. Paul described it in flaming words; and in our time Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* is really a theory of knowledge and a resulting ethics of freedom written in accordance with the spirit of Paul. But man has not been able to understand how freedom can exist within him although the world is subject to laws—whether these be Divine or natural, at work in human destiny or in the stars.

When Rudolf Steiner spoke of human freedom, he often described it as something unique in the cosmos, something which men would bring as their particular contribution to the evolution of the world. And yet he spoke also, particularly towards the close of his life, of the freedom of the Gods, of the beings of the heavenly Hierarchies.

Man needs first an understanding of his consciousness with itself, to grasp the freedom for which his being is prepared. Then he can go on to seek within him for powers through which he can encounter beings with a quite different consciousness. Rudolf Steiner once described something like a sevenfold branching of the human "I" through which selves develop in us able to meet the beings of the Hierarchies. That in us which can be the Angel's brother will recognise the Angel's freedom.

The rediscovery of a living wisdom of the stars depends on the one hand upon our feeling for the Mystery of Golgotha, on the other upon an increasing awakening towards the mission of Michael, the Archangel who is the great guardian of spiritual freedom in our time. Michael would have men feel what the starry cosmos has been to humanity in the past, and learn in freedom to bring his deeds into harmony with both the heavenly and the earthly present.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Rudolf Steiner stated that the original Good Friday was on April 3, A.D. 33; this is to be found in his *Kalender 1912-13* and in some of his lectures, as a result of spiritual scientific research.

Historical research has sometimes led to the same date, for example in Dr. George Ogg's *The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge, 1940), and in his article on *The Chronology of the New Testament* in Peake's *Commentary on the Bible*, 1962, where references are given to writers who disagree. The alternative date in A.D. 30 seems to have been reached as a result of a misunderstanding of Paul's chronological statements.

Dr. Elisabeth Vreede worked out the planetary positions for Good Friday and Easter Sunday during Rudolf Steiner's life-time, and showed her results to him. They are published in her *Anthroposophie und Astronomie*, Chapter 21. Chapter 5 and much else in her book is also very helpful on this subject. The positions given by Dr. Vreede have been compared with those in *Planetary, Lunar and Solar Positions A.D. 2-A.D. 1649*, by Bryant Tuckerman, Philadelphia, 1964, from which have been derived the movements mentioned here other than those given by Dr. Vreede. Rudolf Steiner spoke of the significance of Cancer in his cycle on *St. Matthew's Gospel* (Berne, 1910, lecture 11), and of Saturn in Cancer in his lectures on the Grail (Leipzig, 1913-1914, lecture 6), now available in a new translation under the title of *Christ and the Spiritual World: The Search for the Holy Grail* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1963).

A fundamental reference by Rudolf Steiner to the relationship between the Christ's work on earth and the heavenly constellations is contained in his book, *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind*. For the work of Michael in bringing into harmony human freedom and cosmic processes see Rudolf Steiner's *Letters to Members*, August, 1924-March, 1925, published as *The Michael Mystery* (Rudolf Steiner Press). Relevant passages are to be found also in *The Effects of Occult Development on the Sheaths and Self of Man*, and in *Human Questions and Cosmic Answers*.

FOUR POEMS

E. L. Grant Watson

Time

"Are you there, brother?" called the blackbird
In the suburban garden. Silent the frost lay,
As down Time's galleries the notes dissolved.

Pharoah's peregrine stirred in her Theban temple,
Shifting a foot, ruffling her feathers;
Waves on a far shore advanced and retreated,
As the wise falcon, listening in silence,
Waited as Time paused——

Till a call came from the near coppice:
"I am here. I heard you."
To whom the first bird sang from the garden:
"Out of my fountains flash fire-lit sapphires!
Answer! O answer for the past springtimes,
Springtimes to follow."

To Be

How often I forget to be
Falcon or hare, or flying spray.
Deaf ears to hear, dim eyes to see,
A meagre man, in a dying day.

A wounding light, a dawning pain,
Lifts Time into Eternity,
And I remember myself again,
Both root and flower, Myself to be.

Reincarnation

In future lives, when we shall meet,
Shall we remember our past pain?
Will bitterness be turned to sweet?
In future lives when we shall meet
How shall we then each other greet?
What then, perchance, will be our gain
In future lives? When we shall meet
Shall we remember our past pain?

When I Dare Wish to Look

I have been visited by rare delights,
Distilled euphoria, Nature's second birth,
The human touch, and far horizon sights
Of heavenly script made legible on earth.
I have been visited by rare delights.

I have been daunted by the endless pain,
The long procession of the unfulfilled,
The ever-cheated. "My faint life is vain."
So I surmise, and find my actions willed
By other Thought than mine: the way is pain.

I have been loosed to go a little way,
To learn to walk, and by good chance to run,
My tether not so long but I must stay
When I do find my journey but begun.
I have been loosed to go a little way.

I would be stilled when I dare wish to look
Into the mirror whose deep glass contains
The prologue and the index of the book
Whose leaves are my life's ecstasies and pains.
I would be stilled when I dare wish to look.

On "Mechanical Occultism" *

Georg Unger

IT is essential to consider not only the statements of spiritual-scientific research on this subject, but to relate them to what science has to tell us in the field of mechanisms.

In Rudolf Steiner's lectures entitled *In the Changed Conditions of the Times*,¹ he describes "powers which, in the future, human beings will develop in a quite elemental way." These lectures are fundamental to our subject. We have to do here with powers that are unknown to materialistic science, since it is concerned with a period during which its general methods have undergone little change.

Dr. Steiner first refers to "the threefold capacity, of which every well-informed member of these secret circles speaks." The first is "the capacity for so-called material occultism." By this means, according to the ideas of these secret societies, "certain social forms which to-day are the foundation of industrialism will be placed on a quite different footing." Rudolf Steiner continued more specifically:

Every knowledgeable member of these secret circles is aware that, solely by means of certain capacities which are still latent in man but are still evolving, and with the help of the law of harmonious vibrations, machines and mechanical constructions can be set in motion. You will find a small indication of this in what I connected with the figure of Strader in my *Mystery Plays*. . . . The capacity to set motors in motion according to the law of interacting vibrations will develop on a considerable scale among the English-speaking peoples.

If the reference to Dr. Strader is traced back to its original, we are led by way of Rudolf Steiner's statements about human destiny to the philosopher Gideon Spicker. That is, as it were, one side of the picture. The other side is that Rudolf Steiner's audiences at the beginning of this century were familiar through theosophical literature with the personality of the inventor John Worrell Keely, who was active in America during the second half of the 19th century. Keely introduced his "motor," which depended on raising certain vibrations to ever-higher frequencies. It was, however,

* This "introductory lecture" was given at a members' meeting in Wiesbaden, 1963, and printed in *Mitteilungen aus der Anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland*, nos. 68-69, 1964, from which the present translation has been made by permission of Dr. Unger and of the editors of *Mitteilungen*.

¹ Six lectures given at Dornach, November 29 to December 8, 1918. Translated by Olim D. Wannamaker. New York, Anthroposophic Press; London, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company, 1941.

governed by mechanical vibrators, regulated by the inventor himself. In Keely's writings there are accounts of cylinders which released tremendous forces of a mechanical kind, and of vibrators for shattering rocks, useful in the mining industry. There are whole tables of vibration-numbers which go with the various spheres of reality. All this was first published by the Theosophical Society and afterwards arranged in book form by one of Keely's sponsors, Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore.

The law of interacting phenomena, mentioned by Rudolf Steiner in the lecture quoted, is one to which he refers on other occasions, always as though he were passing on widely known occult facts. For instance, in the 8th lecture of the *First Scientific Lecture-Course*,¹ he says:

You have a pendulum clock; you wind it up and set it going. In the same room you have another pendulum clock: it must, admittedly, be of a certain type. This second clock you do not wind up. Under favourable circumstances you may sometimes discover that gradually this clock starts of its own accord. We will call this the "mutual sympathy" between phenomena; it can be investigated in a very wide domain. A last phenomena of this type, still connected to some extent with the outer world, could be examined far more frequently than it generally is, for it occurs very often. Times without number you may have had this experience. You are at table with another person and he says something you have just been thinking. You were thinking it but did not say it; he now says it. It is the sympathetic going-together of events (or complexes of events) which is here making itself felt in a highly spiritual realm. We need to recognise the whole range of continuity from the simple resonance of a violin string, which one may still interpret crudely and unspiritually within the sequence of outer material events, to these parallel phenomena which appear so much more spiritual—as when we experience one another's thoughts.

In a book by the occultist C. G. Harrison, *The Transcendental Universe* (London, 1894), the possible effect of prayer on rainfall is discussed (p. 104): "Is it so unscientific to think that when the wishes of a whole community are concentrated on a certain object, they may perhaps set free forces which are not without influence on the magnetism of the earth?—through vibratory coincidence, say." In a footnote at this point the author says: "If Keely's 'motor' should ever become an accomplished fact, who can say what wonderful results the application of the law of vibratory coincidence might not have in the future?"

Shortly before the passage just quoted, Harrison drops a veiled

¹ Ten lectures given at Stuttgart, December 23, 1919, to January 3, 1920. Published by the Natural Science Section of the Goetheanum, 1925. English edition, translated by George Adams, issued by the Goethean Science Foundation, Clent, Worcs.

hint. Owing to the connection which he claims to exist between rain, atmospheric moisture and earth-magnetism, the following remark sounds quite natural and harmless: "What after all is magnetism? It is a form of energy. But will-power is also a form of energy. Are our scientists concerned to prove that between these two forms of energy there is no such common factor as is agreed exists between magnetism and other forms of energy such as warmth, electricity, etc.?"

The idea that is here wrapped up in seemingly commonplace language is brought into the open by Rudolf Steiner in other connections, where he shows that electricity and magnetism are related in their fundamental nature to human will-power. At the same time he emphasizes that these forces are not—like other natural forces—morally neutral, and he warns us of their inherent dangers.¹

Another indication, which similarly concerns the dissemination of occult knowledge, is given by R. Harte, at that time secretary of the Theosophical Society, in his introduction to the first publication of "Keely's Secrets" by Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore (T.P.S. No. 9, July 10, 1888). These are his words: "Occultists generally believe that the world is not yet ready for the appearance of such terrible forces in the life of humanity. Man is too selfish, cruel, stupid, unsympathetic, bestial, to be entrusted with what in sober reality are secondary 'divine powers'." After developing this theme further he continues: "For this reason, most occultists did not think it likely that Keely's discoveries would have 'results' in the commercial sense of the word."

The background to these words must be borne in mind. That is, the existence of "progressive and conservative sides" to the occult movement, to which Rudolf Steiner made specific references in his lectures on "The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century."

So much for this occult side of the matter (we will return to it later, in connection with passages from H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*). Incidentally, it was not until after his discovery that Keely came into touch with the Theosophical Society. There is something very obscure about all his pronouncements and he seldom goes further than the most veiled indications. One of these is that his force is suited to powering the biggest ship, just as well as a sewing-machine. This brings us back to the characterisation of the "Strader machines" in the *Mystery Plays*. Strader's invention, according to his own words, is intended to transform

¹ For example, in *Lebendiges Naturerkennen, intellektueller Sündenfall und spirituelle Sündenerhebung*, six lectures given at Dornach, January 19-28, 1923. Published at Dornach, 1943. These lectures have been translated separately, but not published as a whole in English.

social life by enabling everybody to use this power for his own convenience in the home he has designed according to his own ideas. Nothing is said about its physical or technical characteristics.

The situation of the inventor, Strader, is of special interest. First he discovers the basic possibility of the machine, which "maintains itself but cannot set itself going." The technical realisation of the idea miscarries; and the inventor is finally plunged into an agony of doubt about the basis of his work through the interference of an ahrimanicly inspired know-all. How he surmounts this crisis shortly before his death marks an important turning-point in the fourth play, "The Soul's Awakening."

I mention the inventor's situation because of a certain similarity to another situation which was in other ways completely different. This arose at the time the plays were written (1910 to 1913). The warmth generated by radioactive salts was measured in 1903, and confirmed in 1908 through the precise measurement of the energy given off by discrete fragments. Between 1911 and 1913 fundamental facts about the radioactive transformation series were discovered, and co-ordinated with other known facts relating to the nature of the Periodic System of the elements. But it was not until 1919 that a deliberate experimental transmutation of elements, sought for earlier, was achieved, though still only in the realm of those unweighable quantities described as individual atoms.

The final significance of this line of research did not lie in the fact that it became possible to calculate, in accordance with Einstein's theoretical investigations, the prodigious amounts of energy that could be released under certain conditions through the transmutation of elements. For the step from theory to practice could not then be taken. The later developments that led to present-day nuclear technology have passed into world-history. . . .

By this means man has acquired a power which all responsible people must view with alarm, for it represents a constant threat to the progress of human civilisation and even to the continuance of life on earth.

One cannot help thinking of the warnings uttered by Harte, for instance, and of Rudolf Steiner's statements in his lecture called *The Etherisation of the Blood*.¹ He speaks there of the contrast between our civilisation and that of a far-distant past:

If we take the early post-Atlantean periods, we find that people constructed their dwellings in a quite different way from ours to-day. They made use of all growing things to help them. Even when building palaces they summoned nature to their aid by intertwining plants and branches. To-day we have to build with broken fragments. All our external civilisation is made out of the products of destruction.

¹ Given at Basle, October 1, 1911. Revised translation, 1943. (New York, Anthroposophic Press; London, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company.)

In years to come you will understand still better how much else in our civilisation is a product of destruction.

After briefly indicating that electricity in the earth-processes of the post-Atlantean age is "fallen light," and that chemical force, transformed in the course of the earth's evolution, is magnetism, Dr. Steiner describes a third force which "will influence civilisation in an even more wonderful way":

The more we make use of this power, the more will the earth tend to become a corpse, so that the spiritual part of the earth can be preparing itself for the Jupiter stage. Forces have to be used to destroy the earth, so that man may be freed from the earth and the body of the earth can fall away. As long as the earth was developing in a forward direction, this did not happen, for the great civilising achievements of electricity can serve only a disintegrating earth. However strange this may sound to-day, it must be gradually made known.

When answering questions after this lecture,¹ he described these three forces as antitypes in the sub-physical worlds of the light-ether, chemical-ether and life-ether respectively. These worlds in turn are antitypes of the devachanic and upper devachanic astral worlds. Of the third of these forces he says:

There is an even more terrifying force, which cannot be kept secret much longer. We can only hope that when this force comes, as it quite certainly will, a force we have to think of as far more powerful than the strongest electrical charges—we must hope that before any inventor bestows this power on mankind, nothing un-moral will be left in human nature!

I should like to give an express warning against identifying the power of so-called atomic energy with this third force described by Rudolf Steiner. However potentially disastrous the uranium and hydrogen bombs may be, we are still only at the beginning of a process whose ultimate outcome we cannot foresee.

There are other forces stirring in the second half of this century. They are not characterised primarily by tremendous destructive action. The tendency is rather more to implant a sort of lower but autonomous intelligence into machines of human construction.

We will not deal here with the formidable problem of the extent to which so-called cybernetics merely imitates the processes of thought and how far other minds or forms of intelligence enter into such machines. We will turn to what Rudolf Steiner said in a lecture given in Dornach on November 25, 1917²:

¹ See *Anthroposophical Quarterly*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1956, in which these questions and answers are reported fully in a translation by George Adams.

² The first of three lectures entitled *Individuelle Geisteswesen und einheitlicher Weltengrund*. Published in English by H. Collison as *Secret Brotherhoods*. The extracts quoted are from a new translation now in preparation.

Where this kind of thing goes on, the wish to yoke up human strength with the strength of machines is always involved. It would be quite mistaken merely to oppose these things. They are not going to fade away; they are on the march. The only question is whether in the course of world-history they are going to be brought on to the scene by men who are unselfishly aware of the great aims of earth-evolution and wish to shape these developments for the healing of mankind, or by groups of men who want to use them for their own or the group's selfish ends. That is the issue. The point is not *what* is going to happen, for it certainly will happen, but *how* it happens—how these things are handled. The welding together of men with machines will be a great and important problem for the rest of earth-evolution.

I have often deliberately pointed out, even in public lectures, that human consciousness depends on destructive forces. During public lectures in Basle I twice said that in our nerve-system we are always in process of dying. These forces of death will become stronger and stronger, and we shall find that they are related to the forces of electricity and magnetism, and to those at work in machines. A man will be able in a certain sense to guide his intentions and his thoughts into the forces of machines. Forces in human nature that are still unknown will be discovered—forces that will act upon external electricity and magnetism.

Later in the same lecture, Dr. Steiner not only gives warning of the dangers involved, but indicates the appropriate way of using these forces:

Whether to conquer the cosmic for humanity in a wrong, twofold way, or rightly in a onefold way—that is the question facing mankind. From this will come a true renewal of astrology, which in its old form is atavistic and cannot survive. The wise Beings of the cosmos will enter into the struggle; one side will use the morning and evening processes in the way I have indicated; the West will prefer the midday processes, shutting out the morning and evening ones; and the East will prefer the midnight ones. Men will no longer manufacture substances on the basis merely of chemical attraction and repulsion; they will know that different substances arise according to whether they are made with morning and evening processes, or with midday and midnight ones. It will be known that such substances act in a quite different way on the triad, God, virtue and immortality—gold, health and prolongation of life. When the forces of Pisces and Virgo act in co-operation, nothing wrongful can be brought into being. Men will achieve something through which the mechanics of living will be detached, in a certain sense, from man himself, but will not give any one group power and rulership over another. The cosmic forces drawn from this direction will create remarkable machines, but only those that will relieve man of work, because they will carry a certain power of intelligence within themselves. And a Spiritual Science which itself reaches out towards the cosmic will have to see to it that all the great temptations which come from these machine-animals, created by man himself, are not allowed to exercise any harmful influence upon him.

With regard to all this, the essential thing is that people should prepare themselves for it by not treating realities as illusions and by coming to a genuine spiritual conception and understanding of the world. To see things as they are—very much depends on that! But we can see them as they are only if we are in a position to bring the ideas of Spiritual Science to bear on reality. For the rest of the earth's existence the dead will be co-operating actively in the highest degree, and it is *how* they co-operate that will matter. Here will arise, above all, a great distinction. On one side the attitude of men on earth can rightly lead the co-operation of the dead in such a direction that the dead will be active out of their own impulse, an impulse coming from the spiritual world which the dead are themselves experiencing. But from the other side many endeavours will be made to introduce the dead into human existence by artificial means. Along the indirect path through Gemini the dead will be led into human life, with the result that human vibrations will pass over into the mechanisms of machines and will continue to vibrate there in a quite definite way. The cosmos will impart motion to the machines by the indirect path I have indicated.

It will thus be essential, when these problems emerge, that no improper methods should be applied to them, but only those elemental forces which belong to nature on their own account, and great care will have to be taken not to introduce improper forces into the realm of machines. In this occult sphere the human element must not be related to machinery in such a way that the Darwinian natural selection theory is used to determine the working capacity of human beings, in the way of which I gave you an example last week.¹

Anyone wishing to go further into these matters should pay particular attention to the strange remark that the "mechanics of living" will in a certain sense be detached from man himself. When, under the influence of cybernetics, the nature of the forces which create and sustain organic patterns are increasingly thought of, in a mechanistic way, as "information," this is a picture, even though a caricatured one, of the development described above. "Machine-animals" have not yet come about, but their forerunners are playing an effective role on the stage of scientific progress. The first indications of a new technology are emerging out of a confused background. Automation is being developed by purely electrical techniques. Endeavours are being made to account for the working of the brain in terms of electrical wave-forms. It is certain that when in 1911 and 1919 Rudolf Steiner spoke of new possibilities, he was not thinking merely of the technology of electrical waves, which by then was already well developed.

In order to forestall questions that are often asked, it should be said that the much talked of idea of "implosion instead of

explosion" (expounded by L. Brandstätter following certain discoveries by Schauburger) has no positive significance in the sense of Rudolf Steiner's statements. On the contrary, it is well to know that Brandstätter has always written in the vein of a shallow, popular occultism, and still brings out a publication on these lines. Very relevant to all this is what Rudolf Steiner says in the lecture I have just quoted from:

I am making these remarks—obviously they cannot exhaust the subject in so short a time—in the belief that you will meditate on these things and will try to build a bridge between them and all those experiences of life which can be encountered especially in this difficult time. You will see how things become clear to you if you contemplate them in the light that can come from such ideas as those I have been placing before you. The real point is not that in our time powers and constellations of powers are standing opposed to each other, as we are always being told in external exoteric life. The real point is quite different. It is that a kind of veil is now meant to be spread over the true impulses at work. Certain human powers are intent on saving something for themselves—what is it? Their aim is that impulses which up to the time of the French Revolution were justified, and were represented also by certain occult schools, shall now be taken charge of in an ahrimanic-luciferic sense, so as to maintain a form of society which is generally thought to have been overcome since the end of the 18th century.

* * *

In connection with Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, we will now go further into the possibly occult background of Keely's discoveries and into various other relevant circumstances.

In the chapter called "The Coming Power," after a vague assertion that sound is a terrible occult force, we find the following (p. 606):

And if all this appears too *unscientific* to be even noticed, let Science explain to what mechanical and physical laws, known to it, are due the recently produced phenomena of the so-called Keely motor. What is it that acts as the formidable generator of invisible but tremendous force, of that power which is not only capable of driving an engine of 25 horse-power, but has even been employed to bodily lift the machinery? Yet this is done simply by drawing a fiddle-bow across a tuning fork, as has been repeatedly proven. For the Etheric Force, discovered by John Worrell Keely, of Philadelphia, well-known in America and Europe, is no hallucination. Notwithstanding his failure to utilize it—a failure prognosticated and maintained by some Occultists from the first—the phenomena exhibited by the discoverer during the last few years have been wonderful, almost miraculous, not in the sense of the *supernatural* but of the *superhuman*. Had Keely been permitted to succeed, he

¹ The quotations and page-numbers are from the third and revised edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. I (Theosophical Publishing Company, London, 1893).

¹ The example was of "Taylorism," whereby workers were selected for a job after tests of their muscular endurance, and those who failed to pass the test were dismissed.

might have reduced a whole army to atoms in the space of a few seconds, as easily as he reduced a dead ox to that condition.

On the next page:

In the humble opinion of the Occultists, as of his immediate friends, Mr. Keely was, and still is, at the threshold of some of the greatest secrets of the Universe; of that chiefly on which is built the whole mystery of physical Forces. . . .

The rest of the chapter consists mainly of long quotations from the writings of Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore.

A theosophical discussion is followed by the remark that although Keely's opinions are considered "unscientific," they are "quite *orthodox* from the spiritual and occult point of view." Then comes a revealing passage (p. 609):

Occult Philosophy divulges few of its most important vital mysteries. It drops them like precious pearls, one by one, far and wide apart, and even this only when forced to do so by the evolutionary tidal wave that carries on Humanity slowly, silently, but steadily, toward the dawn of the Sixth Race mankind. For once out of the safe custody of their legitimate heirs and keepers, those mysteries cease to be Occult: they fall into the public domain, and have to run the risk of becoming curses more often than blessings in the hands of the selfish—of the Cains of the human race. Nevertheless, whenever such individuals as the discoverer of Etheric Force are born, men with peculiar psychic and mental capacities, they are generally and more frequently helped, than allowed to go unassisted, groping on their way; if left to their own resources, they very soon fall victims to martyrdom or become the prey of unscrupulous speculators. But they are helped only on the condition that they should not become, whether consciously or unconsciously, an additional peril to their age: *a danger to the poor*, now offered in daily holocaust by the less wealthy to the very wealthy.

A footnote to this passage is not without interest because of the analogy it suggests with the fate of Strader:

The above was written in 1886, at a time when hopes of success for the "Keely Motor" were at their highest. Every word then said by the writer proved true, and now only a few remarks are added with regard to the failure of Mr. Keely's expectations, so far, a failure now admitted by the discoverer himself. Though, however, the word *failure* is here used, the reader should understand it in a relative sense, for, as Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore explains: "What Mr. Keely does admit is that, baffled in applying vibratory force to mechanics, upon his first and second lines of experimental research, he was obliged either to confess a *commercial* failure, or to try a third departure from his base or principle, seeking success through another channel." And this "channel" is on the *physical* plane.

Blavatsky then repeats her own remarks at the Philadelphia centenary exhibition, when she had said that it was beyond Keely's

power to contribute anything that lay outside "the capacities inherent in his own particular make-up." After further praising him highly, she continues (p. 611):

It is just because Keely's discovery would lead to a knowledge of one of the most Occult secrets, a secret which can never be allowed to fall into the hands of the masses, that his failure to push his discoveries to their logical end seems certain to Occultists. But of this more presently. Even in its limitations this discovery may prove of the greatest benefit.

After quoting some further extravagant assertions by Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore, Blavatsky continues:

The Occultists are ready to admit all this with the eloquent writer. Molecular vibration is, undeniably, "Keely's legitimate field of research," and the discoveries made by him will prove wonderful—*yet only in his hands and through himself*. The world so far will get but that with which it can be safely entrusted. The truth of this assertion has, perhaps, not yet quite dawned upon the discoverer himself, since he writes that he is absolutely certain that he will accomplish all that he has promised, and that he will then give it out to the world; but it must dawn upon him, and at no very far distant date.

In dealing with the question why Keely was not allowed to cross a certain frontier, Blavatsky returns to this theme (p. 614):

It was because that, which he has unconsciously discovered, is the terrible sidereal Force, known to, and named by the Atlanteans Mash-mak, and by the Aryan Richis in their Astra Vidyā by a name that we do not like to give. It is the Vrīl of Bulwer Lytton's *Coming Race*, and of the coming Races of our mankind. The name Vrīl may be a fiction; the Force itself is a fact, as little doubted in India as is the existence of the Rishis, since it is mentioned in all the secret books.

Then comes a vision of the future, terrifying because of its unnoticed warning of the atomic bomb, although this, after all, has no direct connection with Keely's discovery:

It is this vibratory Force, which, when aimed at an army from an Agni-ratha, fixed on a flying vessel, a balloon, according to the instructions found in Astra Vidyā would reduce to ashes 100,000 men and elephants; as easily as it would a dead rat. It is allegorized in the *Vishnu Purāna*, in the *Rāmāyana* and other works, in the fable about the sage Kapila whose "glance made a mountain of ashes of King Sagara's 60,000 sons," and which is explained in the Esoteric Works, and referred to as the Kapilāksha—Kapila's Eye.

In the rest of this chapter there is nothing new.

If the passages quoted are brought together and considered symptomatically, in the sense recommended by Rudolf Steiner in such cases, the impression is confirmed that Blavatsky at least suspected the presence of occult purposes behind Keely's activities.

The tone of the account bears the hallmark of the "conservative" or "right wing" section of the occult movement. It was here, according to Rudolf Steiner, that a feeling of responsibility prevailed towards the revealing of occult truths; while the "left wing" consisted of occultists who for various reasons of their own were in favour of the widest possible publicity.

One gets the impression that Blavatsky either is not allowed to say, or does not wish to say, or perhaps has no knowledge of, anything very definite; but through her words glimmers the fact that Keely's results were not permitted to lead to a premature disclosure of certain capacities.

Rudolf Steiner speaks of this, once more in a different connection, in the lectures called *The Karma of Vocation*.¹ In the fourth lecture we are told that the detachment of the worker from his work is the first sign of a further development. The world is permeated with "concrete, specialised spirituality," in contrast to the abstract and now decadent terms in which the religious denominations talk of one God:

Men must learn to know that when a workman stands at his bench and the sparks fly about, elemental spirits are being created who pass over into the world-process and have their significance there. . . . They will certainly come into existence; the important point is that they should come into existence rightly, in the right way. For elemental spirits that are destructive of the world-process can be engendered, as well as those that serve the world-process.

We are shown how humanity stands on the threshold of a world-evolutionary development which will lead to "a connection arising between what man is and the objects he produces and brings forth." Unless this trend is associated with spiritual-scientific endeavours, it could turn out to be "the very worst thing that could happen to the earth." It is a trend that will become apparent first in the preparation of medicaments:

The subtle pulsations existent in the will-life and disposition of human beings will more and more weave themselves, incorporate themselves, into what he makes, and it will not be a matter of indifference whether someone receives a particular medicament from one person or from another person.

The lecture then goes further into these effects:

Human beings will grow into conjunction with the objective world. Everything we touch will gradually come to bear our human imprint. And we shall learn, no matter how silly this may sound to the clever people—but St. Paul said long ago that the cleverness of this world is often foolishness in the eyes of God—that a time will come when

a machine will stand there motionless, at rest, and a man will step up to it who knows that he has to make a certain movement with his hand, then another movement in a particular way, and then a third, and through the air-vibrations produced by this definite signal, the motor, having been tuned to this signal, will be set in motion.

This is one of the most definite indications given by Rudolf Steiner about the connection between man and machines which future technical developments will bring about. His remarks must of course be considered in relation to other indications about the nature of machines. For instance, in the ninth lecture of this same course he goes very thoroughly into how it was that the technical use made of the vacuum first led to the development of the steam engine. This is how Ahriman

is given the possibility of establishing himself as a demon in the physical realm itself when a steam engine is constructed in this way. In constructing steam engines an opportunity is thus provided for the incarnation of demons. If anyone does not want to believe in them, he need not do so; this is negative superstition. Positive superstition consists in seeing spirits where there are none; negative superstition in denying spirits where they exist. In steam engines, Ahrimanic demons are brought right down to the point of physical incorporation. This means that while the cosmos with its spiritual element has descended through what has been poured into human evolution, the spirituality of the cosmos is driven out through what is created in the form of demons. This great and wonderful modern progress has in fact brought about not only a demonology, but a demon magic; and in manifold ways modern technology is demon magic.

Rudolf Steiner then points to the symptomatic significance of the remarkable fact that when James Watt was compelled for patent reasons to design a new drive for his steam engine, he called it a "sun and planet" movement, after the Copernican picture, which by that time (1781) was fully established:

Now think of what I mentioned recently as something that is going to happen but is at present in its first beginnings: delicate vibrations will amplify each other by resonance and great effects will be produced. Thank God this has not yet been achieved on earth! But a beginning of it lies in the fact that the movement of the sun and planets is imitated. Do you believe that, since the movements of the sun and planets have great significance for the earth when they radiate inwards, it means nothing when we copy them in miniature and allow them to radiate outwards again into cosmic space? What happens then has great significance for the cosmos. Here you can see quite directly how vibrations are given over to the demon, so that he can develop his activity outwards into cosmic space.

No-one of course must imagine that what I have just said means that we ought to do away with steam engines. In that case we should have to do away with a great deal, for steam engines are by no means the most demoniacal devices. Wherever electricity and

¹ Ten lectures given at Dornach, November 4-27, 1916. New York, Anthroposophic Press; London, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company, 1944.

much else is used, there is far more demon magic, for electricity operates with quite different forces which have a different significance for the cosmos. Anyone who understands Spiritual Science will naturally know clearly that these things are not to be done away with; that we cannot be reactionary or conservative in the sense of opposing progress. Indeed, demon magic signifies progress, and the earth will make more and more progress of this kind. A stage will even be reached when it will be possible to produce great effects outwards into the cosmos.

The point is not to abolish these things or to condemn them, for they are obviously justified. The point is that since these things must come about on one side in the course of human progress, counter-forces must be created on the other side so as to re-establish a balance. And it will be possible to create these counter-forces only if humanity comes again to understand the Christ-principle; if humanity finds the way to the Christ.

There are two remarks to add to these very significant explanations. The obvious one is that what has been said here about the steam engine applies in a much greater degree to the technology of our time. Many years ago I said repeatedly, in conjunction with a Swiss friend, Dr. Marti, who had spent a long time in America, that many cubic metres of vacuum are to be found in our cities wherever electricity is at work—not only in countless small radio valves, but on a much larger scale in mercury-vapour rectifiers and in other modern apparatus of many kinds—television, for example. The result is that the demon magic spoken of by Rudolf Steiner is spreading more and more intensively on all sides. The vacuum is only one example. It is very necessary that anyone who aspires towards the spiritual should realise clearly how the most varied opportunities for a virtual incarnation of elemental beings and demons are constantly on the increase.

The other remark follows from our so plainly defined duty to create *counter-forces*. In the last of the lectures on *The Karma of Vocation*, Rudolf Steiner packs a great deal into a small space; part of this must be given in his own words:

What used to be accomplished on the altar only must lay hold of the entire world. Humanity must learn to deal with nature as the gods themselves have done: not building machines in an indifferent way, but doing everything as an act of divine service and bringing the *sacramental* into everything.

It is only in this way that “negative superstition” can be overcome: the real demons have to be really driven out by treating the handling of machinery as something sacred. Two examples were given by Rudolf Steiner in the same year (1916) as these lectures: the first relates to upbringing and education and the second to knowledge. With regard to this second one, his indication follows from that fundamental sentence in his Introduction to Goethe's

scientific writings: “To perceive the Idea in the existent reality—that is the true communion of man.” One could regard these words as a basis for all the impulses to which Rudolf Steiner's work gave rise in later years—impulses which found expression in such varied fields as those of art, religious renewal, medicine, agriculture and natural science.

Many examples could be given of the tasks to be approached in this sense. To take one example only, I will in conclusion say something about scientific method.

If we wish to publish the *results* of experimental work—including work influenced by Spiritual Science—we have to satisfy the strict methodological standards set up by materialistic science. Rudolf Steiner spoke of this in the ninth lecture of the course on *The Occult Movement in the 19th Century*¹:

When, after our fifth post-Atlantean epoch and in the course of the post-Atlantean age as a whole, man has in essentials lived through his mineral evolution and enters again into a different form of evolution, the closeness of his relationship to the spiritual world will depend on whether he has already acquired on earth the intelligence and the measure of free-will intended for him; otherwise he will not be able to fulfil the purpose of his evolution. Viewed in this light, the materialistic method acquires great significance; but it must remain a *method*—a method for investigating the external physical-material world.

These methods do indeed expose man to a deception:

But this deception can be actually advantageous, for directly a man has seen through it, he enters at first into the kingdom of Ahriman and his attendant beings. These beings are bent on destruction and death, with the result that the destructive forces in man's nature are developed to a certain point of refinement.

It needs few words to point out the results of such destructive impulses; they have stemmed from the unconscious or half-conscious crossing of the threshold by natural science in the further course of the 20th century.

To come back to experimental researches in the sense of Spiritual Science, we must take a wider view of what scientific method involves. Besides *results*, something else plays a significant part—the *mood* in which researches are carried on. Herein lies an important point, which can hardly be given too much thought whenever experimental science is practised on the basis of Spiritual Science. We must aspire to imbue all experimental work with a sacramental character. This by no means concerns only the experimenter and his co-workers, in whose souls is engraved the

¹ Ten lectures given at Dornach, October 10–25, 1915.

injunction that the laboratory table should become an altar. It concerns our whole movement—all the friends who give collaboration and support. In so far as we carry out relevant research in the mood of Spiritual Science, and support it spiritually and financially, we are helping in the task of *casting out the demons* from our technological environment.

The Moorings

Different angles on the masts Of grounded sailing boats Make old and crooked cemetery, Till flooding tide refloats.	In that actual phase of turning, Dressing is lost, as though Highwater would prefigure The shambles at the low.
Then masts are rectified and swing Round the perpendicular, Regrouped in social rhythm by Hydraulic formula.	For when each keel grounds again, The last wave or the last Flurry differentiates The angle of each mast.
And horizontal parallels Align each stem and stern; And as the flood tide turns to ebb, The tethered vessels turn.	So, moored upon a tidal reach, These boats grotesquely mime Our alternating attitudes, In and out of time.

Laurence Clark

At Iford

Disturbing . . . how nature will compose
With a single cypress, a crimson rose,
Pictures that pierce the drowsy mind
Of countries we have left behind
Many lives past. "Oh—Italy!"
We cry in sudden ecstasy:
And the flame-like flower and the shivering tree
Symbol the darkness and the light,
The emerald, the ruby of delight
We knew—but when?—by that southern sea.

I. Arnold

Potentization and the Peripheral Forces of Nature¹

George Adams

MAY I begin by saying that I feel it a great privilege and satisfaction to be invited as a layman to address this Congress. My theme will be to tell of new ideas and discoveries—well founded, though still in their initial stages—which, among other things, should contribute to the long desired scientific explanation of the effectiveness of high potencies in medicine.

Let me remind you to begin with where the difficulty lies. For generations past the effectiveness of high potencies has been a fact of experience for the physician and of untold benefit to countless patients. Also in recent decades, in the work of L. Kolisko,¹ Boyd² and others, it has been experimentally established by biological as well as purely physical and chemical reactions. Yet it is difficult to account for, both in the light of rough and ready common sense and of prevailing scientific notions. The chemist who surmises that a particular component, present in small quantities in a solution or mixture, is responsible for some physical or physiological effect, will contrive by distillation, crystallization or the like to concentrate it. His theory is confirmed if the effect increases; thus Madame Curie when with endless pains she extracted a few grammes of radium from tons of pitchblende. Why, in the preparation of homœopathic remedies, do we dilute instead of concentrating? I am, of course, aware that potencies are no mere dilutions. "Dilution alone," says Hahnemann,³ "say when a grain of common salt is dissolved, produces the merest water. Diluted with a vast amount of water, the salt simply disappears. This never makes it into a medicine. Yet by our well-prepared dynamizations the medicinal virtue of common salt is wondrously revealed and enhanced." Nevertheless, there is no denying that among other things the potentizing or dynamizing process does dilute the substance and in so doing bring forth its virtue. To quote Hahnemann again: "The homœopathic dilution of medicaments brings about no reduction but on the contrary a true enhancement of their medicinal virtues; thus our dilutions represent a truly wonderful unveiling, nay more, a calling-to-life of the medicinal and healing spirit of the substance."

The down-to-earth, common sense difficulty of understanding how this can be is reinforced by the prevailing molecular theories

¹ A lecture given to The British Homœopathic Congress, London, June 1, 1961. Reprinted by permission from *The British Homœopathic Journal*, October, 1961.

of matter, according to which the number of molecules in a gram-molecule of any substance is of the order of 10^{23} . The exact figure, variously known as Avogadro's or Loschmidt's number, has been found consistently by several methods. In terms of molecular theory therefore, starting with a normal solution and with the normal technique of potentization, by the 23rd or 24th decimal potency only a single molecule would be left, and from then onward it is ever more unlikely that even this will be there in the medicine bottle or ampoule bearing the name of the substance! Ways of escape from this theoretical dilemma have indeed been suggested by the more recent theories of physics. The nineteenth century conceived the molecules or their constituent atoms more or less naïvely as ultimate and self-contained pieces of matter. The atoms and sub-atomic "particles"—protons, electrons, and so on, in terms of which even the chemical affinities and biological effects of substance are today explained—have become purely ideal entities figuring in recondite mathematical equations. Thinking of the mysterious duality of particle and wave, the philosophically minded physicist can even aver with scientific reason that with its sphere of influence each single atom is co-extensive with the entire universe. Some people therefore pin their hopes on a future science of biophysics, in which the subtle influences of life will be illumined by the idealized conceptions of atomic physics. Yet it should not be forgotten that the experiments and discoveries on which the latter are based have been increasingly remote from the realm of living things, depending as they do on the deliberate enhancement of conditions—high vacua, high-tension electric fields and the resulting radiations and "bombardments"—downright inimical to life. It is therefore better to regard the apparent gulf between the experience of homœopathic medicine and the conventional scientific outlook in a wider historic setting, not only in terms of the ever-changing theories of twentieth-century physics.

The growth of physical science from the times of Galileo and Torricelli, Newton, Boyle and Huyghens, Dalton, Lavoisier and Faraday down to the present day is a wonderful chapter in the intellectual and spiritual history of mankind. Hahnemann's long life (1755–1843) spans an important period in this development, leading from the celestial mechanics of the eighteenth to the electro-magnetic theories and growing chemical discoveries of the nineteenth century. Still in his youth when hydrogen and the composition of water are discovered, he is in his prime when Dalton enunciates the atomic theory. Cavendish in 1772 confirms the inverse-square law in electrostatics, Oersted and Ohm make their discoveries on the electric current in the 1820's, Faraday's electro-magnetic researches culminate in 1831. In 1828 Wöhler's synthesis of urea undermines the old vitalist ideas of organic chemistry which

Hahnemann—himself a creative chemist—still entertained in common with his contemporaries.

It is well to remember this when reading Hahnemann's forms of expression, which as I shall hope to show are scientifically important to this day. For the vitalism, inevitably abandoned in its old philosophic form, the vagueness of which stood in the way of true research, can now be re-born on a clear and scientific basis. Hahnemann's vitalism underlies his use of the word "dynamic" and the noun "Dynamis" which he adopts, or coins for himself. "From the beginning," says Tischner,⁴ "his notion of the vital force prevailing in the living body was essentially spiritual." He attributes illnesses to immaterial, dynamic causes, and in his essay of 1801 describes the medicinal effects of high dilutions as "dynamic" rather than "atomic"—a contrast, the literal significance of which will, I hope, emerge in the course of this lecture.

We also have to remember that the clear distinction of energy and matter and the law of conservation of energy were not yet current in Hahnemann's day. The "mechanical equivalent of heat" was discovered by Mayer and Joule almost exactly at the time of his death (1842–45). Heat, light and other energies—bio- and psychological as well as physical, even including "animal magnetism," for example—were until then still being thought of as tenuous if not imponderable substances. The supposed substance of warmth was called "caloric." Lavoisier in 1789 still included heat and light among the chemical elements. Rumford's experiment was widely supposed to have released the "caloric" from the iron made hot by friction. Even in 1824, when in his *Puissance motrice du feu* Carnot in effect discovered the second law of Thermodynamics, soon to become a cornerstone of physics, he still interpreted it in terms of "caloric." Perhaps this idea of imponderable essences is in the light of present-day ideas no longer quite so wide of the mark as it might have seemed sixty years ago. It should at any rate be borne in mind when reading Hahnemann's expressions, when for example he describes as *feinstofflich*, "delicately substantial," or as "virtual" or "well-nigh spiritual" the medicinal effects set free from the material during the rhythmic processes of dilution, trituration and succession.

I have deliberately drawn attention to these aspects. The history of science is not the uni-directional process which neatly finished text-books lead one to suppose. Many streams run side by side; the most essential discoveries, experimental or theoretical, may lie unnoticed for decades till a fresh aspect emerges to reveal their importance.

*

Let us consider for a moment in a human and historic spirit what it was that gave the orthodox scientific outlook its strength,

accounting too for the intolerance with which the claims of Homœopathy have only too often been met. It was the combination of an instinctive and robust materialism with the mathematical clarity and cogency of theories supported by experiment and observation. The instinctive materialism is well illustrated by the story of Dr. Johnson's angry reaction after listening to a sermon in which Bishop Berkeley put forward his idealistic theory of the world. "I refute it thus," the learned doctor exclaims, kicking his foot against a stone. In scientific atomism until the close of the nineteenth century, Johnson's stone—vastly reduced in spatial but proportionately grown in spiritual dimensions—became the highly satisfying football, better perhaps the baseball of science. For it is this intuitive feeling of the ultimate reality of tangible material things which underlies the older forms of scientific atomism. It is a very genuine element in the consciousness of Western man throughout the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, inseparable from the age of exploration, the growth of Natural History and of artistic naturalism, the dawn of industrialism. Nor is it out of harmony with the patriarchal, simply believing, strongly Old Testament forms of religion then prevailing.

Yet the instinctive materialism is reinforced by another, more ideal factor—and this alone accounts for the spiritual tenacity of a materialistic science—namely, the confidence born of the intellectual clarity and probity of mathematical thinking. It is too apt to be forgotten how many purely ideal, in other words spiritual elements are built into the resulting scientific system. Mathematics is an activity of pure thought, and in the past (if not in the extreme formalism and empty nominalism which is now the fashion) was never quite remote from philosophical and even religious thinking. Certainly Isaac Newton, whom we may justly think of as the founder of modern physics, was in his own dominant interests a philosopher, even a theologian, as for example his correspondence with Henry More and the Cambridge Platonists reveals. For all the scientific care and scepticism, sincerely voiced in his "Hypotheses non fingo," he—who was afterwards to describe his Universal Space as "the sensorium of God"—built into his *Principia*, in formal quality if not in intention, an almost theological masonry of thought. The implications of it were but inverted by the French atheists and rationalists! Over a century later, other Englishmen of philosophic and religious disposition brought a like clarity of geometrical imagination and mathematical analysis into the rising science of electric and magnetic forces. I refer, of course, to Faraday and Clerk Maxwell. It is this mathematical element in physics which gives it strength and power—power for technical uses, strength in its influence upon our mental outlook. There is an element of tragedy in this, for the resulting system becomes a rigid framework barring access to the more spiritual aspects of reality, of which the

truths of homœopathic medicine are an example. But the spiritual power of geometrical and mathematical thinking which has helped build this framework can also help in the much needed release. Of this I am about to tell.

Till about half a century ago—the time of Einstein and Minkowski—the space in which the real events of the universe were supposed to be taking place was that of Euclid, the geometry of which we learn at school. It is the space measured in finite and rigid lengths, or areas and volumes based on the measurement of length. It is determined by the well-known laws of parallelism and of the right angle, as in the theorem of Pythagoras or in the statement that opposite sides of a parallelogram are equal. The same type of space was held to prevail down to the smallest and up to the largest dimensions. Inward and outward, the identical scale of length leads to the millimicrons of atomic science and to the parsecs and light-years of astronomical speculation. What happens when a straight line is extended to the infinite, was held to be an idle question, of philosophic interest perhaps, but beyond the effective range of science.

Occasionally, scientists of the nineteenth century—W. K. Clifford, for example—reflected that cosmic space might after all be "non-Euclidian," its structure differing from the Euclidian to so slight an extent as to escape our instruments of measurement. But neither this nor Einstein's four-dimensional space-time did more than modify the profoundly Euclidian—I might also call it earthly—way of thinking about space and the realities it contains. This is so taken for granted as to be difficult to describe; few people realize that there is any other way. Space is conceived as a vast empty container—the Irishman's box without sides, top or bottom—populated (in some regions more and in others less densely) by point-centred bodies sending their forces and radiations to one another. It becomes a field of manifold potential forces, but the real sources of activity are, once again, point-centred—material or at least quasi-material—bodies. Apart from these, there would be emptiness, mere nothing. That, surely, is a fair description, both of the popular idea and of the mathematical analysis.

As against this, I now have to tell of what opens out quite new possibilities, both of pure thought and of insight into the realities of Nature. For in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, while physicists and astronomers were busily applying to their problems the ancient geometry of Euclid—rendered more handy and more elegant but in no way altered by the new analytical methods of Descartes, Leibniz and Newton—among pure mathematicians a new form of geometry was arising. It is a form which while including the Euclidean among other aspects is far more comprehensive, also more beautiful and more profound. I refer to the school of

geometry variously known as Projective Geometry, modern Synthetic Geometry, or the Geometry of Position. In the seventeenth century its truths began to be apprehended by the astronomer Kepler and the mystical philosopher Pascal, also by Pascal's teacher, Girard Desargues, a less known but historically important figure. It was, however, in the early nineteenth century, about the last twenty years of Hahnemann's own life, that the new geometry really began to blossom forth. Once again, French mathematicians—among them Poncelet, Gergonne and Michel Chasles—were the pioneers, soon to be followed by a few brilliant thinkers in Switzerland and Germany, England, Italy and other countries. Largely unnoticed save among pure mathematicians, upon whose thought it was to have a deep and lasting influence, it grew into an ever wider insight, which by the end of the century was seen to embrace most if not all of the known forms of geometry, Euclidean and non-Euclidean alike. Today, as I shall presently contend, it opens out new ways of understanding Nature—above all, living Nature and the subtler, more spiritual forces which the intuitive genius of Hahnemann was perceiving.

Like that of Euclid, Projective Geometry is not only a discipline of pure thought, resting securely on its own ideal premisses or axioms; it is also related to practical experience, though to begin with in a rather different direction. Our experience of the spatial world is above all visual and tactile. There are indeed other and less conscious senses—senses more "proprioceptive" of our own spatial body both in itself and in its interaction with the world, such as the sense of movement and that of balance—to which our spatial awareness and geometrical faculty are largely due. But in our outward consciousness it is the sense of touch and that of sight which reinforce and confirm geometrical reasoning and imagination. Now the geometry of Euclid relates above all to the sense of touch; hence too its natural connection with a scientific outlook taking its start from tangible material things. The inch, the foot, the yard, derive from our own body. We measure as we touch the earth, foot by foot and step by step, or in the rhythmic act of measurement with finger-tip and yardstick. By tactile experiences we confirm the constant distance between parallels, the symmetry laws of the right angle. We even prove the first theorem of Euclid by the imagined tactile experiment of applying one triangle to another. But our experience of space is also visual, and as such far more extensive, more manifold and satisfying. We see things we can never touch by hand or foot or tool; our vision reaches to the infinite horizon and to the stars. Now in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries the beginnings of modern science coincided with the increasingly naturalistic art of the Renaissance. Both were inspired by the same love of Nature and wish to penetrate her secrets. So as to give an outwardly "true"

picture of the scenes of landscape and the forms and works of men, artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Dürer studied the science of perspective vision, which from its practical and æsthetic applications presently gave birth to a new purely geometrical discipline—to wit, Projective Geometry. The latter therefore naturally deals not only with tangible and finite forms but with the *infinite* distance of space, represented as these are by the vanishing lines and vanishing points of perspective. Thus in the new geometry the infinitely distant is treated realistically, in a way that was foreign to the classical geometry of Euclid and the Greeks.

To include the infinitely distant, sometimes referred to as the "ideal elements" of space, no less definitely than those at a finite distance, is a bold step in thought, and is rewarded by a two-fold insight, of an importance hitherto unsuspected for the science of living things. (1) Attention is focused no longer on rigid forms such as the square or the circle, but on mobile *types of form*, changing into one another in the diverse aspects of perspective, or other kinds of geometrical transformation. In Euclid, for instance, we take our start from the rigid form of the circle, sharply distinguished from the ellipse, parabola and hyperbola, as are these from one another. In Projective Geometry it is the "conic section" in general of which the pure idea arises in the mind and of which various constructions are envisaged. As in real life the circular opening of a lampshade will appear in many forms of ellipse while one moves about a room, or as the opening of a bicycle lamp projects on to the road in sundry hyperbolic forms, so in pure thought we follow the transformations from one form of conic section to another. Strictly speaking, the "conic section" of Projective Geometry is neither circle, ellipse, parabola nor hyperbola; it is a purely ideal form, out of which all of these arise, much as in Goethe's botany⁵ the "archetypal leaf" is not identical with any particular variety or metamorphosis of leaf (foliage leaf varying in shape from node to node, petal, carpel and so on) but underlies them all. The new geometry begets a quality of spatial thinking akin to the metamorphoses of living form.

The other insight (2) is perhaps even more important. Projective Geometry recognizes as the deepest law of spatial structure an underlying *polarity* which to begin with may be called, in simple and imaginative language, a polarity of expansion and contraction, the terms being meant in a qualitative and very mobile sense. (If I now illustrate by using, after all, some of the more rigid and symmetrical forms, the limitations of which I have just referred to, it is only to make it easier by starting with familiar pictures.) Think of a sphere—not the internal volume but the pure form of the surface. One sphere can only differ from another as to size; apart from that, the form is the same. Now the expansion and contraction of a sphere

leads to two ultimate limits. Contracted to the uttermost, the sphere turns into a point; expanded, into a plane. The latter transformation, though calling for more careful reflection, is no less necessary than the former. A large spherical surface is less intensely curved than a small one; in other words, it is flatter. So long as it can still grow flatter, a sphere has yet not been expanded to the utmost limit, which can only be the absolute flatness of a plane.

The above simple experiment in thought—the ultimate contraction and expansion of a sphere—leads in the right direction. Point and plane prove to be the basic entities of three-dimensional space—that is, the space of our Universe and of our human imagination. Speaking qualitatively, the point is the quintessence of contraction, the plane of expansion. Here comes the fundamental difference as against both the old geometry of Euclid and the naïve and rather earthly spatial notions which culminate in a one-sidedly atomistic outlook. For in the light of the new geometry, three-dimensional space can equally well be formed from the plane inward as from the point outward. The one approach is no more basic than the other. In the old-fashioned explanation, we start from the point as the entity of no dimension. Moving the point, say from left to right, we obtain the straight line as the first dimension; moving the line forward and backward, we get the two dimensions of the plane; finally, moving the plane upward and downward, the full three dimensions.

For modern geometry this way of thinking is still valid, but it is only half the truth—one of two polar-opposite aspects, the interweaving harmony of which is the real essence of spatial structure. In the other and complementary aspect we should start from the plane and work inward. To mention only the first step: just as the movement of a point into a second point evokes the straight line that joins the two, so does the movement of a plane into a second plane give rise to the straight line in which the two planes interpenetrate. We can continue moving in the same line and obtain a whole sheaf of planes, like the leaves of an open book or a door swinging on its hinges. We thus obtain a “line of planes,” as in the former instance a “line of points.” In the space-creating polarity of point and plane, the straight line plays an intermediate role, equally balanced in either direction. Just as two points of space always determine the unique straight line which joins them, so do two planes; we only need to recognize that parallel planes too have a straight line in common, namely the infinitely distant line of either. At last we see that all the intuitively given relationships of points, lines and planes have this dual or polar aspect. *Whatever is true of planes in relation to lines and points, is equally true of points in relation to lines and planes.* Three points, for example, not in line, determine a single plane (principle of the

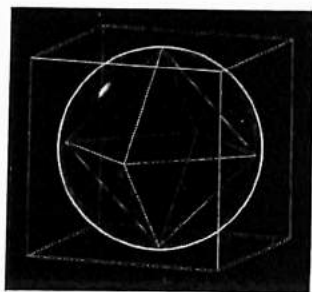


FIG. 1

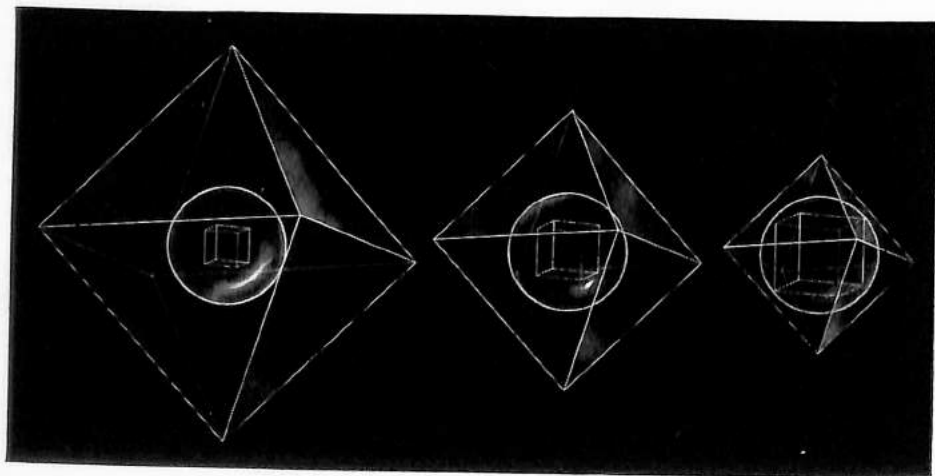


FIG. 2

tripod), but so do three planes, not in line (e.g. the ceiling and two adjoining walls of a room) determines a single point. The planes must again be extended to the infinite and thought of as a whole to see that this is true without exception.

All spatial forms are ultimately made of points, lines, and planes. Even a plastic surface or a curve in space consists of an infinite and continuous sequence, not only of points, but of tangent lines and tangent or osculating planes. The mutual balance of these aspects—pointwise and planar, with the linewise aspect intermediating—gives us a deeper insight into the essence of plasticity than the old-fashioned, one-sidedly pointwise treatment.

The outcome is that whatever geometrical form or law we may conceive, there will always be a sister form, a sister law equally valid, in which the roles of point and plane are interchanged. Or else the form we thought of—as for example a tetrahedron with its equal number of points and planes—proves to be its own sister form, arising ideally out of itself by the polar interchange of point and plane. The principle just enunciated, as it were a master-key among the truths of Projective Geometry, is known as the “Principle of Duality.” It would perhaps have been better had it been described as a “Principle of Polarity” from the outset, for in its cosmic aspect it is also one of the essential keys to the manifold polarities of Nature. The recognition of it leads to a form of scientific thinking calculated to transcend one-sided atomism and materialistic bias.

A simple instance is shown in Figure 1. A sphere is placed inside a cube just large enough to contain it. Touching the six planes of the cube, the sphere picks out six points of contact. Joined three by three, the latter give eight planes, forming the double pyramid of the octahedron. Octahedron and cube are sister forms, in polar relation to one another. The structure and number relations are the same, only with plane and point—the principles of expansion and contraction—interchanged. The octahedron has *eight planes*, each of them bearing a triangle or triad of *points* and of the lines that join them; so has the cube *eight points*, each of them bearing a triad of *planes* and lines. The octahedron on the other hand has *six points* or apices, each with a four-fold structure, answering to the cube with its six four-square *planes*. The number of straight lines or edges is the same in each, namely, twelve.

The sphere is only one of many spatial forms which evoke the polarity of plane and point—qualitatively speaking, of expansion and contraction. It does so not only by actual contact as in Figure 1. For any given plane in space, the presence of a sphere evokes a point; for any given point, a plane. I cannot stop to explain the comparatively simple construction by means of which this happens. The mutual relation is literally one of expansion and contraction, as

shown in Figure 2. Here, on the left, we see the positions of cube and octahedron reversed as compared with Figure 1. The sphere is just large enough to fit inside the octahedron, touching the eight planes at the mid-points of the triangular faces. The points of contact obviously mark the eight corner-points of a cube, which is now inside the sphere. In the middle and right-hand pictures the size of the sphere is left unaltered, while in imagination we have deliberately caused the cube to contract towards the centre. The sphere preserves the mutual relation of cube and octahedron, only the octahedron now has to expand. For in the same proportion as the eight points of the cube recede, inwards from the surface of the sphere toward the centre, the corresponding planes hover outward, causing the octahedron to expand even as the cube contracts. In the right-hand picture the cube is in linear dimensions half, the octahedrons twice as big as on the left.

We can imagine the same process continued "to the bitter end." The octahedron quickly grows, outward into the spatial universe. For when the cube is a hundred times smaller, the octahedron will be a hundred times bigger than before. And when at last the cube disappears, its eight corner-points merging into the single centre, we must imagine the eight planes of the octahedron coalescing in a single plane—the infinite periphery of space. For the infinitely distant taken as a whole in all directions—as it were, the infinite sphere of space—being of infinite radius, is no longer a sphere at all in the ordinary sense (just as a sphere contracted to a point is no longer a true sphere); it is a plane. We thus arrive at another of the basic concepts of the new geometry, namely the single infinitely distant plane qua infinite periphery of space. It is the presence of this unique plane which from the indeterminate and ever mobile forms of pure Projective Space helps to produce the more rigidly determined space of the physical world, in other words the space of Euclid. We need only think of parallelism. Parallel lines and planes are those that meet at an infinite distance. Now as the crystals in Nature and human works of architecture show, parallelism plays an essential part in all the laws and measures of the physically spatial world. To the laws of parallelism must be added those of the right angle and of angular measure generally. These, too, are determined from the infinite periphery inward. The way in which this happens would take too long to explain in the present context, but the fact is evident, for we bear witness to it in every act of mensuration, when we take our sightings from the most distant points available—to be exact, from infinitely distant points.

Now my contention is that these ideas—the fundamentally planar and not only pointwise structure of universal space, and the mutually balanced relation of contractive and expansive, or centric and peripheral qualities, known to pure mathematicians for well over

a hundred years—should at long last be taken seriously in our understanding of real Nature. The same thing was suggested a few years ago by Professor H. W. Turnbull,⁶ editor of Newton's correspondence now in course of publication. "In the realm of growth and form," writes Professor Turnbull, referring to the pointwise and planewise aspects, "both analyses are significant. The seed, the stem and the leaf of a plant suggest two ways of studying the three-dimensional shape, the one pointwise microscopically and the other planewise." He also draws attention to the fact that the relative completeness of a pointwise analysis, reached at a certain scientific stage, neither excludes nor is vitiated by the polar opposite aspect which may still be awaiting discovery. "This mathematical duality is not a case of competing theories, where one is right and the other is wrong. . . . The characteristic description of their relationship is that of in and through but not of for or against." It is only a deeper and fuller insight which we may expect along these lines. Surely it is not unreasonable to suppose that Nature is built on the same principles which light up in the mind of man when he exercises one of the noblest of human faculties—that of clear geometric thinking and imagination.

* * *

Let us now turn from the world of pure form to that of active forces. Here once again, since Newton, Faraday and Clerk Maxwell, clear geometrical and mathematical thinking has enabled us to master the play of physical forces, such as the force of gravitation, the momentum of heavy bodies, the electric and magnetic forces. Primarily, we know of these not by dint of thought alone, but by experiment and observation. Unlike that of velocities or of accelerations (though some of the text-books fail to make this clear), the "parallelogram of forces" cannot be proved by any reasoning or definition; it is a fact of experience, confirmed as accurately as we like by many kinds of experiment. But though we only know of them empirically to begin with, Nature reveals that in their interplay and balance the physical forces obey mathematical laws. When we discover these laws and bring our minds into harmony with them, we learn to understand and master the play of forces. Hence all the power of our applied science and technology. Now it is characteristic of nearly all the forces known to physics that they are point-centred. These are the kind of forces which emanate from heavy matter; it is only natural that we have found them first, since physical science took its start from mechanics—from the investigation of the cruder properties of matter. But this was also due to the prevailing forms of thought. Man naturally notices what he is wont to think, and things escape his notice even if he sees them, if the idea that is in them is foreign to his mind. Through his Euclidean schooling, the spatial thinking of the scientist has hitherto

been one-sidedly centric and pointwise. He has the mental equipment for understanding centric forces; no wonder if he finds them.

For sake of brevity may I now put as a categorical statement what I certainly do not intend thus dogmatically, for like any other scientific proposition it is only stated to be put to the test. *The forces of Nature, manifesting in the world of space and time, are not only centric; there are peripheral forces also.* Even as the pure form of space is in the light of modern geometry balanced between point and plane, so are the forces that prevail in Nature; they are not only pointwise or centric but peripheral or planar. Moreover, as in the domain of centric forces the central point of the material planet on which we live, in other words the centre of gravity of the earth, is for us a centre of primary importance, so in the realm of the peripheral or planar forces, what we experience as the infinitely distant plane—in simple language the vast periphery of the blue sky—is a most important source of the peripheral forces.

This, I shall now endeavour to explain, is an ideal key to what you are really doing when you enhance the power of your medicaments by the rhythmic process of expansion or dilution. But let me first point out that the idea of peripheral forces is not altogether new. Under the name of "ethereal forces" or by other kindred forms of description they have been known since time immemorial. In the East, their reality has never ceased to be recognized. They only need to be re-discovered in terms of modern science. In the seventeenth century a more or less instinctive knowledge of them still lingered on traditionally, but had grown so confused that the new science, based on experiment and reason, could make nothing of it. Tradition undoubtedly helped give rise to Huyghens' idea of a "luminiferous ether," but this too was interpreted in terms of physical and centric forces and was to that extent a misunderstanding, which has in any case been abandoned by twentieth-century physics. The new geometry on the other hand, grown to maturity during the nineteenth century, gives us the possibility of understanding the ethereal qua peripheral forces in a strictly scientific sense. They are forces related above all to the realm of life, just as the centric forces—gravitational, electro-magnetic and so on—manifest most strongly in the sphere of inorganic matter. By sensitive and spiritually developed people, though often called by different names or not named at all, they can be known from direct experience.

The late Rudolf Steiner,⁷ to whom I am most indebted in this connection, was always at pains to integrate with scientific method what is experienced by subtler and more spiritual modes of cognition. Thus in his medical work *Fundamentals of Therapy*, written in conjunction with Dr. Ita Wegman, he described the ethereal formative

forces of the human and other living organisms as in their essence "peripheral forces." He distinguishes between the forces—manifested above all in the lifeless realm—emanating from material centres, and another kind of force, working not outward from any earthly centre but inward from the periphery, generally from the surrounding Cosmos. In spatial character he describes them succinctly as "forces which have not a centre but a periphery." They tend indeed towards the material bodies of living things—above all towards the germinating centres of fresh life—but the relative centre towards which they work is not their source, rather their infinite receiver. We must invert the accustomed functional notions of centre and periphery to get the right idea. A physical force emanating from a centre needs the surrounding space into which to ray out. The infinite periphery has to be there to receive it. So does an ethereal or peripheral force need the living centre towards which it works. It springs from the periphery, from the vast expanse, and tends towards the living centre which it endows, just as the physical force springs from a centre, from a place of concentration, and works outward.⁸ In lectures to scientists towards the end of his life, Steiner himself referred to Projective Geometry as a valuable pathway along which such ideas could be elaborated.

The ethereal or peripheral forces, in the nature of the case, have more to do with living growth and development, with the "becoming" of things. If there were only rigid and finished forms the old Euclidean geometry might suffice us. To understand the genesis and metamorphosis of living forms we need a more mobile thinking, and one that reveals the balance between the centric and peripheral, architectural and plastic aspects. Yet even the most rigid of Nature's forms, that of the crystal, is understood in a far deeper way (as any crystallographer with an elementary knowledge of Projective Geometry may confirm) when we perceive how the crystal lattice derives from an archetypal pattern in the infinitely distant plane—the infinite periphery of universal space.⁹ In the realm of living form, once the new geometrical idea has been awakened in the mind, morphology and embryology confirm what is known to us by simple everyday experience from the world of plants—how life on earth is sustained by forces flowing inward from the surrounding heavens. Biology has hitherto been trying to understand these things with concepts derived from the inorganic world, where centric forces predominate. As has been said by Bertalanffy among others, it has in some ways been a hindrance to biological thinking to have to borrow its basic concepts from the non-biological sciences of physics and physical chemistry. Ideas no less scientifically exact should be derivable directly from the study of living phenomena, even as the ideas of mechanics and electro-magnetics have been derived from the study of non-living things. Far from implying a gulf between the living and the non-living, it would then be found

that the ideas derived from the world of life reveal the non-living too in a deeper aspect. A corpse is understandable as the remnant of a once living body. To try to comprehend the living with the science of the dead is in an almost literal sense to put the cart before the horse.

To open-minded contemplation, Nature reveals on every hand the forms and the signature of active forces, not only centric but peripheral and planar. Once this is recognized, the enhancement of medicinal virtues by the potentizing process becomes intelligible. There is a passage in the *Organon*¹⁰ where Hahnemann distinguishes between the raw state of matter and what becomes of it "by ever higher dynamization when at long last it is entirely sublimed [or subtilized] into its spirit-like medicinal virtue. . . . It is most probable that in the dynamizing process the matter is in the end entirely resolved into its individual spirit-like essence, and that in its crude condition it should in any case be regarded as consisting of this spirit-like essence in a latent, undeveloped state." (Hahnemann uses the word *Wesen*, which I have here translated "essence." One is reminded that in former times the most volatile and fragrant effusions of a living plant were taken to be a physical manifestation of the ethereal forces and virtues; hence the traditional names which still survive. In English we call them "essential oils," and the equivalent in German is *aetherische Oele*, i.e. "ethereal oils." We come near to Hahnemann's meaning when we realize that the ethereal, peripheral forces of life, working in towards the earth from the surrounding heavens, are the means of bringing into the physical world the purely spiritual essences to which the specific virtues of living things are due. I think this too is the significance of Hahnemann's often repeated phrase, "well-nigh spiritual.")

Let us pursue the thought a little further. If crude matter alone were concerned—if stress were laid on the domain of centric forces, expressed in material quantity and weight—it would be natural to expect that an effect, comparatively feeble in a dilute solution, would be enhanced with increasing concentration. We reduce the volume; in other words, draw in towards the centre. But if the substance is the bearer of ethereal virtues of which the origin is peripheral, experience will show—and it is equally natural to expect, once we get used to the idea—that the effect will be enhanced, not by concentration but by expansion. Admittedly this notion is too simple; for it is the *rhythmic* sequence of dilutions and succussions or triturations which renders the potency effective. This too, however, is understandable in terms of centric and peripheral or physical and ethereal spaces, and our attention is thus drawn to a principle of great importance which we could scarcely approach at all, but for these ideas.

May I explain by a familiar comparison from physics. Again

and again we see rhythmic phenomena taking place along and about a line stretched between two end-points—a violin string, for example, a monochord, even an organ pipe. Or again, between the poles of a Wimshurst machine—it is well known that the spark is not a simple but a rhythmically alternating discharge. Tension between two poles begets a play of forces giving rise to rhythm. But in these purely physical examples either pole is of point-like, centric nature. I believe science will presently discover a deeper and more primary source of rhythmic activity—no longer between two point-centres or the two ends of a line, but between centre and periphery, or point and plane, in concentric spheres, of which there may be many forms. The tension is no longer between two foci of like kind, competing with one another as in a tug-of-war, but between entities polar-opposite in nature, physical and ethereal respectively—related to the polarity of point and plane, of which the mental picture is evoked in its simplest form by the geometrical function of a sphere, illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. I would suggest that a polarity of this kind is latent in every chemical substance, and that there is no physical material that has not ultimately arisen from the interplay of centric and peripheral forces—forces of earthly and cosmic origin. The finished substance lying there in its crude and quiescent state is the ultimate precipitation of an activity between centre and periphery—qualitatively speaking, between earth and heaven. I think the number-relations of valency and chemical constitution, also the wonderful rhythms of the spectral lines, will prove to be an expression of this fact. The words of the poet, "Out of the everywhere into here," apply not only to the human child but to all living things, and in its ultimate origin to the very substance of the earth.

Even the simplest facts of science point in this direction, though one will only see this if one's idea of space derives from the new geometry. Think of a body radiating light and heat, say a candle-flame, a glowing ember. Purely as a phenomenon—a fact of everyday experience confirmed by exact experiment—the radiation expresses itself in concentric spheres about the source. In the one-sided thought-forms of the old geometry and physics, the whole activity is attributed to the visible, point-centred source of the radiation, with the surrounding space a mere emptiness into which it spends itself as it falls off with increasing distance. But in the light of modern geometry the figure of concentric spheres only has meaning as a *mutual* relation between centre and infinite periphery. The centre is the answering point or "pole" of the infinitely distant plane; spheres are concentric if this point is the same for them all. It is only by virtue of their common relation to the cosmic periphery that the spheres *are* concentric. Thus in the simple phenomenon of radiation Nature is bearing witness to the fact that in some way the periphery is an active partner.

Incidentally, something like this appears to have been known in earlier times; perhaps it is only waiting to be re-established in a more scientific form. I spoke of Newton's relation to the Cambridge Platonists. Another of Newton's contemporaries who also moved in these circles was Thomas Vaughan, brother of the better-known poet Henry Vaughan. Like Newton himself, Vaughan was an alchemist and wrote books not very easy for us today to understand. In his *Lumen de Lumine*¹¹ he tells of a "spiritual fire-earth," by which he evidently means something of the quality of a circumference, a cosmic periphery enveloping the earth. He who attains to the great secret, says Vaughan, will come to know "how the fire-spirit hath its root in the spiritual fire-earth and receives from it a secret influx." Nay, more, he will know "why all influx of fire descends—against the nature of fire—coming downwards from heaven . . . and why the same fire, having found a body, ascends again towards heaven and grows upwards." Such paradoxical ideas as are suggested to us by the clear and cogent thought-forms of the new geometry seem here to be expressed as an immediate outcome of mystical communion with Nature.

Admittedly the thought I have put to you concerning radiation is purely geometrical to begin with: Nature alone can show whether and how it is relevant to the real play of forces. Yet in the light of your own experiences, ladies and gentlemen, this is precisely the suggestion which I now venture to put forward. In homœopathic remedies, in so far as rhythmic potentization plays an essential part in their preparation, you are already dealing with a realm to which this kind of thought applies. The substance you are potentizing was originally formed from the cosmic periphery inward, by an individually rhythmic, not to say musical relation between the cosmic periphery and the earthly centre. True, it has come to rest in the earthly place where it abides—in root or leaf of plant, in metal or crystal mineral, or even in the bottle on the apothecary's shelves. But this is only its last resting-place. In the precise earthly locality where it was first precipitated, it came into being through a specific and individual relation between the earth-planet and the vast spheres of the Cosmos. In this relation lies the secret of its chemical individuality qua substance, and of its vital nature if still embedded in the living realm. The formative rhythm is still latent in it, and when the careful hand of the pharmacist, guided by experience and inspired by the will to help, subjects it to the rhythmic process of expansion, mingling it by trituration or succussion with the spatial medium which is to receive it, an opportunity is given for the formative rhythm of its origin to be re-born and for its latent connection with the healing essences of the Cosmos to be restored. One is reminded of the saying of Novalis: "Every disease is a musical problem and every cure a musical resolution." Moreover, is not the picture I have been giving in harmony with Hahnemann's

own words quoted above, when he speaks of the spirit-like individuality of the substance which in the crude material lies latent and concealed?

If I am right in the main thesis I have put before you, a new chapter will be opened out, tending to bring our science nearer to life—to human life above all. Work in the new direction is progressing, both in its biological aspects and in its bearing on the facts of chemistry and physics.¹² The concept of ethereal space as the natural field of action of living formative forces, which I have had to put forward all too briefly in this lecture, can be worked out with all mathematical precision. And as so often happens when an idea is really fertile, in doing this one finds that one is not alone; that what is seemingly new has been divined and adumbrated and was implicit in much of the scientific work that has gone before. The seemingly unsurmountable division between an orthodox scientific outlook and realms of human skill and experience which find no place in the accepted system of the day, is overcome without injustice to either party when a fresh aspect springs into focus. This I believe is about to happen, and in it your profession too, ladies and gentlemen, will find new life and vindication.

REFERENCES

- ¹ L. Kolisko, *Physiologischer und physikalischer Nachweis der Wirksamkeit kleinster Entitäten*. Monographs, Stuttgart and Dornach, 1923–32. Comprehensive edition, Stuttgart, 1959. Also in *Agriculture of Tomorrow* 1945.
- ² W. E. Boyd, "Biochemical and Biological Evidence of the Activity of High Potencies." *Brit. Hom. Journ.*, 44, 1954.
- ³ Quoted from R. Tischner, *Geschichte der Homöopathie*, 1939, p. 278. See also Th. Schwenk, *Grundlagen der Potenzforschung*, Arlesheim, 1954; A. Leroi, *Rhythmische Prozesse*, Stuttgart, 1950.
- ⁴ R. Tischner, loc. cit. ref. 3, p. 279.
- ⁵ Goethe's *Botanical Writings*, tr. by Bertha Mueller, Honolulu, 1952. R. Steiner, *Goethe the Scientist*, New York, 1950. A. Arber, *The Natural Philosophy of Plant Form*, Cambridge, 1950.
- ⁶ H. W. Turnbull, "Mathematics in the Larger Context." *Research*, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1950.
- ⁷ R. Steiner and I. Wegman, *Fundamentals of Therapy*, London, 1925, ch. III. See also the lecture by R. Steiner, April 9, 1922, in *The Golden Blade*, 1961.
- ⁸ G. Adams, "Physical and Ethereal Spaces." *Anthroposophy Quarterly*, Vol. 8, 1933; "Space and Counter-Space," in *The Faithful Thinker*, ed. by A. C. Harwood, 1961. L. Locher-Ernst, *Raum und Gegenraum*, Dornach, 1957.
- ⁹ See the Author's *Space and the Light of the Creation*, London, 1933; *Strahlende Weltgestaltung*, Dornach, 1934.
- ¹⁰ Quoted from R. Tischner, loc. cit., ref. 3.
- ¹¹ See A. E. Waite, *The Secret Tradition in Alchemy*, London, 1926, p. 275.
- ¹² G. Adams and O. Whicher, *The Living Plant and the Science of Physical and Ethereal Spaces*, 1949; *The Plant between Sun and Earth*, 1952 (Goethean Science Foundation, Clent, Worcs.); *Die Pflanze in Raum und Gegenraum*, Stuttgart, 1960. G. Adams, "Universalkräfte in der Mechanik," in *Mathematisch-Physikalische Korrespondenz*, ed. by Dr. G. Unger, Dornach, Switzerland, 1956–59.

Dynamics of Nutrition

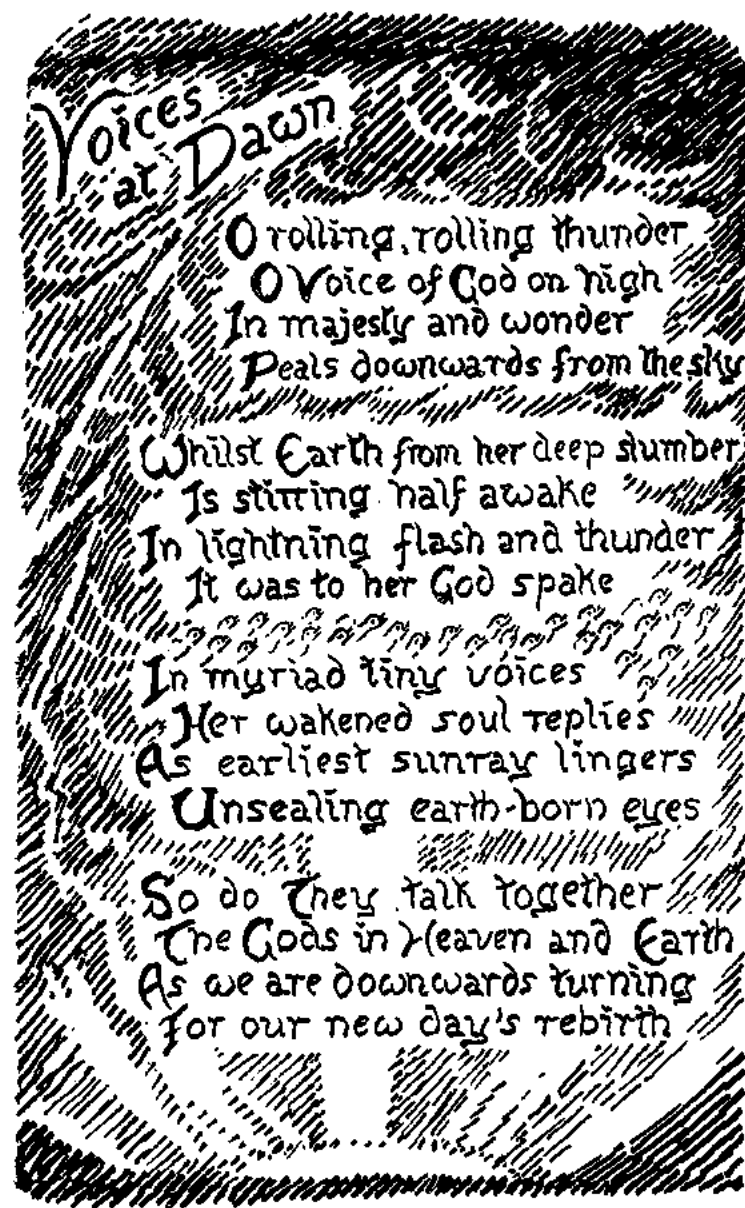
Grange Kirkcaldy

THIS article will try to show, in accordance with the indications given by Rudolf Steiner, how in nutrition man is an unconscious alchemist, who during digestion first dematerialises his food-stuffs, releasing the dynamics, or forces inherent in them. These forces, by interacting with the forces of his own organism, enable him to receive corresponding dynamic and finely divided substances from the cosmos; and all this he finally rematerialises into the substances necessary for the upkeep of his bodily organism. Hence the need for food-stuffs which are well endowed with dynamics or forces, the imponderable elements which organise the material elements of nature into the organic substances we know as food-crops and foods.

Since the popular word "natural" is used by many in connection with Food Reform, some explanation is due as to the writer's views on the connotation of that word. A state of nature is considered to exist as Nature herself presents it to man before he modifies or transforms it for some purpose of his own. In this sense, farming, gardening, food processing, including cooking, are a transformation and modification of Nature. Some balance must then be found between what Nature finds necessary for herself and what man finds necessary for himself; a disturbed natural balance and ecology must be re-established on some other level satisfactory both to Nature and to man. Man can even improve on Nature, as for example in cooking, where ripening can be extended. On the other hand, a modification and transformation of Nature and of nature-products can be carried beyond a point satisfactory to Nature and hence, in time, unsatisfactory or unsatisfying to man. Lack of flavour in food-stuffs and lack of "a sense of well-being" of the consumer can be examples of this. Here let a plea be put forward in favour of man's commonsense and of recognising seven other senses besides the usual five, including the sense of life and of "well-being." Man's commonsense as an expression of these twelve senses should be given favourable consideration *vis-à-vis* pure statistics and quantitative analyses regarding his relationship as a living, sentient and self-conscious being to other forms of life.

In the bio-dynamic methods of soil, plant and animal husbandry, the "natural" or purely organic is enhanced to a stage where human beings can participate in the evolutionary processes of earth, plants, animals, and of man himself. Those interested to go further into these concepts are invited to study Spiritual Science and its expression in the bio-dynamic methods of husbandry.¹

¹ Information from the Secretariat of the Bio-Dynamic Agricultural Association, Broome Farm, Clent, Stourbridge, Worcestershire.



Experience in a garden. Dornach, 1924,
recorded in line and verse by Gladys Mayer.

During and since the second World War, Western peoples have been strongly briefed as to the state of plain hunger and malnutrition which obtains on a world-wide scale. There has been stressed the disparity between world food crops and the vast number of human beings who simply do not have enough to eat or are under-nourished for various reasons. Among these reasons are lack of food crops and of knowledge how to produce them, lack of knowledge of food values, and the fact that crops which are surplus to requirements in one part of the world have not been made available to other parts lacking them.

The supporters of chemical fertilisers argue that these are necessary not only to maintain the existing level of production but also to increase it in relation to present and future world needs.

On the other hand, it is commonly held from the organic and bio-dynamic side that a smaller quantity of products grown by these methods is needed to satisfy hunger and to maintain health, compared with products grown with the aid of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and weed killers. This applies both to human beings and to animals; the reasons for it will appear later.

The evidence and personal experience in favour of organically and bio-dynamically grown food, whole food and food as little commercially processed as possible, for man and for animals, is extensively recorded in organic and bio-dynamic publications.

By adding samples of food crops and food-stuffs to certain mineral salt solutions and allowing these to crystallise out, patterns are obtained which give indications as to the values of different methods of cultivation and treatment. Chromatographic tests are also used; in both cases controls are employed. For the bio-dynamic school, these tests give evidence of the extent to which different methods of growing and treating food impair or conserve the activity of the living, organising forces which went originally to synthesise inorganic material into a living organism.¹

Two main factors enter into the production of food-crops and therefore of food-stuffs. There are inorganic substances such as water and carbon dioxide; mineral salts, which include the three macro-nutrients, nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus, and the micro-nutrients or trace elements; and finally the dynamic factors—light, warmth, gravity, photosynthesis—which organise the inorganic substances into organic entities. So we have the substance, the organiser, and the pattern according to which it organises. What

¹ The term "organic chemistry" generally refers to the chemistry of carbon compounds. Here the words "organic" and "inorganic" are used in the popular sense to distinguish the living and the biological from the lifeless and the mineral.

causes such processes as photosynthesis, osmosis, root-pressure, transpiration, geo-tropism and helio-tropism, the affinity of plants for certain minerals in the soil? What causes an oat-plant and nothing else to grow from an oat-seed? If it is said, "the genes and chromosomes," are they causative, or are they mediators between cause and effect?

According to Spiritual Science, the life-processes in all living things are activated by the etheric body, or body of formative forces. A mineral substance is composed of a physical body only; a plant has a physical body and an etheric body; an animal has both these, plus an astral body which endows it with a capacity for emotional response; while man has in addition an ego which endows him with (*inter alia*) self-consciousness.

The lifeless mineral realm can be perceived and experienced through our ordinary senses, extended by instruments such as the microscope; so can the outer aspects of living things. But the activating life-principle, the etheric body, is perceptible only through higher organs which are dormant in most people. And a further development is necessary for perceiving the astral body and the effect of the ego.

The general characteristics of the plant are that it consists of physical substance and form, colour, flavour, aroma, with metabolism, growth and reproduction as expressions of life.

*

What happens, then, from the spiritual-scientific aspect, when we consume food substance?

First of all, Dr. Steiner emphasises that whatever man takes into his organism must not remain in its own natural state, or subject to its own natural laws. Any nutriment that is not transmuted acts as a foreign element in the human organism and may cause illness. "All evolution, all world processes, are different within man from what they are outside him. . . . It is simply ridiculous for people to imagine that the chemical experiments carried out in laboratories today occur in the same way within man when he absorbs nourishment."¹

In the *Agriculture Course* (Koberwitz, June, 1924), Dr. Steiner says (Lecture 4):

The idea used to be that the essential thing in human nutrition is what a man daily consumes. Undoubtedly, our daily food is important. But the greater part of what we daily eat is not there to be received as *substance* into the body—to be deposited in the body substantially. By far the greater part is there to give the body the

¹ *Man as Symphony of the Creative Word* (Dornach, Oct.-Nov., 1923), Lecture 10.

forces it contains, and so to call forth in the body inner mobility, activity. . . . Therefore the important question in the metabolic process is not the proportion of weights, but: Are the foodstuffs providing us with the proper living quality of forces? . . . What the body needs, on the other hand, so as to deposit substances in itself—to provide itself with substances (which are expelled again every seven or eight years as the substance of the body is renewed)—this, for the most part, is received through the sense-organs, the skin and the breathing. Whatever the body has to receive and deposit in itself as actual *substance*—this it is constantly receiving in exceedingly minute doses, in a highly diluted state. It is only *in* the body that it becomes condensed. The body receives it from the air and thereupon hardens and condenses it, till in the nails and hair, for instance, it has to be cut off. . . . On the other hand, what we receive through the stomach is important by virtue of its inherent life and mobility—as of a fuel. It is important inasmuch as it introduces the necessary forces for the *will* which is at work in the body.

This means that man must develop an inner activity which will meet and master the forces that are actively inherent in the food he eats. And by so doing he becomes correspondingly more receptive, through his skin, his breathing, his sense-organs and even his eyes, to the highly divided substances which (as mentioned above) he needs to draw in from the atmosphere. Dr. Steiner refers in particular to a subtle form of gold existing in the light, and to lead existing in the atmosphere. Through the gold, the human heart is built up; the lead enables man to form concepts about his sense-perceptions. The lead is taken up by a process "many times more delicate than the process of breathing,"² and in "super-homoeopathic dilution."³ "Innumerable substances in a very subtle and refined condition are present in the air we breathe" and are taken up into the human organism."³

The late Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer has recorded that shortly before the *Agriculture Course* was given, he had a conversation with Dr. Steiner about nutrition:

He had been speaking of the need for a deepening of esoteric life, and in this connection mentioned certain faults typically found in spiritual movements. I then asked, "How can it happen that the spiritual impulse, and especially the inner schooling, for which you are so constantly providing stimulus and guidance, bear so little fruit? Why do the people concerned give so little evidence of spiritual experience, in spite of all their efforts? Why, worst of all, is the will for action, for the carrying out of these spiritual impulses, so weak?"

² *World History in the Light of Anthroposophy* (Dornach, December 1923), Lecture 7.

³ *Mystery Centres* (Dornach, Nov.-Dec. 1923), Lecture 4.

³ *Man's Life on Earth and in the Spiritual World*. (London and Oxford, 1922), Lecture 3.

I was particularly anxious to get an answer to the question as to how one could build a bridge to active participation and the carrying out of spiritual intentions without being pulled off the right path by personal ambition, illusions and petty jealousies; for these were the negative qualities Rudolf Steiner had named as the main inner hindrances. Then came the surprising and thought-provoking answer: "This is a problem of nutrition. Nutrition as it is today does not supply the strength necessary for manifesting the spirit in physical life. A bridge can no longer be built from thinking to will and action. Food plants no longer contain the forces people need for this."¹

Thus it can be realised that the more inert a food-stuff may be, the less effort is required to transmute it. Conversely, the greater the "life" that obtains in a food-stuff, the greater is the activity required on the part of man to transmute it, so that his being is raised up to the requisite level of active receptivity. "Now the well-being of an organism does not consist in its doing as little as possible, but in its really bringing all its forces into activity."²

These general aspects of nutrition can now be followed by more specific ones. Here it must first be said that in dealing with nutrition Dr. Steiner never made propaganda or laid down hard and fast rules. His method always was to give knowledge of what happens under certain circumstances and of the results which can be obtained from certain practices of thinking, feeling and willing. Knowledge is given; but hearers and readers are left free as to how they apply it.

Typical and topical subjects in nutrition are meat-eating and vegetarianism, raw and cooked food, alcohol, sugar, honey. In general Dr. Steiner points out, meat-eating tends to hinder spiritual development and can be a definite earth-binding factor; whereas vegetarianism tends to assist spiritual development and many persons pursuing Spiritual Science will tend naturally to adopt it. This is something to which a number of Anthroposophists could testify. Meat-eating will not debar a person from spiritual-scientific endeavours and results, but he will find he has to do more to overcome the "heaviness" engendered by eating animal flesh. On the other hand, the vegetarian should not suppose that his régime can of itself promote spiritual development without his own inner endeavours.

In terms of what has been recorded above from Dr. Steiner, vegetarian food requires more effort to transmute it than does flesh

¹ From Dr. Pfeiffer's contribution to the volume, *Wir Erlebten Rudolf Steiner*, translated as "Rudolf Steiner: Recollections by Some of his Pupils" in *The Golden Blade*, 1958.

² *The Effect of Occult Development upon the Self and Sheaths of Man* (The Hague, March, 1913).

food. The plant carries the otherwise inorganic to a certain point of development from which man can take it further. The animal in this sense performs part of the work which might otherwise have been done by man. The smaller effort expended in transmuting flesh foods can lead to the metabolic deposits found in gout and rheumatism because of unused forces, which can also manifest as diabetes. A vegetarian diet, including some raw food, demands greater effort from the human organism and can be a protection against these ailments. Nutrition, however, is a very individual matter, and it can well be that certain people are not able to cope with a complete vegetarian diet, whereas others feel the need of it and can benefit from it.

The word "vegetarian" covers today various practices. It may cover those of people who include milk and milk products, while those called Vegans seek to obtain all they need from plant food alone. Dr. Lindlahr, in his *Philosophy of Natural Therapeutics*, says that plant food without milk or dairy products can lead to excessive states of psychic imbalance. Hence, while advocating vegetarianism, he strongly recommends the inclusion of milk and milk products. Dr. Steiner points out that milk is essentially a food related to the planet Earth, and its inclusion in a vegetarian régime can assist a person to maintain a balance between Cosmos and Earth, whereas a strictly vegetarian diet could lead to imbalance.

Animal food influences the instinctive life of the will, which flows into emotions and passions. Thus warlike people are more inclined to animal food than are peaceful ones. The vegetarian student of Spiritual Science has other opportunities to develop strength of soul, initiative and courage.

Raw or cooked food seems to be a subject rather well taken care of by individual common sense, experience and palatability. Certainly raw food requires more effort on the part of man to transmute it and make it his own, and therefore it can be remedial and beneficial.

On the other hand, those who have experienced uncooked bread and pudding dough will have realised the difficulty of digesting and transmuting it, and its unpalatability. Kale in Scotland used to be called "the Green Doctor." It can be eaten raw, but few would relish it; yet cooked and flavoured with herbs, a little cream and brown sugar, or even as Kale Brose, it can be palatable and valuable. A proportion of uncooked food, in the form of sun-ripened fruit and the usual chopped and grated salad foods, is undoubtedly valuable in the sense of providing that nutritional inner exercise of which Spiritual Science speaks.

It is significant that certain kinds of alcohol are termed "spirits," and that alcohol is consumed on many occasions which demand "good spirits"—courage, initiative, self-confidence, and other qualities which should spring from the ego or spirit of the man

himself. In lectures given at The Hague in 1913 and mentioned above, Dr. Steiner shows that alcohol creates in a man a sort of spurious ego which opposes his own. Here (and in some other forms of consumption) the choice is between stimulants which act as a temporary substitute for true inner activity, and nourishment which helps a person to develop this activity for himself.

Coming now to sugar, we find that Professor John Yudkin, head of the Department of Nutrition at Queen Elizabeth College, University of London, has lately pointed to a statistical connection between heavy sugar-eating and enhanced liability to coronary thrombosis.¹ He does not distinguish between different forms of sugar—e.g. between the refined white product and the more nearly natural brown Barbadoes, or between cane sugar and beet sugar. It would be instructive to discover whether evidence differentiated according to the type of sugar eaten would affect Professor Yudkin's thesis.

Dr. Steiner indicates that persons who are seriously pursuing anthroposophical methods of inner development have a need for sugar as a strengthener of ego-consciousness; and also that sugar aids the complex relationships of spiritual growth to the physical body.

It is noteworthy that small amounts of sugar and honey in diluted form are constituents of Scleron, the remedy for sclerotic processes in old people described by Dr. Steiner and Dr. Ita Wegman in their book, *Fundamentals of Therapy*². "Honey enables the ego-organisation to exercise the necessary dominion over the astral body." (p. 158).

In the first of his *Nine Lectures on Bees*, given in 1923 to the workmen at the Goetheanum, Dr. Steiner made that well-known observation, "By way of the beehive the whole cosmos enters into man and makes him strong and able." Too much honey can be harmful, but as a condiment it helps the soul-forces to work healthily in the body and helps a person to breathe rightly. Just as milk is the natural and necessary food for children, so is honey a health-giving food for people in old age. As children grow older, however, a little honey will benefit them also, especially during the adolescent years from 13 to 17.

*

All these questions concerning food and health lead back to agriculture and market-gardening, for health-giving food needs to be grown in healthy soil by methods that will not rob it of the vital forces which should enter into it both from the earth and from the cosmic atmosphere. Hence Dr. Steiner's words on nutrition must

¹ *The Lancet*, 4/7/64.

² Anthroposophical Publishing Company, 1925.

always be read in the light of his advice on farming and composting. This wide subject is the province in this country of the Bio-dynamic Agricultural Association, and of similar bodies abroad. It can be studied fundamentally in Dr. Steiner's *Agriculture Course*, and in various publications by practitioners and students of the bio-dynamic methods.

Here we come back also to the controversy, mentioned earlier, between supporters of chemical fertilisers and the organic school. During recent years the organic school, represented in this country by the Soil Association, has made considerable headway and the chemical school has modified some of its earlier views, but there is still a fairly sharp difference in outlook and value-judgments between the two schools, and a difference again between the organic outlook and the bio-dynamic ideas. A quotation from Dr. Pfeiffer's Preface to the *Agriculture Course* will bring this out:

Devotees of the purely materialistic school of thought, who once felt impelled to reject the progressive thinking advanced by Rudolf Steiner, have been forced by facts brought to light during research into soil-biology to go at least one step further. Facts recognised as early as 1924-34 in bio-dynamic circles—the significance of soil-life, the earth as a living organism, the role played by humus, the necessity of maintaining humus under all circumstances and of building it up where it is lacking—all this has become common knowledge. Recognition of biological, organic laws has now been added to the earlier realisation of the undeniable dependence of plants upon soil-nutrient substances. It is not too much to say that the biological aspect of the bio-dynamic method is now generally accepted; the goal has perhaps been overshot. But, important as are the biological factors governing plant inter-relationships, soil structure, biological pest-control, and the progress made in understanding the importance of humus, the whole question of energy-sources and formative forces—in other words, cosmic aspects of plant life—remains unanswered. The *biological* way of thinking has been adopted, but with a materialistic bias, whereas an understanding of the *dynamic* side, made possible by Rudolf Steiner's pioneering indications, is still largely absent.

Something similar could be said about present-day ideas on nutrition. During the last forty years or so, together with scientific recognition of the importance of vitamins and trace-elements in foods, there has been a widening public understanding of basic nutritional facts and a modestly growing demand, fostered by various food reform movements, for fresh fruits and salads to supplement the traditional heavy fare associated with British menus. All this is to the good, but against it must be set the growing vogue of packaged and "fresh-frozen" foods sold in supermarkets; the application of "factory farming" methods to the production of eggs, poultry, veal, pork and rabbits; the use of antibiotics and other drugs to stimulate growth in livestock; and the often reckless use

of pesticides on food crops. It is generally impossible to prove by the methods of orthodox science that foods produced in these ways are unwholesome, but from a bio-dynamic point of view it seems certain that they provide inadequate nourishment for human beings, if nothing worse.

So on one side we have an expanding but still relatively small public interested in food reform, and on the other a mass public concerned mainly with cheapness and convenience. In this situation one cannot expect a wide hearing for Rudolf Steiner's teachings on nutrition; even to most food reformers they are bound to seem strange, especially if they are presented to people unfamiliar with the general background of Anthroposophy. In fact, they must always be related to this background, for Rudolf Steiner did not deal with nutrition as a specialised subject, but as part of that far-reaching knowledge of man and human evolution and of man's place in the cosmos which both lay at the heart and formed the framework of all his teaching.

The Grail Stories and their Interpreters

John M. Wood

A BOOK which must arouse interest in students of Anthroposophy, and especially in those who feel drawn towards the study of the Grail legends, is the work of R. S. Loomis: *The Grail: From Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol*.* In a very readable survey of all the known versions of the Grail legend, Professor Loomis shows how it is only by studying the field of Arthurian literature as a whole that we can arrive at an understanding of the legend's many inconsistencies.

With convincing argument Professor Loomis shows how the main themes in nearly all versions of the legend can be traced back to some ancient Irish or Welsh tale. We are given an explanation of why it is that, although nearly all the earliest manuscripts are of French origin, it is to the geographical surroundings of Britain that we must turn for the setting of the tales. The reason for this, Professor Loomis maintains, is that the Breton *conteurs* of the 12th and 13th centuries, who spread these stories, were descended from Welshmen who had fled from their native country at the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion about 600 years previously.

These old Welsh stories, in their turn, may often have developed out of still earlier Irish sagas. We have, for instance, the theme of "the beheading test," which occurs in some of the Grail legends. This is obviously connected with the Welsh story of "Gawain and the Green Knight," which, in its turn, has its counterpart in the Ulster tale of the adventures of the youthful Cuchulain.

The Irish "echtraí," or adventure epics, are the ultimate model for stories concerned with visits to the Grail Castle in which appear magic food-dispensing vessels, floating through the air or carried by the Grail-bearing damsel, or an enchanted or suffering host who must be released by a question.

Even the names of the Grail heroes can sometimes be traced back to their ancient Welsh origin. Thus, Bron, appearing in some of the legends, is a metamorphosis of Bran the Blessed, son of Llyr. Pelles and Pellinor have both been derived from the same source—from Beli and Beli Mawr respectively. Gawain (Gwalchmai) is a corrupt rendering of a Welsh epithet, Gwallt-advwyn, meaning "bright-hair," and Perceval (Peredur) has developed from the earlier "Pryderi."

* University of Wales Press, Cardiff; Columbia University Press, New York, 1963.

The characters have their prototypes in saga and myth, quite apart from the transformation which their names may have undergone. Thus, the prototype of the Grail-bearing damsel is shown to be Eriu, the divine personification of Ireland, and Lancelot du Lac is the Sun-god, Lug.

Not only the heroes themselves and the tests they have to undergo are traceable to Irish and Celtic sources, but the paraphernalia and equipment with which they deal are likewise not primarily Christian in origin. The Grail was originally Bran's dish of plenty and the bleeding lance was the fiery spear of the God Lug.

For all these conclusions Professor Loomis claims no personal credit. It has almost all been stated before by other scholars, he asserts, and he has only collected the evidence together in one great survey. There is, however, one piece of research which he believes to be entirely original. It is the discovery that, through various clerical or translator's errors, alterations in the story have sometimes had a profound effect upon its subsequent development.

The most notable of such "mistakes" has been the misunderstanding of the words "Cors benoiz," which were originally used to signify the sacred drinking-horn of Bran the Blessed. Owing to the fact that in Old French the word for "horn" and "body" (li cors) was identical, the horn of Bran became the "sacred body" and was used to signify either the body of Our Lord or, in its specialized sense, the eucharistic wafer.

Was it really a mistake, or could it conceivably have been a stroke of genius, or the result of divine inspiration which made the change?

Rudolf Steiner has given indications that the Grail, in one of its deeper aspects, was in fact the body of the Natheic Jesus child.

What a magnificent change it was that brought about the transformation of the pagan horn of plenty into the body of the Saviour! It is an instance of the magic of language which Dr. Steiner was so fond of demonstrating.

Were the writers of the Grail romances high initiates, or were they merely inventors of fiction, or recorders of partly forgotten traditions?

The Grail romances were written down at a time when the occult knowledge which inspired them was rapidly fading. So it is with all learning. The recording of a piece of knowledge becomes important when the insight which first revealed it is no longer present.

This does not mean that all the writers of the romances had necessarily lost their deeper understanding of the mysteries before they started to write. Some of them, such as Wolfram or Chrétien, had certainly preserved this secret wisdom and were anxious to hand it on to posterity.

It will be interesting, at this point, to make a survey of the main versions of the story. There are about a dozen of these, and a still greater number of writers who have contributed to their composition:

1. The work of Chrétien de Troyes: "Le Conte du Graal," and its continuations by four different authors, Manessier, Gerbert and two anonymous authors.

2. The "Joseph d'Armathie" and the fragmentary "Merlin" of Robert de Boron, and two different continuations by anonymous authors, one called the "Petit St. Graal" or "Didot Perceval," the other the "Grand St. Graal" or "Estoire del St. Graal."

3. The prose "Lancelot," an anonymous French romance usually associated, in what is known as the "Vulgate Cycle," with the previously mentioned "Estoire," and also with

4. "La Queste del St. Graal," attributed to Walter Map, but in reality the work of several authors.

5. "Perlesvaux," said to have been written as a sequel to Chrétien's poem by an anonymous Belgian or northern French writer.

6. The Welsh "Peredur," occurring in the "Mabinogion."

7. The "Parzival" of Wolfram von Eschenbach.

8. "Diu Crône," an elaboration of the Gawain episodes by the Austrian poet, Heinrich von dem Türlin (beginning of 13th century).

9. "Sone de Nansai," by an anonymous French poet (end of 13th century).

10. "Peronnik," a Breton poem.

11. "Sir Perceval of Galles," a rhymed English romance (early 14th century).

The incidents related about the Grail in Malory's work are acknowledged to be derived from the "Queste del St. Graal," already enumerated.

Sir Thomas Malory's presentation of the Grail episodes and the incidents occurring in the Mabinogion were, until recently, the only versions of the Grail romance readily available to English readers. Now, with a modern American paperback edition of Wolfram's poem, translated by Mustard and Passage (Vintage Book, New York, 1961) and a collection of "Medieval Romances," edited by R. S. and L. H. Loomis, containing a translation of part of Chrétien's Perceval, we are much better provided for.

Perhaps, with the renewed interest which seems to be stirring in America at the present day, other versions which have long been out of print in this country will soon appear.

Let us turn to one version of the Grail legend which is particularly puzzling and is not very well known.

It is the story written in the first quarter of the 13th century (Perlesvaux), known from a manuscript of the early 16th century and from a 15th century Welsh translation. It has been translated into English by Dr. Sebastian Evans for the Temple Classics series (1899) and reprinted in an Everyman edition (1929) under the title: "The High History of the Holy Grail." It has since been translated by W. A. Nitze and others as "Le Haut Livre du Graal, Perlesvaux" (Chicago, 1932/37).

This story has been called the "Cinderella of Arthurian literature," because for a long time it was disregarded by scholars and thought to be a late and inferior work.

The book is divided into 35 sections, called Branches, each of which is subdivided into chapters, or Titles.

The story deals mainly with the adventures of four heroes: the peerless Arthur who has been accused of falling away from his former glory; Gawain, ever loyal and chivalrous; Lancelot du Lac, whose only blemish is his illicit attachment to Arthur's Queen, Guenievre; and the virgin knight Perceval, alternately called "the Good Knight" or "the Best Knight of the World."

When the story opens, Perceval has already visited the Grail Castle once, but, since he failed to ask the awaited question as to whence the Grail comes and whom it serves, both he and his uncle, King Fisher, have become grievously ill and the Kingdom has fallen into languishment.

When Gawain sets out on the Quest and arrives at the Grail Castle, he is repeatedly admonished to remember to ask the question which Perceval omitted, but he is so engrossed in his vision of the Grail and with the sight of the three blood-drops, that he is unable to do so. When, later, Lancelot also arrives at the Grail Castle with the same intention as Gawain, he is not even vouchsafed a sight of the holy vessel, because of his one carnal blemish, and so the King is never healed of his sickness.

Before Perceval himself appears on the scene again to redress the evils, which are, in part, the outcome of his own neglect, his Uncle is already dead and the Grail can be won only by bloody conquest. At the end of the story, when the Quest has been achieved, the Kingdom restored and the wrongs set right, Perceval is called away in a ship to a distant Kingdom, whither the Grail has preceded him, and he is hidden henceforth from human ken.

Such, in barest outline, is the course of the story. From beginning to end it is full of all kinds of religious symbolism and the use of names intended to convey a deeper meaning. We are introduced to divers relics, as, for instance, the sword which beheaded John the Baptist, the winding-sheet of Our Lord and the

pincers which drew the nails from the Saviour's wounds when His body was taken down from the cross.

As with so many of the authors of the Grail romances, the writer of "Perlesvaux," or the "High History," as I shall henceforth call it, is very anxious to make due acknowledgements to his alleged "source."

Like Chrétien, who attributes his knowledge to a book lent to him by Philip of Flanders, or Robert de Boron, who tells us he is indebted for his wisdom to a "grant livre," so the author of the "High History" quotes as his source the Latin writings of "Josephus," which he found in a book in the "holy house of religion in the Island of Avalon"—i.e. Glastonbury Abbey.

The name of Josephus is woven in a mysterious way into our romance. It is mentioned no less than 35 times, to confirm or authenticate some piece of information. Above all, it is used as a confirmation of the fact that Perceval and his nearest relatives were descended from Joseph of Arimathea—and in one place it is even stated: "This High History witnesseth and recordeth that Joseph, who maketh remembrance thereof, was the first priest that sacrificed the body of Our Lord, and foresomuch ought one to believe the words that come from him." Joseph, source and inspiration of the romance, seems suddenly to have become identified with that other Joseph who took Christ down from the cross, and who, in other versions of the Grail story, is the acknowledged institutor of the Holy Mass.

Who is the person who goes under the name of "Joseph" and what is his connection with Joseph of Arimathea?

Professor Loomis is quite decided in identifying this person with Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian of the 1st century A.D., but he is equally emphatic that neither a book written by Josephus nor Glastonbury Abbey itself could have had any connection with the composition of our romance.

Let us see if we are able to find any connection, other than the name, between the two Josephs, which could have caused their confusion or identification.

Strangely enough, there is such a connection.

We know from Josephus's history that at the burning of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70, Josephus the historian and former leader of the Jewish army was already the trusted friend of the victorious Roman general, Titus, and was entrusted by him with the guardianship of the holy Jewish writings. There is even a tradition that Titus and Josephus were together in the inner sanctuary of the Temple on that occasion and were instrumental in saving the branched candlestick.

A later medieval account gives the story of an officer of the army of Titus who, at the time of the burning of the Temple,

discovered an old man sealed in a room with a lot of books and enough food to keep him alive. The officer released the old man and conveyed both him and his books to a place of safety in Seville, where the knowledge contained in the books was preserved under the name of the "Book of Jaschar" or the book of the genealogy of mankind, to which the foregoing account serves as the introduction.

Still other stories—this time two of the Grail romances—the "Joseph d'Armathe" of Robert de Boron and the "Estoire del St. Graal"—relate how Vespasian, son of Titus (the relationship of father and son has become reversed), found in a prison in the City of Jerusalem an old man who was Joseph of Arimathea, who had been kept alive by the Holy Grail ever since the Passion of Our Lord, which had happened 42 years previously.

So there it is! The writer of the High History, anxious to connect his work with the impulse associated with Joseph of Arimathea and the preservation of the Jewish occult writings, makes quite sure of the job by bringing in the names of Josephus the historian, Joseph of Arimathea himself, and Glastonbury Abbey, with which Joseph's name was already associated. It is quite a neat piece of work which combines all these different features in a semi-plausible fashion, but if by the "Knights of King Arthur" we are to understand the heroes of popular imagination belonging to the 5th century A.D., then it is a flaw in the writer's perspicuity if he imagined that their deeds could have been recorded by angelic revelation in the 1st century A.D. Perhaps, after all, the knights in the tale are not warriors in armour, as we imagine, but the transformed saints of early Christian times, living, as our story affirms, a generation or so distant from the events of Golgotha (the Perceval of the High History is the great nephew of Joseph of Arimathea).

Let us take the views of two scholars who have spent many years trying to unravel the mysteries of this particular version of the story.

The first is Dr. Sebastian Evans, translator of the "High History," who published his theories in a separate volume called "In Quest of the Holy Grail" (Dent, 1898).

Dr. Evans would see in all versions of the Grail legend which deal with an unasked question, a suffering king and a wasted land a reflection of contemporary historical events in the early 13th century. The events are the crusade against the Albigensian heretics launched by Pope Innocent III in 1198; the crusade and Interdict brought into force against King John of England to compel him to accept Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury (1208/14); the crusade and war against Emperor Otho IV of Germany, lasting till 1214; and the crusade and war undertaken in 1214 against Philip of France and his son Louis, whose intentions to continue to fight

against England, even after the capitulation of John over the appointment of Stephen Langton to the Archbishopric, were not to the liking of the Pope.

The wasted land of Logres is England under the Interdict; the suffering King Fisherman is the Pope; his wicked brother, "The King of Castle Mortal," is Emperor Otho; and his other brother, King Pelles, is the immensely powerful Abbot Arnold Amalric of Citeaux.

Dr. Evans gives several reasons for assuming that all the versions of the Grail legend which refer to these events were written during the twenty years between 1210 and 1230. Chrétien's version, usually held to be the earliest, he would date about 1220—about 40 years later than the date usually ascribed to it. He regards as an interpolation by a later hand those passages used to support the earlier dating, and the Philip of Flanders, therein referred to, he associates with a much later Philip, Philip the Good, who lived during the early years of the 15th century.

The earlier versions of the story, having Perceval as their hero, he would date between 1210 and 1218 and ascribe to Dominican and Cistercian authorship. The later versions, written after 1218 and having Galahad as the hero, he would ascribe to Franciscan authorship. In the hero Perceval he sees a characterisation of St. Dominic, and in Galahad a portrayal of St. Francis.

Now let us turn to the second of the two scholars who have interested themselves in interpreting "The High History of the Holy Grail," Mrs. K. E. Maltwood.

The name of Mrs. Maltwood will be familiar to a number of our Anthroposophists. It took many years of study in intimate contact with the environment of the "Isle of Avalon" (Glastonbury) to evolve the ideas which were set down in 1934 in a booklet, now long out of print, entitled "A Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars."

In this booklet Mrs. Maltwood sets out to prove that, taking into conjunction a study of our romance, a large-scale map and air views of the Glastonbury district and a modern star planisphere, we can arrive at a key to Glastonbury's enchanted wonderland of the giant zodiacal effigies.

It was while pondering one day upon the characteristics of the lions of Arthurian romance, with a map of the Glastonbury district spread out before her, that Mrs. Maltwood suddenly became aware of the fact that a stretch of the Cary river with two of its tributary streams, some stretches of roadway and part of the contours of a hill "took on the outline of a lion," standing with one paw raised, facing west and extending about 3½ miles from east to west and 2½ miles from north to south.

This fact was later given a new significance by interpreting it through the medium of "The High History of the Holy Grail."

Other effigies mentioned there were looked for and duly found. The effigy "Giant" was revealed not very far away from the lion, its head outlined by Dundon Hill, sitting cross-legged in a boat which was formed by dykes and artificial waterways. On the opposite page is a map of these two effigies as visualized by Mrs. Maltwood.

Later on in her researches, Mrs. Maltwood arrived at the conclusion that there was a whole system of such outlined effigies, lying for the most part within a circle of land 10 miles in diameter, which corresponded not only to the figures of the Romance but to a kind of zodiacal arrangement very like the one still shown in our present star-charts. The adventures recounted in the "High History" were, according to this hypothesis, nothing else than events of the starry heavens portrayed through the language of romance.

"By noting the places within this area where the knights appear to meet one another, and knowing the time it would take to ride there from the last encounter," Mrs. Maltwood writes, "it is possible gradually to make a complete itinerary and map of the Quest—disregarding, of course, fabulous distances which obviously refer to the starry sky."

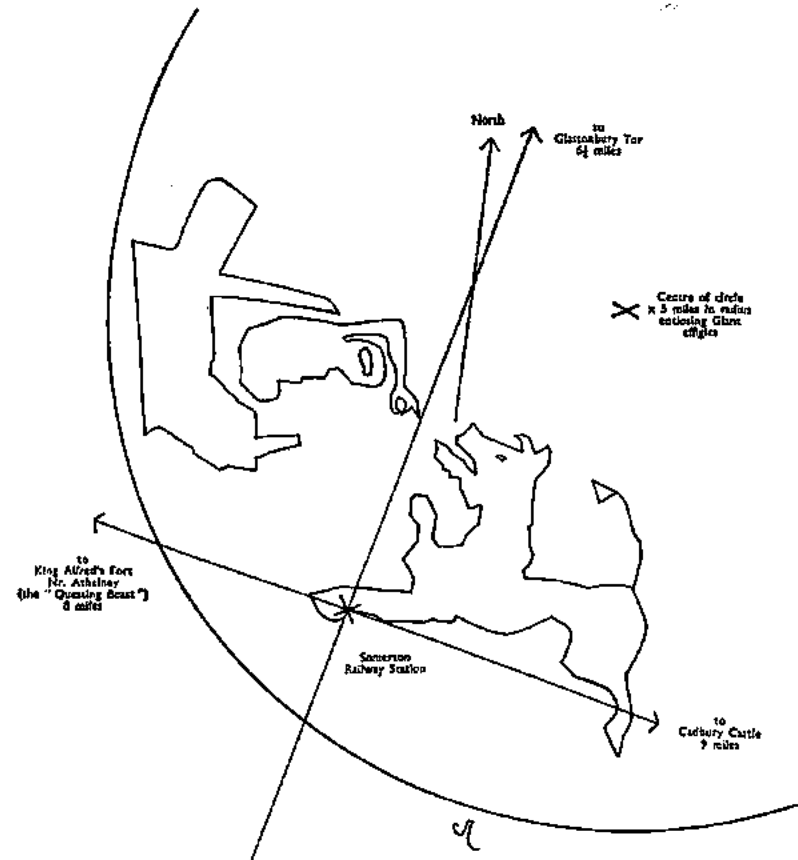
Such a map was made by Mrs. Maltwood and published by Dent in the Everyman edition of "The High History of the Holy Grail" in 1929.

This region—and its extension N.W. to the coast between the rivers Axe and Parrett and S.E. to include the land around Cadbury Castle (the ancient Camelot)—was the country which Mrs. Maltwood identifies with the "Kingdom of Logres."

Within this circle of the effigies are to be found the Burning Manor, the Castle of Beards, the Castle of the Ball, the Castle of Inquest, the Castles of King Hermit and King Fisherman, and many other places mentioned in the Romance.

Not only are the zodiacal constellations represented geographically by their effigies, but the heroes who move on this stage are themselves representations of certain zodiacal forces as well as various aspects of the sun. King Arthur with Sir Perceval, Sir Lancelot and Gawain "depict the sun in its four quarters, each with its own 'house' or constellation effigy." Their doings, as related in the "High History," are likened to the scenes of an ancient initiation play such as was presented by certain Chinese travelling companies under the title of "the spectacle of the Sun and Moon."

This explanation of the Romance is certainly unique. The richness of material which is drawn upon to support these claims makes tantalizing reading. Local traditions, interpretations of place-names, Theosophical and other writings—anything and everything seem to be made use of for the purpose. But the



conclusions will not stand the test of a more critical judgement. We are asked to believe that about the year 2,700 B.C. (just prior to the dawn of Neolithic times in this country and about the time of Ur of the Chaldees and early dynastic Egypt) these ten or a dozen zodiacal nature effigies were planned and executed by the inhabitants of these islands.

It would have been impossible for the makers of these vast designs ever to have viewed the work of their own hands in its entirety with physical eyes. As Mrs. Maltwood herself says: "Only initiates could see the Grail"—and by the Grail she means just this complex of designs we have spoken about. Again, she tells us: "Half the outlines of seven Giant figures are drawn by natural water-courses, which rather points to the idea that Mother Earth first suggested the design, though the scientific knowledge required to adapt it undoubtedly came by the same route that Joseph the tin merchant used from the East."

The effigy of Leo is one of the seven whose outline consists to at least half its extent of water-courses. The Cary river delineates the front of the back leg and the underside of the lion as far as the chest. Two tributary streams form the back of the neck and the tail and the rump. The remaining part of the effigy is outlined by roads and tracks—as, for instance, the whole length of the animal's back, part of its hind quarters and back leg and its two front paws. Only the lower jaw is modelled by linches or man-made ridges.

Now roads, in times as far distant as those we are discussing, were probably non-existent in any modern sense. The country at that time, except along the tops of the dry chalk or limestone ridges, was impassable swamp or jungle, unless the water-courses happened to provide an alternative mode of travel. Tracks would be worn along the only possible routes of travel, linking such important sites as easy crossing-places of waterways, settlements and look-out posts. To conceive of Mesolithic or early Neolithic man having the time or skill required to make roadways to serve any but the needs of bare necessity and survival is hard. Not even the magnificent embankments of Avebury, or of Stonehenge in its earliest form, was executed till nigh a thousand years later. The linches forming the lion's jaw are probably of Iron Age date, as well as the great camp on Dundon Hill which is supposed to model the ear of the Giant or Gemini effigy. As for the boat formed by artificial waterways, these were almost certainly first cut by monks from Glastonbury Abbey as late as the 15th or 16th century A.D.—two or three hundred years after the Romance was written!

In spite of obvious weaknesses in Mrs. Maltwood's line of attack—and there are countless other points which could be discussed—there is an attractive width of perspective in her method of attaching significance to every detail. But we would ask: "Was

the author of the "High History" really such an inspired or enlightened writer as this line of thought presupposes?"

At the risk of meriting just such a severe censure as Mrs. Maltwood has received at our hands, we could perhaps be allowed to take the argument even further. Can we think of the possibility of a far more distant past than Mrs. Maltwood envisages, when the ancient gods of Atlantis were at work moulding the hills and valleys and configurations of this part of the country? Perhaps it is they who have implanted some mysterious sanctity in the etheric currents around Glastonbury, and people who are particularly sensitive to such things may become aware of what hovers there in the glint of stones and soil?

Even if we could agree that the investigations of Mrs. Maltwood are the dim rememberings of a forgotten past such as this, it is still hard to attach so specific an explanation as hers to the Romance before us. Mrs. Maltwood's investigations have led primarily to a geographic explanation of the story, and through that, of course, to a mythical and finally a stellar explanation. But, as Professor Loomis points out, apart from the mention of what appears to be the Glastonbury Tor as "La montaigne de la vallée," and of Glastonbury Abbey as "the house of religion which standeth at the head of the Moors Adventurous" and one mention of Tintagel Castle, "the rest of the geography of the Romance is so utterly unrelated to actuality that it is hard to believe that its author was familiar with the country."

It is precisely in this version of the Grail story that Professor Loomis sees a more complete preservation of older Welsh sources than in the other versions. Through its similarity with the legends of Dinas Bran, an ancient ruined fortification on the banks of the River Dee in North Wales, the Fisher King's Castle has been identified with this site. The other Grail Castle, however, which Professor Loomis refers to as the "isle of the ageless elders," to which Perceval is called away by the ship at the end of the Romance, is that other abode of Bran the Blessed usually identified with the island of Grassholm off the west coast of Pembrokeshire.

It is interesting to read in the "High History" itself the account of the two Camelots (Branch 22, Title 5): "Lords, think not that it is this Camelot whereof these tellers of tales do tell their tales, there where King Arthur so often held his court. This Camelot that was the Widow Lady's (Perceval's inheritance) stood upon the uttermost headland of the wildest isle of Wales by the sea to the west. Nought was there save the hold and the forest and the waters that were round about it. The other Camelot, of King Arthur's, was situate at the entrance to the Kingdom of Logres, and was peopled of folk and was seated at the head of the King's land, for that he had in

his governance all the lands that on that side marched with his own.”

*

Now let us continue our study by referring to the book by the late Dr. Walter Johannes Stein: *Weltgeschichte im Lichte des heiligen Gral* (“World History in the Light of the Holy Grail”).

In it Dr. Stein, an intimate pupil of Dr. Steiner, gives us quite a different insight into the Holy Grail legend, chiefly in connection with the version handed down to us by Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Like Mrs. Maltwood, Dr. Stein would see a reflection of zodiacal and planetary influences expressed in the story of the Grail. It is not, in this case, a portrayal of merely stellar events, such as the seasonal passage of the sun through the Zodiac, nor has the story any geographical explanation, but a historical aspect is intimately bound up with the whole conception. We are shown not a mythical “sun-hero” alone, but the vital experiences of an Initiate in human incarnation going through a series of trials like a Theseus of old or a Hercules performing his twelve labours.

The story starts, according to Dr. Stein, under the sign of Gemini, and from this aspect are described, in the first two books of the poem, all the prenatal events connected with Parzival’s father, Gahmuret, his two wives, Herzeleide and Belekane, and the two sons of these marriages, Parzival and his half-brother, Feirefis.

At the beginning of Book III, where the birth and lonely upbringing of the child in the wilderness of Soltane is described, the influence of the sign of Cancer is felt. Then, when Parzival first meets with knights in armour and is entirely given over to his sense-impressions, disregarding the questions he has been asked, the influence of Leo is shown. The subsequent meeting with Jeschute and Sigune takes place under the sign of Virgo, and, when Parzival receives instruction at the hands of the wise old Gurnemanz, Libra, the Scales, is dominating events, as is aptly brought to expression in the words of Gurnemanz to Parzival: “Make your rule the true mean” (Book III, Section 171, Mustard and Passage translation).

Next come the experiences in the realm of Scorpio (Book IV)—longing for the love of the beautiful Liasse, daughter of Gurnemanz and renunciation—longing for the love of Konwiramur—and submission. At the beginning of Book V, during Parzival’s hasty ride to the Grail Castle, three zodiacal signs are passed without comment: “A bird,” we are told, “could only with great difficulty have flown all that way” (Book V, Section 224).

Next comes the encounter of Parzival with the Fisher—an obvious connection with the sign of Pisces. The ascent and entry into the Grail Castle take place under the sign of Aries—from the depths of humility (Pisces) we are led to the heights of spiritual recognition.

Then begins for Parzival, upon leaving the Grail Castle, a recapitulation of preceding events—Taurus is active in the strict fulfilment of karmic necessity. And so we come once more, at the end of Book V, to the sign from which we started—Gemini—but this time on a different plane of experience, and the whole journey through the Zodiac is embarked upon once more, this time with the additional colouring of planetary influences.

Dr. Stein does not elaborate the details of the second half of the journey in its connection with the Zodiac. Some of the stations on the way are touched upon and we may guess at others.

There is a wonderful order and arrangement in the composition of the poem which has led some investigators to argue that Wolfram could not have been the illiterate person he declares himself to be (end of Book II).

As already mentioned, a kind of turning-point occurs in the story towards the end of Book V, when Parzival begins to recapitulate his earlier experiences. It is on the occasion of his first visit to the cell of the hermit, Trevrezent. Another such important moment occurs in Book IX, when Parzival arrives at the hermitage for the second time and makes his confession.

Professor Springer, one of the leading authorities on the work of Wolfram, calls this incident the “core” of the work and shows how the sections before and after it exactly balance one another. The sections of the whole work, 827 in number, are each of 30 lines and the complete poem is divided into 16 books or “adventures,” which is, according to Dr. Stein, a reflection of the inner path of occult development, known as the “eightfold path.” The city of Patelamunt, with its sixteen gates and two besieging armies, as described in the first book, is a kind of picture of the tale as a whole. How could an illiterate poet, unable to read, weave such a complicated structure?

Dr. Stein has pointed out that the question whether the poet could read becomes of secondary importance as soon as we understand the insistence of his claim in its true intention. Wolfram wished to emphasize his complete freedom from dependence on a literary source. For him the source of his knowledge and inspiration was a star-wisdom, together with a knowledge of the genealogical secrets concerning the ancestors of the Grail family, handed on to him by his master, Kyot.

Kyot, whose existence has often been denied by modern investigators, was a real person for Rudolf Steiner; this was revealed to him, as he describes in a lecture given in Leipzig (January 1, 1914)—“The Search for the Holy Grail.”*

* See the new translation of this lecture-course, entitled *Christ and the Spiritual World: the Search for the Holy Grail* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1963).

"Kyot," we are told by Wolfram, "set about to trace this tale in Latin books, to see where there ever has been a people dedicated to purity and worthy of caring for the Grail" (Parzival, Book IX, Section 455, transl. Mustard and Passage). It was Kyot's aim to find on earth the genealogical connections which would be the expression of the star-lore he had acquired from Flegetanis. Flegetanis, we are told, lived 1,200 years before the birth of Our Lord and was the Old Testament prophet, Balaam, who foretold the birth of Jesus.

When Dr. Stein set himself the task of verifying a statement by Dr. Steiner, that the characters of Wolfram's poem were historical personages living at the time of the 8th or 9th centuries, he was, in a true sense, continuing the work of Wolfram himself and, before him, of Kyot and Flegetanis.

Dr. Stein tells us that at the time in question there were people living who were intimately connected with an esoteric Christian stream. Bishop Waldo of Reichenau and Hugo of Tours, living at the court of the Emperor Charlemagne, were two such personalities. Pope Nicholas and his councillor, Anastasius, were certainly of this order, and St. Richardis, wife of the Emperor Charles III of Germany, was another.

A story about the Empress Richardis and Bishop Luitward, her husband's Chancellor, which is related in a document of the 17th century, preserved in the Strassburg Archives, bears on our subject. Here is described how a certain personality, named mysteriously the "Red Knight," accused the Empress Richardis before her husband of adultery with Bishop Luitward, and was the cause of her and his banishment and degradation. Richardis is forced to undergo an ordeal by fire, which she successfully withstands and then retires voluntarily to her Abbey at Andlau where she ends her days.

This story bears a great similarity to the situation described in the Wolfram romance as the meeting between Parzival and Jeschute, where Parzival breaks into the latter's tent, while her husband, Orilus, is absent, and takes by force the ring from her finger, kisses her and satisfies his hunger with the food he finds at his disposal.

Dr. Stein, made attentive by the mention of the "Red Knight"—the same epithet which is applied to Parzival after he has killed Ither von Gahevis—sees in the episodes of this medieval legend the origin of the story which Wolfram tells. In the personality of Luitward's calumniator, the Red Knight, is to be found the model for the figure of Wolfram's Parzival. Charles III, the jealous husband of Richardis, is the prototype of Orilus, who subjected his wife to degradation, and Richardis herself is portrayed in the figure of Jeschute.

Another personality, revealed by Spiritual Science to have affinity with the Romance, is Landulf II, Duke of Capua, whose

whole relationship to Arabism and his connection with the Castle of Calot Babot (Kaltabellota in Sicily) is reminiscent of Klingsor and his realm of Schatelmerville.

Dr. Steiner drew Dr. Stein's attention to the connection of Arlesheim and its Hermitage with certain scenes described by Wolfram.

Dr. Stein's labours in the field of interpreting the Grail legend did not stop with the conclusion of his first book. Although the second volume which he originally envisaged was never published, the theme was constantly in his mind and he returned to it again and again in articles and in many unpublished lectures.

The search for the Holy Grail can still be called the search for a "book" or a "grant livre" in the sense in which this was understood by the early romances. It is the book of the genealogy of the Grail Guardians. This was the secret which Kyot tried to unravel, the task which he handed on to his pupil, Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Dr. Stein knew of the mysterious blood-relationship linking together the members of a "Grail race." He tried to find answers to the questions: Who were the Grail-seekers in history? and Who are the Grail-seekers among our contemporaries? The answer to the first question he tried to reveal through his book. The answer to the second question he could not make public.

Professor Loomis looks upon his task as the solving of the question: Where does the literature of the Grail have its origin? His interest is directed towards the texts, the "physical body," as it were, of the research. We become acquainted, through his efforts, with all the known documents, their order of composition and as much as possible about their authors. We learn next to nothing about the impulse which created them—except the negative one of misinterpretation. We learn only about the transformations which the text has suffered and not about the inner causes for such change—e.g. the Christianizing of pagan myths.

Dr. Evans, on the other hand, tries to provide us with a key which will unlock all the doors at once, but by reducing the Grail romances to a kind of standard fitting, he has done much to remove their very poetry and essence. He has failed to see that romance is an experience on two different levels—an "outer" and an "inner" path together. Romance can never be just translated history.

Mrs. Maltwood has realized this most clearly. She looks for the "inner" path and the "hidden" meaning behind every incident, but the "soul" which she provides remains disincarnate and stays in the clouds. The modern investigator cannot be convinced by her arguments. The "physical" reality is lacking.

Dr. Walter Johannes Stein attempted to reconcile these two points of view, the spiritual-cosmic and the historical. His task was never completed. His work really falls into two parts—an

appreciation of the artistic skill of Wolfram, and its interpretation in historical terms. The two halves are not brought together. We are not told how the "Red Knight," mysteriously mentioned in a medieval document, could have undergone the trials and adventures described in the Parzival legend.

Dr. Stein affirms, in the conclusion to his book, that his attempt to elucidate the events of the 9th century in the light of the Grail stories must of necessity remain incomplete. His book, he says, must be regarded as the publishing of his own private notes for the benefit of those who might carry on the task in future. He envisaged a collaboration of many students in this stupendous undertaking.

The task is still awaiting completion.

Springtime

Springtime!
The light and the dark
Newly aware of each other
And yielding the blossom of tenderness.

Almond blossom,
Tender radiance in the ruthless street.
Crocus, white and purple,
Light's purest silken weave.
And the green torches budding,
Glowing from delicate wands.
Such lucid speech of the struggle
And new balances achieved.

Jeffrey Gibian

Autumn

Warm wind from the south
Speaking of the sun,
Gold birds from the north
Winging to warmth.

Apples yellow falling,
Leaves reddening,
White mists rising
In mornings cool.

Awakened hearts debating
Love's harvest,
Frozen winter's onset
The coming of spring.

Frank Newell

Communion, Community and Communism

A. G. Brice

RUDOLF STEINER often spoke of the urgent need today for a new social life based on a true conception of Man and the world. In his *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* he describes how it is just the task of social life to work favourably on our inner development. The esoteric content of our souls must become the principle forming the esoteric world; threefold Man must live in a threefold human society, so that there can be a creative interplay between the spiritual world and Man on the one hand, and Man and society on the other.

We can see how little this is the case today. Society, being the expression of a wrong picture of Man, must react unfavourably on the striving human being. Pessimists think the world is getting worse, while optimists point to the apparently positive symptoms of our age. In Rudolf Steiner's sense we must be neither pessimistic nor optimistic, but realistic. Progress may consist in evil apparently becoming greater, so that more people can come consciously to the realization that evil must be redeemed. In our own inner life, failure in the face of evil drives us on to more intensive endeavour, a fact often expressed by Goethe.

This Age of the Consciousness Soul depends on each separate individual striving to make a conscious link with the spiritual world. We must neither deny the spirit, nor believe in it, but aim to experience its reality. Our thinking is the guide on our way and also our safeguard, and even after spiritual experience, it must interpret to us what we have beheld. Rudolf Steiner expresses this beautifully when he says: "The experience of the idea in its reality is the true communion of Man." Inwardly the idea must become our ideal and thus our striving links us with the spiritual world. Outwardly, we must realize the ideal in society, creating the basis of a new social understanding.

There is a great deal of goodwill in the world today, but without knowledge this often leads back to old forms. We revert to the outer form of a previous time, but without its ideals, when the way forward to new ideas cannot be found. The problems of our youth today are intimately connected with this rebellion against the present. No worthwhile future can be seen and they therefore return to an older past. The phrase "Teddy boys" comes from Edward—from the time of Edward VII, the beginning of the century. Outwardly these young people revert to the beginning of this century, with its Edwardian clothes and hair styles, because, approaching the middle

of this century, they could see no ideas worth living for and the end of this century seemed to offer a hopeless vista.

These young people have many problems to face and their behaviour may be open to criticism; but let us remember that we have created their problems and they were educated by us. Many of them show their goodwill in rebelling against much of our modern world. Talking to them about their strong feelings regards nuclear weapons, one cannot help respecting them for the sincerity of their views. They know something is wrong, but do not know what to do about it, except to protest quite negatively against it. "Ban The Bomb," is a message of despair; it deals with symptoms and not causes. It does not go far enough, and to be consequent they would have to say "Ban Man," as it is he who made the bomb. But this is exactly what they are trying to prevent, the banning of Man from the earth, his inability to incarnate on our planet because of a nuclear war.

Today goodwill alone is not enough; it can even be dangerous, for without true knowledge it easily falls victim to wrong ideas and false ideals. Human activity can be guided only by a true picture of the real nature of Man, and this Rudolf Steiner has given us in abundance. It does not only reveal the true nature of Man, but illuminates all problems facing us. In this instance we can see that behind the outer danger with which these young people are concerned, and connected with fear and the death of our body, lurks another danger. This other enemy, invisible but just as real, is interested in the damnation of our souls. By the end of this century there could possibly be such an apparent paradise on earth, such a wealth of consumer goods, mass-produced entertainment and easy living, that people would not come to ask the questions, Who am I, What is Man, And what am I to make of the world?

After the first World War Rudolf Steiner often spoke about the failure of the world to accept the necessary new impulses and he spoke of further catastrophes, getting progressively worse until Man would begin to ask himself these questions. It is part of the human tragedy to fail at the first attempt, but at the second we must succeed, for the third question will already be asked in the spiritual world, either through Initiation or after death.

Faust fails on all levels at first, and the ordinary bourgeois person, coming to the end of part one of Goethe's Faust, must be pretty horrified, and can be excused from skipping part two. It is difficult to imagine how anyone without Anthroposophy can understand how the evil of part one becomes the driving force in Faust to reach sublime heights in part two. Parsival also failed to ask The Question the first time he visited the Grail Castle; but he did ask it, and had to do so, the second time.

When Rudolf Steiner speaks about the urgency of the times we live in, it is always very surprising how definite points in the spiritual evolution are connected with quite definite dates on earth. On several occasions he mentioned that around the first third of this century quite new things would become apparent, for better and for worse, inwardly, outwardly and in the Etheric World. We must not only look at the outer events which took place in Central Europe, but also at what happened in 1933 on the quiet, in a Cambridge laboratory, where the atom was first split. The inner and the outer danger, and between them the tremendous possibility of human beings experiencing the Christ in the Etheric World.

The results of the evil, first apparent in Central Europe in 1933, we saw around the middle of this century, in the world reverting to the old form of national State on the one hand; and going forward to the wrong kind of international ideal on the other. Nationalism and Communism were the forces which formed States after the second World War, old ideas and wrong ideals. It is clear from Rudolf Steiner's pronouncements that the first third of this century is related to the middle of this century, as the second third is to the end of this century, which is also the end of a millenia. Of Rudolf Steiner's new impulse for a new threefold Society, two-thirds were stillborn, and only the individual realm, that of free choice, of ideas and education, prospered. As Anthroposophy, individuals, groups and schools have taken up the new impulse; but we know that we must add the other two-thirds at least as a seed by 1966, if we are to face the end of the century with equanimity.

The power of Communism lies in its ideas, because they have become ideals to countless millions. Karl Marx first evolved this idea of the historical necessity for Communism, and, like Rudolf Steiner, he based himself on Hegel; the German idealist philosopher who put thinking in its place as the crown of evolution. Towards the end of his life Hegel said that the only one who really understood him, misunderstood him. Hegel thought of thinking as an unqualified activity, but Marx limited it to an activity of the brain. Communism is therefore nothing else but the ruthless application of the idea that Man is a physical being only; the body and the brain primary, thinking and all emotional factors secondary.

Starting from these premises, a perfectly logical, true and powerful idea of Man and the world can be developed, and we can see here the force of an idea which becomes an ideal and is then applied in practice. The only other equally consequent and powerful view, also based on thinking, is that of Rudolf Steiner, but it must be lived with the same intensity; his ideas must become our ideals and they must be applied as efficiently.

In talking to a convinced Communist, it is often a waste of time to discuss education, social life or economics. Starting from his

idea of Man as a material being only, his arguments and conclusions are perfectly acceptable. What one can discuss with him, however, is the nature of the human being. Let him speak first, ask him for his picture of Man, listen patiently, because it is after all nothing but a Western idea of Man, taught in our schools and universities, applied cold-bloodedly.

Having listened to his point of view, we might now suggest that he listens to our standpoint, to our view of Man, which of necessity must lead to a different interpretation of the world. He will not agree, of course, with our point of view and this we must not expect. However, he must know that there is another point of view, explaining all things equally well, but regarding all things physical as transitory, as means to an end, as tools for the spirit. One can agree to disagree and the basis of mutual respect can be found, on which practical problems can be discussed and solved, leaving the ideas aside. All of us are free spiritually and may choose those ideas we find adequate to our needs, think true and want to live by. We have chosen a different ideal, and although we know ours to be true for our time, and the other false, respect for the freedom of others will give us the understanding to tolerate their point of view.

What can we do to strengthen the truth in ourselves and in the world? First of all we must get things clear in our own minds; we must study, digest and understand Rudolf Steiner's indications. Trying to apply them, on whatever level, brings us in touch with other people and now we must find the tolerance to accept another's path, even if it is not ours. This applies in our own circles as well as in the world at large. Meeting the strivings of another Anthroposophist I do not agree with, I can only say, if I am truthful—I do not see it your way, but if this is the result of your own sincere striving, I will respect it, yes, even support it, if need be. This complete tolerance is one of the three ideals Rudolf Steiner told us we had to achieve by the end of this century. The other two are the spiritual understanding which leads to this tolerance; and feeling the other's needs as my own, the direct result of real understanding and active tolerance.

Human relationships in our own circles, whether family, group, society or educational centre, of course present great difficulties. We must be grateful for these, as by overcoming them and finding new solutions we may lay the seeds for the missing two-thirds of Rudolf Steiner's new social impulse. The painful birth of conscious achievement in this realm is nothing but an attempt at the practical redemption of evil in ourselves.

What is the basic problem in human relationships in this respect? Being part of the world, we all labour under the illusion that the person I behold is the human being I meet. Unless we make a conscious effort, we too think that sense-perception is everything,

and we all know who is the master of this act of delusion. In his *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, Rudolf Steiner tells us that we cannot understand another person with our own, but only with his, concepts. To one of the original Waldorf-School teachers in Stuttgart he once said that only partially understanding another person already pre-supposed a certain degree of initiation.

Looking at the Twelve Senses described by Rudolf Steiner, we see how the four lowest senses make us aware of our own organisation; the middle four relate our soul to the world; and the four spiritual senses relate us to another spiritual being. I meet another person and know from Rudolf Steiner that the appearance is but a picture, an Imagination of the other Ego. I confront the outer, but must relate myself to the inner, and this I do through the Hearing Sense. The Imaginative element recedes, the Inspirational becomes audible, I hear a human voice. The voice becomes transparent to me, my Speech Sense perceives human speech, and now the Intuitive, spiritual content enters. The word, perceived by my Speech Sense, becomes a cup filled with the content of the other's thinking and now my Thinking Sense perceives and thinks the other's thoughts.

My Ego now, in thinking the other person's thoughts, experiences the other Ego, how the other Ego thinks, for it is the Ego living in thinking which I now behold as a spiritual activity. My Ego Sense perceives the other Ego; for a moment in consciousness I have ceased to be myself, I have allowed the other to live in me. This Rudolf Steiner calls an act of spiritual love; I can now return to my ordinary consciousness and now I can truly claim to "under-stand" the other human being. This is the new love we need, one based on real spiritual understanding and not a sentimental liking or wanting to be with. This act of love can become the basis of a new human relationship, if only we have the will to practise it, daily, hourly, every minute of the day, when we meet other people.

If I dislike a person I meet daily, I cannot decide to love him, starting tomorrow morning. But I can decide on meeting him to practise this art of understanding, from which I after all will gain tremendously. By allowing myself to be swamped by my feelings of dislike or irritation, I give the person I dislike the power to make me miserable and impede my progress spiritually. One only has to meditate sufficiently on this ridiculous but interesting position to find the strength at least to try and battle with oneself.

This is the level on which we must work and strive if we are to bring harmony into our relationships; if we really want to solve the problems of our society and if we want to be an effective force in the world by the end of this century. Not only in education, but also in social life; and only after that shall we be able and worthy to have a say in the economic and international affairs of the world.

Drugs and Consciousness

Daniel Bittleston

FOR young people to-day who find life meaningless and unreal there exists the possibility of discovering depths of meaning and new levels of reality through "consciousness-drugs." On the other hand there are those who, unwilling to face the heavy demands that modern life places upon them, retreat into false peace and plant-like existence with narcotics. For two-and-a-half years a search for the reality of the world and of myself led me among people of both kinds. I write these preliminary notes with the intention of casting some light on subjects about which there is still almost total ignorance.

There is a rapidly multiplying diversity of drugs that influence consciousness and which have, of course, effects on the physical and psychological condition in general. A basic division is between stimulants and sedatives, but there is no definite borderline. The same is true for the division between narcotics, which alter cell structure and become a physical necessity, and non-habit-forming drugs; between which lie the habituating drugs, which would include caffeine, tobacco, Cannabis, alcohol. Most frequently used for consciousness-expansion are: Cannabis, which is habituating and lies somewhere between stimulant and sedative, and the Psychedelics: Mescaline, LSD and Psilocybin, which are stimulants and non-habit-forming. The other main drugs influencing consciousness are: the Amphetamines (stimulant, habituating); the poppy derivatives, Opium, Morphium, Heroin (sedative, narcotic), and Cocaine (stimulant, narcotic).

At the University it seemed to me that the conduct of the most respected people was governed by inevitable but to me unknown and unattractive laws. I continually said and did the wrong things. When I finally met some people of the underworld, they seemed mysterious and interesting. Indiscriminate of appearance, living in cellars, attics or abandoned houses, hitch-hiking on impulse to Spain or India, smoking Cannabis, playing guitars, writing and reading poetry, they made me feel I was amongst convivial souls, from whose stimulating and inspired behaviour I had much to learn.

At this time my father lent me a book of Steiner's philosophy, which I found so heavy that I could not read two consecutive sentences.

I became very interested in reports of mystical experience through Cannabis and made the subject my study, only to meet with strongly conflicting reports. I took two years to discover, through the maze of emotional and erroneous statements, that Cannabis is

non-toxic, non-addictive though habituating; smoked by musicians, holy men and layabouts, in India, Arabia, Africa and increasingly in the cities of the West; known as Marijuana, Bhang, Ganja, Kif, Hashish, Indian Hemp, Pot. It comes from a green plant with a tough stalk and small white flowers named Cannabis Indica.

In Boericke's homoeopathic *Materia Medica* I read: "Cannabis Indica (Hashish) (Effects of one dram doses by Dr. Schneider). The experimenter feels ever and anon that he is distinct from the subject of the hashish dream and can think rationally. Produces the most remarkable hallucinations and imaginations, exaggeration of the duration of time and extent of space being most characteristic. Conception of time, space and place is gone. Extremely happy and contented, nothing troubles. Ideas crowd upon each other. Has great soothing influence in many nervous disorders like epilepsy, mania, dementia, delirium tremens, and irritable reflexes."

Where then is the degradation and criminality with which marijuana is associated?

In the New York Greenwich *Village Voice* (January 21, 1965) I read: "Even in countries like Morocco, where kif-smoking has been the norm for thousands of years, the subject became officially taboo when the U.N. framed its narcotics legislation. But on the specific issue of marijuana there have been numerous second thoughts. In the latest U.N. Bulletin on Narcotics (Vol. XVI, No. 4), Dr. Oswald Moroes Andrade writes: 'Experience shows and facts confirm that there is a lot of fantasy and pseudo-science surrounding cannabis (marijuana), not to mention the sensationalist articles which have harmful effects on society. . . . Cannabis . . . is not an addiction-producing substance—that is, its deprivation does not bring on the well-known syndrome of abstinence caused by cocaine, opium, and its derivatives, and the synthetic drugs with morphine-like action. . . . To classify cannabis as a narcotic is contrary to the widespread and classic definition of narcotic substances by Di Mattei. . . . The severe measures that are taken in relation to the habit of smoking cannabis are due to the international conventions. . . .'"

I first smoked cannabis on a sunny spring afternoon with three close friends. Ceremonially the finely chopped leaf was mixed with ordinary tobacco and rolled into a fat cigarette, lit, and passed round the circle. Each inhaled deeply and held breath as long as possible. Then waited. To see what would happen. This continued until the last millimetre of cigarette went up in smoke. It occurred to me that I felt absurd sitting and waiting. Each seriously waited and sat. There was a certain determination not to miss anything.

Gradually I noticed theatrical postures; each looked fascinating and comical; I felt joy to be alive, and someone was laughing infectiously; soon all four of us laughed, sharing the understanding,

and suddenly it seemed I'd been laughing too long and it was more interesting to move my head and note the change in perspective, the patterns of colour in the room, the light and shadow; my jeans looked like Indian tapestry. Space, colour, sound, touch, taste, movement, thought, and all patterns came alive. Time expanded and contracted in waves. After two hours the effects gradually wore off. There were no noticeable after-effects and I felt no immediate desire to repeat the experience.

Alcohol is a depressant of the nervous system, and can release pre-existing desires, but it does not normally increase awareness. Cannabis is a stimulant, yet also soothing, and although at first one may react with symptoms similar to drunkenness, the general effect is of higher consciousness. This tends to lead one to Eastern art, poetry and religion. Under this influence the Beat Generation was formed: Ginsberg, Kerouac, Burroughs, *et al.* One discovers that Rimbaud and Baudelaire smoked hashish. Like troubadours, the Cannabis smokers congregate around the Mediterranean in search of sun and freedom. Life, they say, must become a work of art. The arts awaken us. Becoming is All. An instrument must be made part of oneself to the degree that one's inner music flows directly into outer music. Old habit patterns are broken, and fluid responses sought for. The only desirable activities are the Arts, and inactivity is often preferred. The search is for Reality and Nirvana.

The friends I made around the Mediterranean have gone into many different spheres. One drives a taxi in New York, studies Tibetan Buddhism and meditates; one has become a famous folk-singer; one is acting with the Living Theatre from country to country; one has financed a poets' festival in the Albert Hall; one has started a new religion in America; one travels on his abilities as a cook, so he might be anywhere; one is becoming a first-class flautist; one is living in a visionary state close to insanity; one organises shocking Happenings in Paris; one is studying to become a psychoanalyst-doctor. Some sell Cannabis to tourists, or live the life of a tramp. Many smokers give up smoking and go back to quite ordinary jobs. But it seems that Cannabis is rapidly assuming an important place in the Western World, bringing with it far-reaching, unforeseen problems. R. D. Laing, a London psychoanalyst, is quoted as saying: "These kids are trying to break through into new realms . . . to experience *inner* space and time. . . ."

The drugs of consciousness-expansion known as Hallucinogens, or, more recently, Psychedelics, are primarily: Mescaline, LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide), Psilocybin, and Peyote. They are generally taken in quantities that produce a much stronger effect than Cannabis. Taken orally as a powder, or drink, or bitter cactus button, the effects occur more slowly and last longer. Peyote is used by the Mexican Indians for religious rites, and it appears that these drugs may soon be used similarly in the Western World.

Timothy Leary and Richard Alport, former Harvard professors, have been experimenting with Hallucinogenic drugs (mainly LSD and Psilocybin) for five years. Together with Ralph Metzner, Ph.D., they are co-authors of *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead* (University Books, 1964). For their Experiential (*sic*) Workshops they give the following background:

In each generation a few men stumble upon the riddle of consciousness and its solution; they discover, once again, that beyond the ordinary world of macroscopic, tangible, material things, there are endless levels of energy transformations accessible to consciousness. They learn again the age-old lesson taught by mystics and philosophers of East and West: that most of mankind is sleepwalking, moving somnambulistically through a world of rote perceptions. They learn that it is possible to "come to," to awake, to be liberated from the prison of illusory perceptions and conflicting emotions. As have many internal explorers of the past, they become dedicated to the process of consciousness expansion, to the ideal of maximum awareness and internal freedom.

The first step is the realization that there is more: that man's brain, his 13-billion-celled computer, is capable of limitless new dimensions of awareness and knowledge. In short that man does not use his head.

The second step is the realization that you have to go out of your mind to use your head; that you have to pass beyond everything you have learned in order to become acquainted with the new areas of consciousness. Ignorance of this fact is the veil which shuts man within the narrow confines of his acquired, artifactual concepts of "reality," and prevents him from coming to know his own true nature.

The third step (once the first two realizations have taken place) is the practical-theoretical. How can consciousness be expanded? What is the range of possibilities outside of our current verbal-cognitive models of experience? What light do the new insights shed on our view of man and his place in the universe? And, perhaps most important, how can the new levels of awareness be maintained?

For those concerned with "third step" questions, a series of weekend workshops in consciousness expansion have been instituted by the Castalia Foundation, a non-profit corporation.

*

The nature and differentiation of Mescaline experience covers a very wide field, differing considerably for each individual. A dosage of 500 milligrams begins to take effect after an hour or so. . . .

On the island of Ibiza in the Mediterranean Sea, the summer night sky ablaze with constellations and galaxies of stars, the new moon hanging out in space, I am sitting with two friends at the end of the pier. We are in a state of complete communication with each other and with the elements. The stones are warm and dusty, waves gossip softly, day smells are being absorbed into sea

smell. In the distant south, tiny clumps of cloud are lifting out of the sea. We watch them sail round the curvature of the earth toward us, billowing high into the night sky. The storm-head sends out shimmerings of lightning and a grumble skims across the surface of the water. Gathering height and breadth, the vast body of cloud bears down on us, boiling slowly in rising tiers; the higher crests are white and starlit; below and behind the colour is more dangerous, a threatening yellow darkness is shutting out the glitter of night clarity. I feel a close presence in the air, especially around my hair.

Now I can taste distant cold water through the languorous island atmosphere, and wind starts up and blows long swirly gusts. We are held, overawed by the majestic power descending on us with implacable inevitability. The moment hangs on a thread, then splits wide and deep, a blinding vision of glory, containing unbearable ecstasy, and shuts with enormous thunderclap reverberations tearing the air apart and shaking the skies.

We are frightened. I have the premonition that the next flash will reach out of the sky and transform us in a moment to ash; a glimpse of infinity shatters space a few feet above us and we crouch in a huddle like fearful pantheist worshippers consumed by the life of their god. Then the stormclouds meet the hot air rising from the island and divide to pass on either side of us, sending a fine spray of silver mist across the moon.

Now we are on the prow of a rocky ship sailing through battle, protected by a cloak of invulnerability. The storm rages harmlessly around the island.

Walking back along the crooked flagstones, we find the ground still warm under our feet; the baked earth is pleading for water. A few scattered drops plummet. I can feel the need for water rising into the air like a negative force. I sit under a balcony, gazing at the immense fortress wall that has surrounded the old town for so long. Impassively the great structure proclaims its domination of time, through lifetimes, centuries. Suddenly, quietly, like a blessing, I feel a living relationship going back through time, through a brotherhood of Man to an *ur*-mother. And now it is only a memory. Sheets of rain pour from the heavens into the earth, bless the earth, cascading down stone crevices, dripping and splashing everywhere. The earth sucks the freshness in, drinks into each pore with deep thirst. In subtle greens and mauves the dawn has been slipping in, part light, part shadow. By the time the sun has risen high, I shall be coming down, nervously sensitive and exhausted. Feeling the delight of my recovered freedom, I shall go to the quayside—someone will complain about the nasty weather—and see if I can borrow some money for breakfast.

Each experience with mescaline is completely individual. Each country, each stage in one's life, is like a different world. On Ibiza I lived amongst people between whom there was a bond of intuitive understanding; this gave the island a magical atmosphere and lifted us on to a plateau of human experience. In cities, on the other hand, one could be dropped into a chasm of desolation.

In Amsterdam, weakened by long travels and exhausted by lack of sleep, I had a very bad experience. Somehow, I am alone; I have lost my way in the city. It is shortly after a bleak dawn. I feel hopelessly lost. I begin to feel that I am doomed to wander endlessly among these unknown houses, across this deserted, heartless landscape. Who would give food to me, a wild-eyed dishevelled beggar, if I were starving? Where could I sleep without getting moved on by police?

A gaunt tree pushes its way up through the concrete, but is out of place in this desert. Workmen have taken up part of the road, the deep gash is roped off; a black and white ringed cone is surmounted by a danger-light, flashing magenta, searing the eye; it is a portent. With my feet I can move the world under me to bring any part to me that I require, but I don't know what the sense of my existence is, there is no reason to desire any place. The streets are empty. I recognise nothing. Then I sense a tremble in the ground. It might be a passing lorry, but it grows. There is a piercing whine in my head. The ground is quivering with the preliminary vibrations of an approaching tidal wave. An immense, all-encompassing roar can be heard faintly, as of an earthquake. The whistle in my head has become a sustained shriek; an unending scream of terror. The roar of devastation is almost upon us. It is an unprecedented disaster. It could be the end of the world. I have a touch of fore-remembrance of the inevitability of the world ending in this way. Very soon houses and streets and my physical body will disintegrate into dust. The deadly thunder is shaking earth and sky on all sides. There is the centre of it: a harsh, dark, malignant machine in the sky, low above the roofs, generating black destruction. It carries the atomic bomb, the doom of the earth is upon us all. All is lost. This is the moment of eternal hellfire. And then it is past. The crisis point has been negotiated. I have not lost my mind. I feel utterly drained. Lost and condemned to long wanderings. I pray to the Archangel Michael for help and remember the song we sang at school, only fragments of the words. I remember then that I am reprieved; in a few hours I shall return to ordinary, simple, boring existence, find my way home, and sleep for twelve hours.

*

Experiences with mescaline vary as much as the individuals who report them, for example: "The four of us sometimes had

perfect communication and in discussion penetrated to the inner truth of every question on which we focused our attention"; "I dissolved and became a rainbow membrane around the earth"; "Everywhere around me were demons ready to destroy me wherever I went"; "I heard gods promise me I would become a god"; "I realised Time had ceased to exist"; "Every action was unbearably significant, the evolution of humanity was happening in every moment"; "Man, I was way out, way out there!"; "I could not bear an experience like that more than once in six months"; "I became the music."

The bulk of the problems now facing society come, however, not so much from Cannabis or the psychedelics as from narcotics. Opium addiction was a serious threat to China in the last century. In Hong Kong one person in twelve is addicted to opium. The extreme difficulty of overcoming addiction is largely explained by the fact that the opium derivatives actually cause changes in the cell-structure of the body. Heroin and morphia addiction are the most rapidly growing problems. In New York there are an estimated 100,000 people addicted to heroin. Morphine gives the primary pattern for sedative drugs, and, in this hectic age, the number of people becoming addicted is certainly not decreasing. In Britain, addicts can register with the National Health Service and avoid resorting to crime. In the U.S.A., despite the recent creation of Syncom, an organisation run by cured addicts, addiction is not officially recognised as an illness but treated as a crime, and thus proliferates underground.

To sum up on the opiates: they originate from a resin of the opium poppy, probably grown in Southern China. Opium is the crudest form. De Quincey describes in detail the terrors and esoteric enjoyments of the weird dream-world into which the opium smoker is carried. Jean Cocteau describes the agony involved in breaking the habit. The present French Minister of Culture, M. André Malraux, proves that it is possible to be completely cured.

Morphia is one stage more refined; it can be swallowed or injected, gives deep relaxation. The highest percentage of addicts is reputed to be among doctors. Heroin is the most refined; it is injected into the skin or directly into the veins, gives a deep peace and ability to withdraw from the world. But this peace has a duration of hours and, as it wears off, existence becomes increasingly unbearable. Heroin has been given a treacherous glamour through its use by the most gifted of modern jazz musicians, Charlie Parker. Presumably it gave him a peace in which he could concentrate on his music amidst the chaos of the big city. But it destroyed him at an early age.

William Burroughs, author of *The Naked Lunch*, is one of the few people who have returned from the vegetable existence of total

addiction to some semblance of normal life. He calls heroin a virus of evil, equating evil with total need; the need for heroin will drive one to murder one's closest friend. The physical and mental torture of deprivation can be fatal.

What lies behind this growing search and need for new states of consciousness? Cannabis appears magically to awaken the senses, to bestow gifts of vision and artistic creation. But it is only the qualities that are inherent in the individual that can be released, and with Cannabis prematurely so. The Cannabis smoker risks being drained of his innate creativity and becoming lethargic and repetitious. The psychedelics carry one into the higher consciousness that is on one's path, before one has been prepared for it by life-experience. One is threatened with complexities of re-orientation for which one is not equipped.

The fact must be faced, however, that there are increasing numbers of people who are unable to live within the materialistic consciousness of the Western World, and for whom a way out presents itself, less final than suicide. They seek either a higher reality or peace. The search is for a state of consciousness other than the one in which they find themselves. How could a change take place organically? One's consciousness expands and contracts gently through everyday experience. It may grow through following the ideas of a great philosopher, through understanding a work of art, through speaking with a friend, through meditation. It may contract through repetitive meaningless activity. But for one's awareness to grow organically there must be some individual effort of will, or deepening of the soul life through experience.

Cannabis or the Psychedelics carry one forcefully into a state far beyond the customary variations. Involuntarily much of one's strength is used up. The will is temporarily lamed. Chemical stimuli may raise the consciousness but cannot give the true soul-experience or discipline of will that are the foundations of balance. The soul-experience given is treacherous, cannot be a basis for judgment. What happens is that one experiences levels of reality that are more real to one than the material world. But they are on indistinguishable levels, one does not know the laws of these worlds. Alienated from the known physical world by its unreality, one is carried deeper into reality but in a state of helplessness. It can come about that hallucination and reality mingle in the outer world, and one's inner life is in a confusion of vision and fantasy.

It must be admitted that, drugs aside, the world of to-day is swamped in superficiality and deception; the generally accepted reality is empty, sterile, a fossil. But one's judgment depends upon

the degree in which one keeps free the channels to one's individual inner source. And this connection can be distorted through drugs, leaving one without roots in any reality, adrift in a sea of illusion. This can be an illuminating experience if one does not lose the final balance. It is a condition very close to madness and death. It is a state toward which many spiritual and artistic young people are drawn to-day. The souls driven to these extremes need every breath of human sympathy that we can give them. And they can teach us much of compassion.

Writers and Anthroposophy

Some Questions and Answers

Joy Mansfield

BEFORE his last illness, if I am correctly informed, Rudolf Steiner had intended to give a special course for writers, as he had for painters, actors, eurythmists, farmers, doctors. This he was never able to do, and what he has said specifically on the subject of authorship is only to be found strewn at large amidst his lectures and books, more especially those which treat of poets and poetry, the nature of art and drama and similar themes. There are also reports of conversations he had from time to time with various people.

For a considerable period of his life Steiner was a writer by profession, making his living by his pen. Perhaps this is one reason why he delayed giving such a course so long. It is a common experience that the subject in which one is most worldly-wise, has been most closely engaged, is the hardest of all to penetrate with Anthroposophy. Is it too much to imagine that Steiner himself found a similar difficulty?

Right up to the end of his life his urge to express himself artistically through the medium of words, and his appreciation of poetry and style in writing, were strong and ardent. Albert Steffen in his book, "Meetings with Rudolf Steiner," tells how much he wanted poems in the magazine, *Das Goetheanum*, founded in 1920; how he provided one of his own, entitled "Spring," for an early number, and had the intention of writing a whole cycle on the seasons; how he was also planning a fifth Mystery Play and had it in mind to embark on a novel "which would be the story of individualities who had passed through various earth-lives." An impression of tremendous latent creativity.

Steiner was deeply and continuously concerned with the mystery of language and its right use through both the spoken and the written word. So in Steffen's book we read: "The next morning Rudolf Steiner spoke about the fact that language is not produced by the brain, as the materialism of the nineteenth century believed, but that language forms the brain." Again, in a passage from "Music as Visible Song," one of the courses for eurythmists: "The spirit of language lies in the inaudible . . . one must hear *between* the words . . . must even hear *into* the words discovering *in the words* that which lies *behind* them. For words can at most be used as an aid to the expression of what cannot be heard." Often in the lectures

for eurythmists he says much that could equally well have been given for writers. There is the detailed differentiation between consonant and vowel, the one painting the external world in a variety of ways, the other forming a channel for the intimate expression of the inner life. There are also many descriptions of the subtle connection between breath-rhythm and blood-rhythm and their metamorphosis into the ancient forms of poetry, enduring even till to-day.

But Rudolf Steiner seems to have been well aware that there were dangers waiting for any writer who became an anthroposophist, above all that of working out of intellectual knowledge newly acquired, rather than from real experience. Most writers are likely to have recognised within themselves the urge to write, long before a conscious awareness of Anthroposophy would have been possible. And when the confrontation with Steiner's work does come, and such a person feels impelled to acknowledge its full greatness, there seems often to be a kind of instinctive warding off of the one from the other. Too glibly inserted into a writer's work—and how easy to deceive oneself here—Anthroposophy could kill or distort his own small creative spark. Besides, he has no desire to acquire a label of any sort, especially not that of "anthroposophical" writer . . . Art has nothing to do with labels. . . .

In the *Drama Course*, Steiner gives this description of poetic creation: "It is not enough for a poet to have in his head the meaning and purport of a poem: the whole of the artistically formed speech must be present to him. Most of the scenes in my Mystery Plays were first heard and then written. I have not begun with an idea and looked for words to express it: I have simply listened and written down what I heard. . . ."

Elsewhere he attacks intellectualism from many different sides and in different ways. In the single lecture "Anthroposophy and Poetry": "We must find our way back to the Spiritual, not by cultivating a dried-up symbolism or an allegorical art as thin as straw. Symbolism and allegory are alike inartistic. . . ." In "Eurythmy as Visible Song": "In art one cannot think things out. . . . When a poet begins thinking, he ceases to be a poet. . . ." In a lecture given in 1918, "The Physical Superphysical: its realisation through Art," he speaks of the two Original Sins of artistic creation: 1. To copy the *Physical*—which becomes at best a refined form of illustration. 2. To copy the *Superphysical*, which, as an attempt to *interpret* a world-conception poetically or pictorially, is a kind of barbarism in the life of feeling due to a sort of possession by one's own understanding and reason.

How much one regrets the *Course for Writers* that was never given . . . how fortunate the actors were! How absolutely "right" this piece of advice that Rudolf Steiner gave them seems to be: he advised them to try to experience the contrast between dream

life and everyday life as vividly as they could—"To pass, that is, from a condition where you are chafed and exhausted in soul by the racket of life around you, and go right through to the very opposite experience, where you are entirely alone and given up to dreams. These, one might imagine, could be only feebly experienced; nevertheless, you know as you watch them go past that you are deeply and intimately connected with them."

What would he have advised for writers?

It was from such questionings as these that the idea of this attempted Symposium was born. Perhaps, if a number of writers known to have had contact with Anthroposophy were asked what they felt they owed to Steiner, their answers might at least encourage and stimulate others in a similar predicament to continue their own struggle. Steiner often said that Anthroposophy has voices which can speak only through the arts, and a writer who is also an anthroposophist is likely at some stage in his career to come to the point when he acknowledges to himself that willy nilly this providing of a voice, however inadequate, must be his ultimate aim.

After a certain amount of discussion with friends, three questions were decided on. These were sent to Kathleen Raine, Owen Barfield, Laurence Clark, John Doe (pseudonym of a novelist who does not feel it wise yet to "hoist the Steiner roger on his literary masthead"); and William Golding. The last two treated the questions as a whole, so their comments are put at the end.

1. As a writer who has paid serious attention to Steiner, you are likely to be constantly aware of new themes which call for new forms of expression. Has Steiner helped you (a) in defining these and (b) in feeling your way towards new methods and techniques?

Kathleen Raine: I have not read Steiner with nearly enough attention, and should really do so. I have been impressed by his thought not so much as a writer but as a former student of biology. His whole theory of "devolution" as against Darwinian "evolution" is most important; and I have found Adams' and Whicher's more precise studies of plant forms and projective geometry extraordinarily interesting and convincing. Also the Steiner (Goethean) view of colour, in which a painter friend of mine at one time interested me. In general it is Steiner's anti-mechanistic thought on "nature" which has interested me; and also his suggested meditations on stones, crystals, plants and other natural forms—attempts to enter mentally into the formal structures and "souls" of nature. As a poet that has always been what I have attempted, and Steiner, Adams and the others have emphasised what I already had discovered in Plato, Plotinus and the neo-Platonists—the view that "soul is form," in an exact and mathematical sense.

Owen Barfield: (a) Yes. (b) Yes—the operative words being "feeling your way towards."

Laurence Clark: I think Steiner influences me in choosing between themes which invite treatment and concentrates my attention on certain aspects of these themes. His method and techniques (e.g. in the Mystery Plays) are too closely related to his particular faculties to be of any help to me at my present stage.

2. Has Steiner helped you to (a) a judgment of your own position as an artist in the latter half of the 20th century and (b) to an understanding of the creative process?

Kathleen Raine: No. Though I daresay his thought would be a confirmation of what I already know. My knowledge has come, rather, from neo-Platonism; but Steiner's view of the Hierarchies of spiritual Powers and their inter-relation is entirely consistent with the traditional view of Platonism, Vedanta, etc. It is always good to see an ancient view re-stated. There is a good deal in Steiner which means very little to me, however.

Owen Barfield: (a) Yes. (b) Yes.

Laurence Clark: (a) No. (b) Yes.

3. Has your study of Anthroposophy inhibited you in any way as a writer? Do you feel exposed to any particular writing dangers or put at a disadvantage in your relations with publishers and critics?

Kathleen Raine: All I write endangers me with critics—as must happen to all who defend spiritual values in an age of positivism. Otherwise, why write at all? Not Steiner in particular—I am not sufficiently with his movement. Plato, Plotinus and indeed Aquinas's theology are quite enough to outrage the positivists and the "new" critics. Any version of Perennial Philosophy at all.

Owen Barfield: Yes, as far as poetry is concerned; but this is all right with me, as I think there is more than enough already of the kind of poetry I might have written.

Yes. It's a disadvantage I have felt bound to put up with and have to some extent survived after a long period (roughly a lifetime) of discouragement.

Laurence Clark: The study of Anthroposophy induces a bifocal attitude towards my work, seen simultaneously from a naive and from an anthroposophical viewpoint. This may have induced a slight schizophrenia and may have inhibited my work—or may have avoided outpouring of bad work. I don't know. I think it does put one at a disadvantage with publishers, who are on the look-out for work which will sell to an established demand: this could induce a third attitude to be considered while working, lead to a tri-focal dilemma. I feel much freer since I have started my own publishing concern. With critics I think Anthroposophy may be an advantage; unlike publishers, they are on the look-out

for *etwas neues*. Their reviews are tests of one's naive (non-pop) validity or otherwise.

John Doe: I must appear to publishers as uncommitted. I'm dealing, in the main, with clever and sometimes brilliant intellectuals (who incidentally keep the wolf) and who think intellectuality is like the brook, going on for ever. Ahriman is in the publishing business: commercialisation of the word and sensation, one word only proscribed—spirit, except in bottles or tanks of cars. (Tiger in the tank!) So, better to infiltrate, be a fifth columnist.

It's very difficult, anyway, to keep believing in one's weak-kneed talents *vis-à-vis* Steiner's colossal contribution to knowledge: many a time I've tried to follow down a sequence of anthroposophical ideas in order to contain them on their own, as it were, to abstract them gently for direct use, only to find that they suddenly become a-logical, skipping away uncaught, although the actual search enriches one in many other ways. As you'll know, in fictional art, as even in the poem, there must be a psychological sequence of image and idea, and in perspective it must be logical. (They're now doing stories, and films especially, in the manner of a man trying to hang his coat and hat on a nail in the wall which was never there and coat and hat fall down on the floor). Many of these latter-day stream-of-consciousness boys seem to be trying to be creatively a-logical but usually succeed only in being sensationally illogical, thereby offending the art they claim to serve by palming off mere personal fantasy for true fantasy: sweaty or sweet soulisms versus spiritual awareness, perhaps.

It's difficult: the whole consortium of anthroposophical orientated thinkers and strivers, deep and shallow, also contains a cross-section of crass neo-Edwardian, pre-Raphaelite sentimentalists and conservatives, who are often more weighty than worthy, 1965-wise, with half our human world sharpening its claws on the other half; sitters, not actors, or actors. Time, perhaps, and its inevitable overlaps from generation to generation—folk whose forefathers were badly scared by the French Revolution, perhaps? Who think that they can have revelation without *any* kind of revolution. But, here we have our physical, psychological, technological world and there . . . ? (The two veils—inner and outer).

When one is utterly convinced oneself, one has then, I suppose, to try and convince (help) one's neighbour. But how? After all, as we are, most of us, we still operate under a kind of developed Morality of Prudence, in that we're convinced that it's just not prudent to keep on making wanton karma, although we won't accept the say-so of an outside authority to tell us when to stop. We still, I think, adjust Steiner to our degrees of need and non-need: all right—better Steiner than any other, even if we do take the common risk that there *will* be another day to-morrow.

BOOK REVIEWS

Flowing Water* and Living Forms

Sensitive Chaos. The Creation of Flowing Forms in Water and Air. By Theodor Schwenk. Translated from the German by Olive Whicher and Johanna Wrigley. (Rudolf Steiner Press, London. 55/-)

READERS of the *Golden Blade* will remember the tribute by Olive Whicher to *Das Sensible Chaos*, when the book first appeared in German.¹ The English edition has the same stylish layout and high quality reproductions as the German, and it has in addition a brief foreword by Commandant Cousteau. The translation faithfully retains the eloquent manner of the original. In all respects the book is a delight to the senses—not only the pictures, but also the look of the print, the feel of the paper, the sound of the rhythmical cadences in the text; but what of its effect on the mind, on the perceiving eye of thought? All lovers of water and of the beauty of its forms will find the book a rich addition to their pleasures, but will they also find that it adds to their understanding of these forms? There is, after all, a difference between art and science.

Schwenk starts with the movements of water and the forms that these movements create; this is the subject-matter of the science of fluid dynamics, a branch of physics. In the study of flowing water and air, as in any other subject, the scientist seeks to understand with his thinking what is revealed by observation. He will analyse complex forms in terms of the actions and interactions of simpler forms. He will isolate the appropriate qualities and properties of the materials he is dealing with—the density and viscosity of water, for instance—and measure them on suitable scales. When these inherent properties have been pinned down, he will consider the variables—rate of flow, position of obstacles, and so on—and look for the forces which bring about the changes observed. When he has formed a concept that seems to fit the observations, he will put it to the test by applying it to a situation created through experiment, leading to new observations. This in turn may lead to new concepts.

Thus we now have a science of fluid dynamics that can explain the most complicated agitations and patterns of waves and vortices in terms of a few simple forces. Computers can be programmed to predict the course of a disturbance in a stream of water, and in so far as the resulting pattern plotted by the computer compares very closely with the pattern observed in an actual stream (such as some

¹ "Water's Forming Forces," in the *Golden Blade*, 1963. This issue is now out of print, but reprints of Miss Whicher's article in a finally revised form can be had from the Rudolf Steiner Bookshop, 35, Park Road, London, N.W.1, price 1/3 post paid.

Some more Germanic authors seem unaware of the effect of sentimentality on the English consciousness: and unaware of special pleading and of rather dogmatic claims on credulity: one wonders do they believe they're writing only for the converted or do they think this is the way to approach the unconverted? . . . Oh, I can see some of their difficulties. I've blundered into a few small ones when foolish enough to try to "explain" an anthroposophical approach.

In Steiner's course on Psychoanalysis (p. 43, middle paragraph), there is a cheering and helpful statement for artists; at least it was so for me as a writer. It's an honest, free recognition of the "daemon." I could answer your first question with a yes: and answer question two with question three, and *vice versa*. Anthroposophy is not, in my experience, an alternative for creative sweat: nor, for me, must Anthroposophy be confused with creative activity—artistic activity. If a book is made as a melange of self-effort and Anthroposophy, it ends as being neither one thing or another. Anthroposophy can gently persuade the artist, steer by a kind of remote control. I think it occupies the same position as the old initiate occupied alongside the bard, the latter making the former's silence sing. On the other foot, I know, I think, had I *not* known of Anthroposophy, I might now be a howling literary success, cashwise, that is—*provided* that my karma-sans-Anthroposophy could have kept me out of moral or physical gaol, which I doubt.

I'd say that the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, for a writer who likes it, can be a veritable anchor in a quicksand sea. And that Steiner's identification of the Christ provides the fixed point round which creative imagination may safely spin.

William Golding: I think your questions are quite unanswerable: and if they are to be answered, then only the books I have written and may write in the future can answer them one way or the other. Steiner is *there*: a historical fact, a process, a society even, with which I have been acquainted and which I am unlikely to forget any more than I am likely to forget any three-year period of my life. I was never "one of the faithful." Indeed, though I've looked fairly hard and would like the peace of agreeing and belonging—though I know that of course it's only one sort of peace and there is much rough stuff to go with any acceptance—nevertheless I haven't succeeded in aligning myself with any philosophy, system, world-belief, church, party, or what have you. Sometimes I've thought this individualism is what I'm for: and sometimes I've thought it's just sheer laziness.

But you'll see from this how unanswerable your questions are. . .

of those illustrated by Schwenk), we may be sure that the concepts are very near the truth.

While some of the more philosophical scientists may still be trying to grasp what is implied by the concept of "force," others are able to go ahead and apply their understanding of fluid dynamics towards solving a whole range of practical problems—from shaping ships' hulls and propellers to controlling and preventing floods, from designing safer bridges to predicting the weather. This is not the path followed by Schwenk, who indeed regards with horror the prospect of a world that treats water merely as a physical medium of unlimited utility. The dynamics of fluids may be put to good use or bad, but Schwenk is really after something else.

Water is a fluid; that is to say, it flows—it has no stable form of its own. And yet when the wind blows over the water, or if the water flows over rocks, then forms arise—ripples, waves, whirlpools, meanders. Schwenk regards these forms as revealing the inner nature of the water itself rather than the nature of the disturbance acting on the water. He supports this view by making many striking comparisons between the water-forms and the forms of living organisms. The latter are drawn from a wide field: the shapes of shells and fish, of growing leaves and gnarled bark, of anatomical structures and embryological development. In each case there is an obvious similarity to a wave or a vortex, an unfolding jet-stream or a pattern of ripples.

The pictures make an immediate appeal to the eye, but the senses cannot penetrate the superficial resemblance; to grasp what forces underlie the similarity of form requires the use of the perceptive eye of thinking. Schwenk's thinking leads him to believe that water is itself a living organism, sensitive to the forces acting upon it in the same way that a plant or an animal is. He believes that the high degree of sensitivity found in some of the most delicate forms in moving water could be developed to give regular indications of the most subtle influences and forces, even to the extent of demonstrating the effects of the heavenly constellations on earthly matter.

In developing this line of thought, Schwenk acknowledges his debt to Rudolf Steiner, mentioning that Steiner worked to show "how scientific thinking, if carried through logically, can lead to the reality of life and its spiritual origins." Steiner did indeed lay great emphasis on the importance of thinking for the attainment of knowledge, and showed how, if thinking itself were taken into account, scientific knowledge need not be confined to the physical world but could also embrace the spiritual. He also stressed the importance of developing a more imaginative kind of thinking, rather than the abstract kind, if one is to be able to grasp the concepts appropriate to the organic realm, rather than the inorganic. This

is because the concepts that are essential to biology concern *forms* rather than *forces*. But thinking must still be precise and objective; that is, it must be so clear that anybody else can follow the line of thought; this usually means in science that thinking takes a mathematical form.

Mathematics need not be abstract and analytical (though it often is), and it is worth remembering that it was geometry that gave Steiner his first assurance that thinking could lead to knowledge, even apart from sense-observation. To deal precisely and objectively with organic forms, one requires an imaginative kind of geometry, and evidently such a geometry could lead to new insights and new concepts in the realm of moving water. But it is not enough to state a possibility, nor does existence of such a possibility constitute proof in any instance.

Unfortunately, Schwenk does not set out his line of reasoning. He makes a number of challenging statements and outlines some very imaginative ideas, which he illustrates and seeks to confirm through the use of pictorial examples. These illustrations appeal strongly to the imagination and, through their extraordinary beauty, to the feelings. This in turn raises an enthusiasm for the subject which may well carry beyond the information that the book gives, along many paths that are only implied or even ignored altogether by the author. For the non-scientific reader, this is a great achievement, and one must suppose that this was the main intention behind the book—to stimulate an imaginative approach to a splendid and important field of study. But for the scientist, or for anybody prepared to think carefully about things, the book raises indirectly many interesting and fundamental questions without attempting to discuss them.

One of these questions concerns the similarity between the forms of flowing water and the forms of living organisms. One can discern through these similarities that the same forces that mould the forms of the branching estuary or the unfolding vortex chain also help in forming the branching tree or the unfolding embryo. But why should one conclude that water is itself an organism, rather than that bodies containing or largely made up of water are susceptible to the forces of fluid dynamics? If water is to be regarded as an organism, what is to become of the distinction so precisely made between organic and inorganic? Water is most certainly made between organic and inorganic? Water is most certainly essential to life, and not only the forms of living organisms but their whole physiology and chemistry depend utterly on its particular properties—as was so clearly pointed out long ago by Henderson in his book, *The Environment of Life* (cited by Schwenk in German)—but if we are to think that water is itself alive, then we must find another word to mean what we have hitherto meant by "life."

It is true that the concept of life is not as precise as we might wish, and there are those who would do away with it altogether. It

has long been agreed that there is no special "vital force" which distinguishes living matter from dead; instead we have learned to recognise the realm of the living through its *vital forms*, inherent in the organism and passed on from one generation to the next. Schwenk seems to be suggesting that the forms of water come into this category.

This is an exciting idea, and needs to be argued in some detail. For if the dividing line between organic and inorganic is becoming blurred in any case, it might be possible to retain the concept of life in a wider context, embracing the waters of the whole Earth-planet as one great organism, rather than abandon it altogether in the face of advancing biochemistry. Schwenk states that it is so, but does not attempt to convince those who do not already agree.

It is one thing to say that water is alive, putting it on a level with the plant kingdom; it is something more to say that it is a "sense organ," for this implies an underlying consciousness of a kind found in the animal kingdom. Here again is a question one would like to see reasoned out. Forms in water may certainly be sensitive, in the way that a delicate balance, or a gyroscope, responds to the slightest touch. Plants, too, can be sensitive in this way, responding to a touch, or to light, but the response is a completely external one—the train of cause and effect is open to investigation. With the sense organs of the animals, however, the response follows a "hidden" phase and may be delayed by minutes or years or even completely inhibited. What goes on in the nervous system is not a train of cause and effect open to investigation in the same way as the inevitable mechanical and chemical responses of plants or instruments. A photographic film is sensitive to light in the simple sense; in the eye there is a layer of cells that is sensitive in just this way, but the eye as a whole—and the creature which sees with it—is sensitive in quite another sense. It is responsive in a sense that implies awareness and the presence of what, following Steiner, we recognise as the soul.

It may be that the waters of the earth are to the Being of Nature what the light-sensitive cells of the eye are to the seeing creature, and again this is an exciting thought, but it is a pity that Schwenk has not discussed his reasons for making this assumption, instead of first demonstrating that water is sensitive like a balance or photographic film and then proceeding as if he had shown it to be sensitive like an ear or an eye.

What we miss is the clarity of thinking exemplified in mathematics that one expects to find in all good science. If science is to advance towards knowledge of the spiritual, it *must* retain this clarity. Admittedly, much more attention should be given to the activity of thinking—current scientific thinking is often so crystal-clear and transparent that it is almost invisible to the scientists using it;

they are well aware of the difficulties of making accurate observations but tend to overlook the part that thinking plays in forming their picture of the world—and we need to develop a more imaginative kind of thinking to deal with a wider range of phenomena; but it is still a great question whether this new thinking will advance very far while it still lives in a realm of comparison and analogy, of lofty ideas supported by beautiful examples, and of religious devotion to the object of study. All this is *necessary* for the kind of advance we are looking for, but *not sufficient* to take us beyond the cosy realm of the soul; to advance to the spirit we need a precise mathematical quality of thinking.

*

People react very differently to questions of comparison and analogy, and what I have written is no doubt influenced by my personal disposition in this respect. There are some who live very strongly in their immediate sense-impressions, and any attempt to shed enlightenment by means of a comparison only adds confusion (for instance, trying to illustrate the classification of animals by an appeal to the feudal system). There are others for whom the underlying structure of relationships, or, if you like, the abstract pattern of connections, is vividly discernible, making analogy a powerful tool of argument (though one does not believe that animals organised their own family tree or that the feudal system was the consequence of natural law). There seem to be others for whom the existence of a close comparison is proof of more than a "mere" analogy, proof of a permeating reality, of ultimate truth (for example, the ordering power of God's wisdom, in the case of animal and social hierarchies).

It may be that I am perverse in not immediately accepting the similarities between water-forms and organic forms as proof of the spiritual nature of water, and that it is only my own limitations as a thinker which prevent me from seeing the truth of Schwenk's statements. Perhaps I am unduly disappointed in finding that Schwenk has not done for the beautiful forms of movement in water what, for instance, Mary Waller did for the Chladni figures, or George Adams and Olive Whicher for the forms of plants. But one should not expect too much from a pioneering effort. I must admit that I am thrilled, aesthetically and intellectually, by the wonderful examples given here—not only in the pictures but in the descriptive text as well—and I believe it is a very good thing to have laid such a thorough basis for the development of a more imaginative science of water. And also to have made this available to the English reader. I shall look forward to the fulfilment of the promise that chaos can be transformed into order.

Ralph Brocklebank.

A Grain of Mustard-Seed

Growing Point. By Alfred Heidenreich. (Christian Community Press. 16/-.)

IN 1955 Dr. Heidenreich wrote a series of articles in the Christian Community Journal on how the Christian Community began. Now, in this very welcome short book, he has amplified the story in many important ways, but it remains a personal account and "does not presume to be anything like a definitive history."

The founding of the Christian Community, as the outcome of an approach to Rudolf Steiner by a group of young men who felt the need for a renewal of religion, was an extraordinary experience for all who took part in it; Steiner himself wrote that "the hours spent with these students in September, 1922 . . . were for me an experience that I cannot but reckon as one of the solemn festivals of my life."

These events are narrated in detail by Dr. Heidenreich; he writes of them with a controlled enthusiasm that never obscures the clarity of the account. He goes on to speak of the early days and the leading personalities (especially Dr. Rittelmeyer) in the young movement; he explains the place and meaning of priesthood and ritual, and of the Sacraments, in the Community's work; he describes its beginnings in England and its gradual spread to other countries outside Germany; and he examines the historical background of its relationship to the Anthroposophical Society.

Dr. Steiner wished the Society to remain independent, non-sectarian, non-dogmatic, open as a source of knowledge and a way of development to persons of any religion, or even of none. He wanted the newly-founded Christian Community to strike its own roots, not to appear to the world as an anthroposophical sect, to be open to persons who wished to share in its Sacraments and its community life, but were not drawn to join the Anthroposophical Society. Hence he saw that if the tiny new congregations were swamped by anthroposophists, both movements would suffer. But it is certainly wrong to imagine that he wished to "warn off" anthroposophists permanently from the Christian Community. There are persons who find Anthroposophy sufficient and persons who find the Christian Community sufficient, and many who welcome both. There is abundant scope for co-operation; none for competition or conflict.

If one remembers how the Christian Community began, with a handful of men and women and no money, and that it has relied throughout on the voluntary contributions of members and friends, few of them affluent, its record of steady growth is encouraging; its greatest need today is for more young ordinands. Steiner recognised that the forces opposed to Christianity and to all religion would gain in strength as the century wore on, and in the Christian Community

he saw a seed which would develop in face of the disintegrative influences to which orthodox Christianity would be increasingly exposed. During the study-course that preceded the birth of the Christian Community he said: "A hundred years from now there will be no Christian Churches left, unless something is founded like that which is intended here."
C.W.

An Enlightenment and a Challenge

The Sufis. By Idries Shah. (W. H. Allen. 45/-.)

"THE Sufis are an ancient spiritual freemasonry whose origins have never been traced or dated. Sufism is the hidden truth behind all the great religions. It has no dogmas, nor creed, nor temples of worship. It believes in the ultimate perfectibility of man, to be attained by a way of life based on the teaching of those who have attained to it, the human exemplars. The teaching is not formalised nor set out in writing, nor can it be discovered by intellectual research. In so far as Sufism is conveyed in writing, that is done in hidden code, for which the Arabic language is especially adapted. The true meaning is perceptible only to the Sufi. It is also conveyed in a hidden way in poetry and romance, in music and dance."

In view of this summary of the nature of Sufism, taken almost direct from Idries Shah's book, it may be wondered at that anyone should attempt to write a book about so secret an Order. As Robert Graves says in his Introduction, "The book will be distributed mostly among readers without much sense of what the author is saying; yet if he had written in a way they clearly understood, he would have been saying something altogether different."

The book serves an important purpose. Islamic Sufism has been widespread in the East for the past fourteen centuries, and throughout the Middle Ages, as a result of the Saracen Conquest of Africa and Spain, it had a great, if not always acknowledged, influence on European thought. After the fourteenth century the Western interest in Sufism lapsed, but in the past hundred years—and especially in the last forty years, it has re-awakened. According to Idries Shah, it is estimated that between twenty and forty million people in the world are now attached to Sufi Schools. It is inevitable that imitation movements and shallow esoteric sects should arise and claim to be Sufism, and it is valuable that an authoritative account of the history and significance of true Sufism should be given. This book also serves as a bridge between two separated worlds of thought—spiritual "illumination" and scientific logic.

Nevertheless, to the reviewer, whose approach is governed by the scientific logic of the sense-perceptible, the book presents an almost insoluble problem. Apart from the fact that he is deliberately

warned off by Robert Graves's Introduction, he is continually confronted by claims and alleged facts that contradict his ideas of rationality, and if he ventures to criticise or appraise Sufi expositions, he is told that their true meaning is concealed in code or allegory, and that the hidden truth cannot be revealed except to those who have learned to understand "the rationality of the irrational and the truth of the illogical." In two long and sympathetic reviews of the book in the *Spectator* and the *New Statesman*, one reviewer concludes that the Sufic truth is more likely to be acquired by those who receive knowledge through the pores of their skin rather than through their head, while the other can hope for no clearer definition of a Sufi than that of a Persian lexicographer, "A Sufi is a Sufi."

The situation, however, is quite different for the anthroposophist, by whom the omnipresent reality and working of Spirit in the universe and the potentiality of different levels of consciousness in man are fully accepted, and for whom the spiritual evolution of mankind is the basic assumption of his own world-outlook. He will realise at once that the origin of Sufism is the same primeval human awareness of spirit which mankind in general has lost and which is the basis of Rudolf Steiner's explanation of the history of human evolution. Nevertheless, he will find that Sufism approaches man's need of a deeper knowledge and reveals to him the path to his final spiritual evolution with a different emphasis and by a different method. This should be for him both an enlightenment and a challenge.

Sheikh Idries Shah's book is a well-written, honest and detailed account of the history of Sufism, and, as far as is possible to the uninitiated reader, an indication of its content. It suffers from the lack of an Index, at least of proper names, most of which are quite unfamiliar to the English reader. The mode of exposition is defined as "scatter." The subject-matter, which by its nature cannot be expounded as an ordered whole, is approached from different angles. The table of contents gives an indication of this and is the best guide to an understanding of the author's mode of exposition.

The opening three chapters present the problem of the relationship between the initiated and the uninitiated in the form of three arresting fables or parables. The first presents the general attitude of the ordinary man to the "deeper knowledge"; the second reveals how varied, and apparently quite different, approaches to the supernatural find reconciliation in Sufic illumination; while the third reveals the errors of partial and unguided contact with supersensible reality.

The next seven chapters deal with the history of Sufism and its influence upon Western mysticism and culture. There is also given some of the teaching of its greatest exponents. While it is shown that, under whatsoever name, the secret transmission of the deeper knowledge has existed from primeval times, the historical

period of its spread under the name "Sufism" started with the explosion of Islam from the desert in the seventh century A.D. Many things contributed to this in a remarkable way. Islam provided better conditions for propagating a hidden doctrine than other religions. In the first place, in Islam religious minorities were for the most part granted freedom from persecution, in great contrast to the lethal heresy-hunting of the Catholic Church at that time. Secondly, the Arabs were by origin dwellers in the barren highlands of Arabia and Central Asia, where mysticism flourished more naturally than in the rich civilisations they surrounded. Mohammed himself was deeply imbued with mystical experience. Although at one time challenged by Islamic theologians, Sufism reached a permanent truce with orthodox Islam.

Again, the spread of Islamic conquest carried the religion of Islam to Spain and Morocco in the West and to the valley of the Indus in the East, and with it the Arabic tongue. Not only was Arabic the compulsory medium of Islamic worship, but it became a unique instrument of Sufi teaching, because in it a word could carry a number of quite different meanings. Thus it provided a code by which the inner meaning of a poem or writing would be discernible only by the Sufi initiate.

Finally, in the East, Sufi teachers contacted all the ancient centres of mystical teaching, and its method of teaching by a School gathered round an Initiate Teacher or human Exemplar was familiar in the East, and the movement spread even to China and Japan. In the West, not only its secret wisdom, but the expression of it in philosophy, poetry, music, and dancing had the deepest influence on Western culture from the tenth to the fourteenth century. Idries Shah makes the widest claims for the dependence of Western mysticism on Sufic thought and practice in expounding these in chapters XI to XVIII, and in regard to this one reviewer has labelled him, not unfairly, as an "annexationist." As Rudolf Steiner has shown, there were independent European streams of mysticism which, while related to Islamic Sufism, were not derived from it.

In the final chapters of the book the author deals more intimately with Sufic teaching and method, throwing great light on the nature of the Dervish Orders, and the place in Sufic teaching of the creed of love and also of miracles and magic. But to dwell further on these is beyond the scope of this review. The careful study of them will repay the reader.

*

To the anthroposophist, this exposition of Sufism presents an enquiry and a challenge, for he finds himself a follower of a different approach to higher knowledge. Rudolf Steiner, in the presentation of his Anthroposophy, has abandoned the secrecy of the ancient Mystery centres and of teaching concealed in code, and has not only

set out clearly the paths to the acquisition of Higher Knowledge, but has revealed in detail, as Spiritual Science, the factual spirit background of man and the Universe, and the relationship of man, in his origin and destiny, to a whole range of creative spiritual beings. He has also shown the transforming effect of the application of this knowledge to all human activities.

He emphasised, however, in all this process the need of deep inner transformation. In his *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* he urges, "For every step in the acquisition of new supersensible powers, take three steps in the perfection of your own character." Moreover he sets out again and again the qualities of being necessary for the seeker at every level of higher consciousness. Nevertheless, in the practice of Anthroposophy today the emphasis is on the acquisition and application of knowledge of the supersensible rather than upon the inner self-development of the seeker. This was clearly expressed to me some years ago in a remark made to me by a very intelligent young man moving towards Anthroposophy from the teaching and practice of Ouspensky, a modern western form of Sufism. "Anthroposophists," he said, "seem to know everything about the origin, nature and destiny of the Universe and Man, but they are not interested in changing themselves. The followers of Ouspensky are concerned only with changing themselves, in order that they may advance towards the goal of human perfection."

Now Rudolf Steiner's presentation of Anthroposophy is not merely a variation of method. It is based on insight into the evolutionary nature of human development, a fact that is fundamental to Sufi teaching and is often referred to by Idries Shah. In the period covered by the Sufi-Islamic expansion and its influence upon Europe, mankind was at the stage of soul-evolution, called by Steiner the Age of the Intellectual Soul. It was the stage at which man was becoming conscious of himself and seeking to understand his relationship with the familiar world around him. The problems of human knowledge and behaviour were his concern.

These problems are still with us, but they are overshadowed by a still more urgent one that has arisen only in our time. The rapid and bewildering advance in scientific knowledge has posed for the scientist the question, not of *how* we know, but of *what* we know. Moreover, his horizon has been lifted beyond the familiar earth and its environment to cosmic distances and objects; with almost daily advance he is fashioning what he hopes and believes will be lines of contact that will bring the whole Cosmos within the scientific sense-derived forms of thinking and relationship in which man is today working. In such an approach to the Universe the spiritual nature of man would tend to disappear from human consciousness. The only answer to this newly-discovered range of human awareness and power is the clear manifestation of the spiritual nature of the Universe and Man, and also its exposition

in terms of the human faculty of thought developed to its true spiritual dimension. This was the aim and purpose of Rudolf Steiner.

But Anthroposophy and Sufism are not opposed to one another, or mutually exclusive. The actual development and reorientation of human personality is essential to entering into the Anthroposophical world-outlook as a living experience. It is not enough to assent to Steiner's teaching about esoteric human development, or to listen to his lectures about the path of that development. We need from time to time schools for the study of the application to ourselves of esoteric moral development in the light of the whole teaching of Anthroposophy.

That, however, demands the Teacher, the Exemplar, the developing Initiate. Here again Sufism utters a challenge to us. In Sufic practice the three indispensable conditions are the Teacher or Exemplar, the School, and the Work in the School under the Teacher's guidance. There are many instances in Sufic history of a new Teacher being brought to a School at the passing of its own Teacher. In Sufism the School should not carry on as such if it is no longer attached to a living Exemplar. If it does, and tries to keep up its life only by the traditions and writings of its former Teacher, the teaching becomes institutionalised. Dogma and orthodoxy develop, and there arises the claiming of rank and authority in the School, on other grounds than acknowledged spiritual and esoteric supremacy.

Anthroposophy has never really recovered from the loss of its great Exemplar, Rudolf Steiner. In his founding, during the last two years of his life, of the School of Spiritual Science, there is manifest in his foundation lectures his desire for the development among his followers of one or more who could wear the mantle of his esoteric leadership. That was not to be, but the story of subsequent years in the Anthroposophical Movement bears out in a warning way the dangers which Sufism sees in the existence of an esoteric movement without the presence of a living esoteric Exemplar. It is a challenge to all Anthroposophists.

*

There is also another direction in which this book, *The Sufis*, throws light upon an important historical observation of Rudolf Steiner. In a course of lectures called *Three Streams in the Evolution of Mankind*,¹ he reveals a great danger which threatened the spiritual evolution of mankind, arising towards the year 666, during the epoch of the Intellectual Soul. The intention of certain Ahrimanic beings, led by a being whom Steiner calls "Sorat, the Beast," was to bestow prematurely on men "everything they will ever be able

¹ Revised translation published by the Rudolf Steiner Press, 1965.

to gain through the Consciousness Soul." If this purpose had been achieved, "a number of geniuses would have arisen, particularly among educated people in the West. . . . The knowledge that in the normal way men will have in 2,493 would have sprouted up in 666, not indeed in men as they were by nature, but through prophetic imagination inspired with the force of genius, and would have revealed itself to unsuspecting Western peoples. . . . It cannot be conceived—need not be conceived—into what situation the so-called civilised world would have come if it had been deluged with this wisdom in the year 666! With their lack of self-discipline, people would have come utterly to grief."

In its original form this Ahrimanic design could not succeed; it had been countered already through the Mystery of Golgotha, by which the Beast had been "put in chains by Christ Jesus."¹ But the Ahrimanic powers were not entirely defeated. For their centre of activity on earth they chose the Persian Academy of Jundi Sábúr, not far from Baghdad, and—as we shall see—they were partially successful in causing a strongly Ahrimanic influence, originating in Jundi Sábúr, to spread out from the Arab world into Western Europe. At this point we can begin to relate Steiner's revelations to the events of recorded history.

In 661 the first Khalifate² of the Arabian Empire was established at Damascus. It was the beginning of a cleavage between the civilisations that had been swept into the Arabian Empire and the strict Islamism of their conquerors. Syria was a highly-developed Roman province, nominally almost entirely Christian, and the government was administered by Christian officials. The Syrians came to feel contempt for their less cultured conquerors, while their own laxity of life and conduct provoked the anger of the Islamic conscience of Medina and Mecca.

In 749 there was a revolt and the Umayyad Dynasty of Damascus was supplanted by the Abbasids, who established their capital at Baghdad. The revolt rose on the wave of Islamic dissatisfaction, but it was really an expression of Persian nationalism, and resulted in a Persianised Mohammedanism. The Abbasids were Persian Moslems and they brought with them the age-long Persian culture and the deep esotericism that was at the foundation of the Persian Mazdean religion. To this they added the Greek wisdom of Aristotle that had taken refuge in Asia in the sixth century, from Christian persecution. But this was an Aristotelianism translated into Arabic at Jundi Sábúr, from Syrian translations of the original Greek, and it included a great deal of the Neoplatonism of Plotinus, with its deep esoteric teaching expressed in terms of Greek logic.

¹ Cf. the Epistle of Jude, verse 6, and Revelation xx, 2-3.

² "Khalif" is a title of a successor of Mohammed.

There were also translations of many of Aristotle's scientific works. This combination of the ancient esoteric wisdom of the East with Neoplatonic mysticism, expressed in the formalised logic of Aristotle and applied to many branches of human thought and activity, would provide the possibility of a great advance in human knowledge.

There developed at Baghdad a culture that exceeded any in Europe or Asia, and it centred on the Academy of Jundi Sábúr. It rose to its height under two great figures, Harun-ar-Rashid, who succeeded to the Khalifate in 786, and his Wazir, Yahya the Barmakid, who had been the Khalif's tutor during his boyhood in Marw in eastern Persia. Yahya was a mysterious personality, steeped in the deepest esotericism of the East. His family were hereditary abbots of a Buddhist monastery, but he himself had conformed to the Mazdean religion of Persia, and, after the Moslem conquest, had embraced Islam. He was passionately attached to the Greek learning of Jundi Sábúr, especially to its esoteric Neoplatonism.

It was these two personalities who pursued the Ahrimanic aim of a culture, based on esoteric knowledge shaped by Aristotelian logic, that should spread over the world-wide Arabian Empire. At that moment, as in all history, the human actors would not be conscious of serving the cosmic Ahrimanic purpose, would not even be aware of it. But through them the Ahrimanic purpose was being worked out.

Meanwhile, at the Abbassid court, Persian influence thrust the Arab element into the background, deriding the Arabs as semi-barbarous nomads of the desert. But once again Islamic orthodoxy asserted itself. The Persian philosophers, the esoteric Sufis, had to come to terms with the Islamic theologians. Knowledge based on esotericism was accepted as valid for the thinker, but it was not to be propagated universally, so as to contradict for the ordinary man the orthodox teachings of the Islamic faith. This was the origin of the "double truth" which played so large a part two centuries later in early Scholasticism. This agreement defeated the Barmakid's Ahrimanic dream, and he himself fell a victim to Islamic hostility. In 803 he and his family suddenly fell from their high estate, and Yahya died in prison in 806.

This interpretation of history is borne out by Rudolf Steiner in the lectures referred to:

Whoever has any inkling of the wisdom of Jundi Sábúr will indeed regard it as in the highest sense dangerous for mankind, but also as a phenomenon of great power. And the intention was to deluge with this learning, not only the immediate vicinity, but the whole of the then known civilised world, Asia, Europe and everywhere. The preliminaries for this were prepared. But the influence that was to have gone out from Jundi Sábúr was deadened, held back by

retarded spiritual forces which were nevertheless connected—although they form a kind of opposition—with the outflow of the Christ Impulse. Through the appearance of Mohammed and his visionary religious teaching, there was a deadening of the influence that was meant to go out from Jundí Sábúr . . . Mohammedanism was destined to deaden the Gnostic wisdom of Jundí Sábúr, to take from it the strong Ahrimanicly seductive force which would otherwise have been exercised upon mankind.

Sufism remained an esoteric secret, but it followed Arabian conquests into Spain and, as Idries Shah shows in his book, it vitally affected European thought and culture. To quote Rudolf Steiner again:

It is possible to trace step by step, from decade to decade, how the Gnostic wisdom of Jundí Sábúr—certainly in a deadened form—spread over Southern Europe and Africa to Spain, to France, to England, and then over the Continent by way of the monasteries. We can trace how the supersensible is driven out and only the sense-perceptible retained; we can trace the tendency, as it were, the intention. And that which arises from the deadening of the Gnostic wisdom of Jundí Sábúr is Western scientific thinking. In this connection it is particularly interesting to study Roger Bacon—not Bacon of Verulam but Roger Bacon. Although he was a monk—not, however, looked upon very favourably by his colleagues—we can see how the Gnostic wisdom of Jundí Sábúr flowed into him.

In other lectures Steiner reveals how Harun-ar-Rashid and Yahya the Barmakid still pursued their dream. Harun, he says, was reincarnated as Francis Bacon, the father of modern science, and Yahya as Amos Comenius, one of the founders of modern education.

History itself interposed in the living contact of Eastern esotericism with the West. Following the expulsion of the Moors from Spain and the growth of political and economic power in Europe, contact of the West with the East was severed, except as a field for exploitation. But the impact of two world wars has brought that to an end. To-day in the West there is a growing interest in this creedless movement of the East for the self-development of man towards an evolutionary goal of human perfection.

But there is still danger in some of the Ahrimanic developments from modern Sufism, such as Scientology. Based on a highly developed psychology allied to knowledge of Eastern esoteric secrets, it offers to mankind a utilitarian and often harmful enjoyment of powers and experiences without the necessary self-development of character.

Meanwhile there need not be between Anthroposophy and genuine Sufism any sense of opposition or mutual exclusiveness. They should understand and supplement each other. Anthroposophy

can rightly claim that in its revelation of a spiritual cosmology it is countering Ahriman's latest and most deadly attack—through scientific materialism—on man's attainment of his true spiritual evolution, but in fulfilling this task it has much to learn from the Sufists' concentration upon persistent and conscientious self-development. It is in this sense that Idries Shah's book offers to the Anthroposophist both an enlightenment and a challenge.

A. P. Shepherd.

Freedom Through Courage

Chekhov. A Biography by Ernest Simmons. (Cape. 45/-.)

THIS new detailed biography by the American Professor Simmons brings to expression once more the interest still inspired by those Russian writers who, during the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, were seeking some spiritual solution for the miseries and cruelties of Russian life. In the modern world we have seen that the spiritual solution was rejected for a coldly intellectual one, ineffective to heal the evils it had thought to overcome. Paradoxically, Chekhov is a proudly valued writer in the Russia of to-day, yet it is easy to see that he has far more in common with modern writers who are banned than with those officially favoured.

It seems an increasingly urgent modern need that we should be able to see some connection between a man's life and his thought; to find the unifying principle. It is very satisfying to discover in this biography how integrated were Chekhov's ideas and his actions.

In the early part of his life it is particularly his actions that inspire admiration. As the third son in a family of former serfs, he had to meet every kind of obstacle to his desire to become a doctor and a writer; he overcame them all, and emancipated not only himself but his entire family. He gradually supplanted the tyrannous rule of his father—enforced, as was the custom in Russian peasant life, by physical brutality—and became the guide and provider for his parents and his brothers and sister.

His early efforts at writing were aimed solely at making money—he wrote short pieces for the humorous magazines. It was later in life that the sense of dedication, the decisiveness and strength that had formerly flowed into his mastery of outer destiny flowed instead into his writing. Outwardly, these later years were years of restlessness, dominated by illness, for he had contracted tuberculosis. During these years it was as if he wished to keep all situations, all relationships beyond his family, in a condition of potentiality—valued, certainly, but ungrasped.

In his relationships with women this sometimes brought

unhappiness. His marriage to the actress Olga Knipper three years before his death, when he was forty-one, was more the result of her decisiveness than of his. She made it clear to him that he must either marry her or let her go. He could not let her go; with prescience he had written to her, soon after their first meeting, "Hello, last page of my life; great actress of the Russian Land."

Professor Simmons points out that in his writing, particularly in his plays, Chekhov concentrated on the inner substance of people—not on the outer events, but on the reactions of his characters to these events. The sub-titles to many of the chapters in this biography are quotations from Chekhov's own letters; one is "My holy of holies . . . is absolute freedom," and he reveals dramatically where freedom really lies. Nina, in "The Seagull," experiences the destruction of her outer hopes and longings, yet escapes inner destruction to say in the final act ". . . what matters is not fame, not glory, which I used to dream about, but the power to endure. . . . I no longer suffer so much. . . . I'm not afraid of life."

In *Uncle Vanya*, also, Chekhov shows how freedom lies not in success, but in the courage born of defeat.

It is not only the positive and enduring qualities which Chekhov illuminates; he casts a piercing ray also on the stupid and the trivial. "You say you have wept over my plays," he writes in a letter, "but I did not write them for that purpose. . . . I only wished to tell people honestly 'Look at yourselves, see how badly and boringly you live.' The principal thing is that people should understand this, and when they do, they will surely create for themselves another and a better life. I will not see it, but I know it will be entirely different, not like what we have now."

The biography makes some interesting comments on the relationship between Chekhov and Tolstoy. Professor Simmons suggests that they represent a certain polarity; Tolstoy saw love as the solution for all earthly problems, while Chekhov sought truth. One can indeed see them as illustrating Rudolf Steiner's words:

In Love lives the seed of Truth,
In Truth seek the root of Love.

In the love which Tolstoy strove to make the foundation of his life—sometimes, perhaps, in a confused manner—one perceives the seed of truth; and one sees that love is indeed rooted in the truth which Chekhov sought to uncover.

There are some parallels between Chekhov's thought and that of Heraclitus, as Rudolf Steiner describes it in the third chapter of *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. Heraclitus tried to convince his uninitiated fellow-men that a realisation of "the play of the eternal" gives man that sense of security in life of which he is deprived by concentrating too earnestly on transitory things. Chekhov shared

something of that vision, which Rudolf Steiner describes in these words: "Only one who sees death in life and life in death, and in both the eternal, high above life and death, can view the merits and demerits of existence in the right light. Then even imperfections become justified, for in them too lives the eternal. What they are from the standpoint of the limited lower life, they are only in appearance."

This is a rewarding book, which sends one back to Anton Chekhov's own works with renewed enthusiasm.

Eileen Bird.

Poet, Painter, Prophet, Printer

William Blake. By Kaethe Wolf-Gumpold. (Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart. DM 16.)

IN the autumn of 1931 my tutor at Oxford asked me to take William Blake as the subject for my next essay. By way of friendly warning he added: "He was, of course, mad; he saw God in an apple tree." This comment aroused my curiosity, for it seemed to me that, if God existed at all, he was as likely to manifest himself in an apple tree as anywhere else. I already knew some of the "Songs of Innocence" and of the "Songs of Experience" and had often enough sung lustily "Jerusalem," without much idea of what it meant, but now I determined to find out something more about this madman. So I hied me to Blackwell's and bought for two shillings the Everyman edition of "The Poems and Prophecies of William Blake." This had been published for the centenary of Blake's death, edited and with an introduction, dated January, 1927, by Max Plowman.

That copy I now have before me inscribed with my name, college and the date 27.11.31. On the fly-leaf I had written, without further comment, two complementary statements by Blake: "Natural Objects always did and now do weaken, deaden and obliterate Imagination in Me" and "One Power alone makes a Poet: Imagination, The Divine Vision." They are actually from his annotations to Wordsworth's "Poems," and, written in 1826, a year before Blake's death, are typical examples of his uncompromising clarity.

In the days that followed I read through much of the poems and prophecies, and then through Plowman's spirited introduction. By that time I had become convinced that Blake was right and my tutor was wrong (looking through Blake's letters for purposes of this review I came across this sentence, which seems to elucidate the difference between them: "The tree that moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing which stands in the way"). As my reading progressed I had become increasingly

aware that much of Blake could best be apprehended through the ideas of Rudolf Steiner (the Argument of "There is No Natural Religion" runs: "Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception: he perceives more than sense, though ever so acute, can discover"), and that he had many affinities with D. H. Lawrence, who had died the previous year and whose writings I was reading with avidity (the second verse of "London" runs: "In every cry of every man, In every infant's cry of fear, In every voice, in every ban, The *mind-forg'd* manacles I hear").

By the time I had written my essay I decided it was quite unsuitable for presentation to my tutor, a conscientious and competent instructor, whose "organs of perception" were, however, conventionalised and atrophied: so I found some excuse for missing my tutorial. Blake, nevertheless, had become a presence for the rest of my life. In the following years I was fortunate enough to find friends in London, in artistic circles and in the Christian Community, who shared this enthusiasm and to be able to handle with joy in the Print Room of the British Museum the Illuminated Books, especially "The Book of Thel," as they had come from the hands of Blake himself. Then the war and its aftermath took me into quite different fields of activity. It was therefore with eagerness but also with trepidation that, a quarter of a century afterwards, I accepted the editors' invitation to review Kaethe Wolf-Gumpold's book on Blake.

Frau Wolf I had come to know in Stuttgart in the years immediately before the war. She was a priest of the Christian Community, but unable at that time to celebrate in public owing to her Jewish descent. In 1939 she came to this country as a refugee, but during the war was interned in the Isle of Man for over two years. After her release she lived in London and followed her vocation, but in 1954 failing eyesight forced her into retirement. From that time on she lived mostly at Saltoun Hall, the Scottish home of Capt. Fletcher.

It was here that she cultivated the fellowship of William Blake, many of whose works were put at her disposal by her host. Herself trained as a craftswoman, with experience as artist and priest, she had the equipment for an appreciation of Blake, the unique manifestation of Poet, Painter, Prophet and Printer, one and indivisible. Already over fifty when she came to this country, uprooted from her German and Swabian cultural background, Frau Wolf could never have felt at home in an alien culture. But in Blake she found a kindred spirit who had also been without home in the alien culture of his times. Devotedly she sought to make his treasures accessible to friends in the German cultural tradition, and this book was the outcome.

As the last years of Blake's life were sweetened by the companionship of younger artists, so must Frau Wolf's last years



Portrait drawing of William Blake at the ages of 69 and 28,
by Frederick Tatham.

Frontispiece from *William Blake*. (Collection Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon).

have been lightened by the fellowship with Blake. She died on Ascension Day in 1961, a few days before her 73rd birthday. In a memorial notice in *The Christian Community*, Adam Bittleston wrote:

Those who knew Kaethe Wolf well, recognised in her a thoroughly and fundamentally artistic personality. It was natural for her to rejoice both in the beauty of nature and in works of human art; and to be concerned herself with the creation and the sharing of beauty. But there was nothing arbitrary in her will as an artist, no wish to self-expression for its own sake. She found in the beauty of nature, the signature of the Creator; and she wanted to find in the works of men, and in what she produced herself, the signature of Christian discipleship.

Again and again in her life, destiny put severe hindrances before her, that made the visible fulfilment of her priesthood for periods very difficult or impossible. But no tragedy in the external world could alter her innermost intention. To her last hour, the words of the Sacraments were plainly her spiritual home. Her priestly purpose she carried on through death.

These are fitting words. What is curious and astonishing about them in the present context is that they could with little modification have been written equally well about William Blake!

Blake was born on November 28, 1757, the second son of a respectable hosier, at 28 Broad Street, Golden Square, Soho. Apart from three years at Felpham on the Sussex coast, from 1800 to 1803, he spent his entire life within easy walking distance of Golden Square, peculiarly well-named abode for such a spirit. From the age of 15 to 22 he served his apprenticeship as an engraver and emerged a thoroughly trained craftsman, competent to earn his living by the skill of his hands. In his 25th year he married Catherine Boucher, the daughter of a Battersea market gardener, and no marriage could have been happier, or, in spiritual terms, more fruitful.

Five years later his younger brother Robert died, and this was to be a turning point in Blake's life: he described how Robert's form appeared to him in a nocturnal vision and revealed to him the details of the unique process of engraving which he was to use in making his Illuminated Books. Using this process, he engraved and illustrated the "Songs of Innocence" and "The Book of Thel" in 1789. It was the year of the French Revolution, which Blake greeted with great enthusiasm, soon to be disappointed. Among other productions, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" was completed in 1793 ("A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees"), and the "Songs of Experience" followed in 1794.

These were years of great productivity but of deepening neglect, culminating in the fiasco of an exhibition of pictures in 1809; with few exceptions his contemporaries lacked the "organs of perception" for his visionary works. Nevertheless, through long years of obscurity, he remained true to his visions, writing "Vala" (begun

1796) and illuminating "Milton" (completed 1808) and "Jerusalem" (completed 1818). In 1817 he had been introduced to John Linnell, a young artist, and, in the years that followed there gathered around him a group of distinguished young painters, who regarded themselves as his disciples and his house as "The House of the Interpreter."

Despite increasing infirmity, his last years were years of triumph and fulfilment during which he produced, commissioned by Linnell, the superb engravings of "The Book of Job" and the magnificent water-colours for Dante's "Inferno," on which he was still at work when he died in 1827, a few months before his 70th birthday. Catherine followed him four years later.

In her book Frau Wolf sets out to accompany Blake through the steps of his life, describing his pictures as they arise and translating some of his poetry and prose for the benefit of German readers. Fittingly, for the record of such a man, she begins before the beginning, and continues after the end! She quotes with approval the remark of Thomas Wright, in his "Life of William Blake" (1929), that "Had William Blake written his own life he would have commenced with an account of his activities in a pre-existent state, from which he had trailed clouds of glory. That he had lived previously he never doubted and he went so far as to say (in commenting, about 1808, on Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Discourses": "Reynolds thinks that man learns all that he knows. I say on the contrary that man brings all that he has or can have into the world with him." Towards the end of her book Frau Wolf again quotes from Wright: Crabb Robinson meeting Blake for the first time in December, 1825, remarks: "I put it to you, Mr. Blake, that an eternity *a parte post* is inconceivable without an eternity *a parte ante*," to which Blake replied eagerly, his eye brightened, "To be sure. We are all co-existent with God."

Between these two points of birth and death, Frau Wolf is Blake's faithful companion. Aptly she reveals the spiritual background to his "Jerusalem." With priestly understanding and a craftsman's appreciation she describes the death of Robert and the development of Blake's technique as an engraver. Passages from Blake's poem on "The French Revolution" are translated, but it would have been interesting at this point to have been told something about the impact of the French Revolution on young German poets. Elsewhere there are interesting references to the connections between Blake and German culture: we learn for instance that a copy of his engravings for Young's "Night Thoughts" found its way into the hands of Novalis, poet of *Hymnen an die Nacht*, while Schlegel, the translator of Shakespeare, expressed the greatest admiration for Blake's illustrations to Flaxman's "Hesiod."

The Felpham years are well covered, with translations from the

magnificent letters Blake wrote during this period to friends back in London. A full description is given of Blake's disastrous exhibition of pictures in 1809, with lengthy translations from his splendid "Descriptive Catalogue," written for that occasion. Long extracts are translated from "Vala," "Milton" and "Jerusalem" (a point here requires checking: Frau Wolf says there are ten remaining copies of "Jerusalem," each hand-coloured by Blake; Sir Geoffrey Keynes, however, writes, in a study of the "Illuminated Books" in 1964, that there are only four copies, of which only one is coloured).

A detailed account is given of Blake's death, which may be briefly summarised in the words of one of his disciples, George Richmond, who was present: "He died on Sunday Night at 6 O'clock in a most glorious manner. He said He was going to that Country he had all His life wished to see & expressed himself Happy hoping for Salvation through Jesus Christ—Just before he died His Countenance became fair—His eyes Brighten'd and He burst out in Singing of the things he Saw in Heaven."

Frau Wolf gives her book the sub-title: Attempt at an Introduction to his Life and Work. This is what it is. It was less her aim to interpret Blake than to make known his life and work to German readers. In this she has admirably succeeded. The book is well printed, runs to 186 pages and has 17 well chosen reproductions in black and white. Owing to increasing blindness Frau Wolf was unable to revise her manuscript and to give the book its final shape, but friends and members of the publishing firm have made every effort to complete her work and have indeed presented a worthy memorial. It would have been her hope, and is ours, that this book may be a means of introducing William Blake to German friends, especially to those interested in the work of Rudolf Steiner.

Returning to Blake after the lapse of a quarter of a century, what strikes the reviewer is not the obscurity of Blake, though there is much one does not understand, but the devastating clarity; not his madness, but his overwhelming sanity. To a clergyman who was dissatisfied with his execution of a commission, Blake wrote in 1799: "You say that I want somebody to Elucidate my Ideas. But you ought to know that What is Grand is necessarily obscure to Weak men. That which can be made Explicit to the Idiot is not worth my care. The wisest of the Ancients consider'd what is not too explicit as the fittest for instruction because it rouses the faculties to act." The clergyman seems to have had the grace to ponder this letter and consider it worth keeping; we too should ponder the possible implications before charging Blake with obscurity.

Indeed, obscurity was a thing he abhorred. When Reynolds wrote, "We will allow a poet to express his meaning, when his meaning is not well known to himself, with a certain degree of obscurity, as it is one source of the sublime," Blake replied:

"Obscurity is Neither the Source of the Sublime nor of any Thing Else."

At the time I was writing this review the business page happened to fall out of *The Times*, and my eye was caught by a paragraph headed "Vietnam Boost to Economy" dated from Washington on August 13 which ran as follows:

Vietnam brightens the 1966 economic outlook as viewed by federal forecasters, Dow Jones reports. The new defence build-up dispels fears of a turn-of-the-year slow-down. . . . Pentagon contracts will boost production and jobs in next year's first quarter. This is expected to more than offset the dampening effects of higher social security taxes.

This at a time when we were being harrowed with casualty figures, with pictures of the burning of village huts and of maimed women and children in Vietnam! What is madness, this sane appraisal of the contemporary position, or Blake's visions of eternity?

There is a very revealing footnote in a letter Blake wrote from Felpham to an old friend in London in 1801: "Next time I have the happiness to see you, I am determined to paint another Portrait of you from Life in my best manner, for Memory will not do in such minute operations; for I have now discover'd that without Nature before the painter's Eye, he can never produce any thing in the walks of Natural Painting. Historical Designing is one thing & Portrait Painting another, & they are as Distinct as any two Arts can be. Happy would that Man be who could unite them!"

There is no confusion here, nor have I found any elsewhere in Blake, between what is seen with the eye and what is seen with the mind's eye; the confusion arises in our own minds because we insist on regarding the vegetable universe as "real" and imagination as "unreal," whereas Blake regards matter and imagination as two aspects of reality. In an appendix to his *Apocalypse*, Emil Bock writes:

Through the intellectualism of the modern age, men believe that what the senses show us, what is easy to grasp, is reality; and what we add to it with our thinking is only a human adjunct. As opposed to this Rudolf Steiner in his early books on the theory of knowledge, worked out the conclusion that what the senses show us is only half of reality, and that the other half which is not revealed to the senses, is perceived through thinking, so that thinking is an organ for the second half of reality. The two halves balance each other: perception and concept.

This is not meant to be, but could serve as, a comment on Blake. Bearing this passage in mind, we can begin to approach his work with a new understanding.

Kenneth R. Walsh.

How Rudolf Steiner Spoke of Music

Rudolf Steiners musikalische Impulse. By Karl von Baltz. (Philosophisch-Anthroposophischer Verlag am Goetheanum, Dornach, 1961. DM 7.)

MUSIC and Anthroposophy are related in a special way. Whereas Rudolf Steiner practised all the other arts and gave advice about their execution, he neither composed nor played an instrument. When he speaks of music he uses musical terms in a much wider sense than musicians do, and for this reason he cannot be easily understood. When he uses words such as interval, major and minor, etc., they mostly become supramusical and universal.

In order to understand this, it may be helpful to look at the meaning of music for the ancient Chinese. For them, the universe consisted of four congruent factors: time, space, matter and music. Every year the Minister of Measures had to go to the Western Mountains to watch the rising of the phoenix, who gave him the pitch of the world from which everything connected with culture could be derived. One of the most important revelations, called *pa yin*, put congruent, corresponding entities into a system. Three examples may illustrate the point: east, spring, mountain, bamboo, pan-pipes; south, summer, fire, silk, zither; west, autumn, dampness, metal, bell.

The "idea" of these corresponding entities is hidden from our present-day consciousness, but it was alive in China. Lao-Tsze, in condemning sensual pleasure, compares the five notes of the pentatonic scale with the colours black, red, green, white, yellow, and with the tastes salt, bitter, sour, acrid and sweet:

Colour's five hues from th'eyes their sight will take;
Music's five notes the ears as deaf can make;
The flavours five deprive the mouth of taste.

In this way the Chinese initiate built up the lost unity of the macrocosmos. Sound reveals the hidden secrets of material things.

Steiner talks mostly about music as it was composed in the 18th and 19th centuries, when the diatonic scales and "tonality" (better, "tonicality") were prevalent. This period lies between the modal experience, which precedes the major-minor period, and the atonal and serial twelve-tone period of the 20th century.

One of the concepts which Steiner often uses is that of interval. Thinking of Lao-Tsze's description of the five notes which build up the pentatonic scale, one can imagine how limited the mere "sounding" experience of intervals must be, compared with the experience of, let us call them, the ur-intervals.

Just as the ur-plant of Goethe became a perceived concept, through meditative observation of its many manifestations, so the ur-intervals should be experienced with the ear of the spirit, through meditative listening.

In his book, *Rudolf Steiners musikalische Impulse*, Karl von Baltz tries to discern a way through which Steiner's work could help the struggling composer to find the power to put new order into the chaos in which present-day music-making finds itself.

Von Baltz seems to be more philosopher than composer, and his book gives no practical advice for the professional musician. What he does achieve is a concentrated picture of Steiner's teaching of the spiritual significance of music as a cosmic and a human power. He has a great knowledge of the lectures in which Steiner talks about music, and his book consists mostly of quotations from these lectures and of comments on them. The two last chapters are most interesting essays on Orpheus and on the quality of music as motive among the Jewish peoples.

Allow me (since von Baltz's book is not available in English) to bring out from it some points which seem to me of special importance.

Introduction. Through his power of spiritual vision, von Baltz says, Steiner can recognise music as a power in its entirety. He sees it as cosmic and as human. He talks of four stages in which man can experience music: the enthusiastic listener, the experience of sounds as messages from a spirit world, the inner hearing of this spirit world, revelation of the secret of world creation.

Music as a power, Steiner insists, should penetrate our earthly life.

Chapter I. From Steiner's *The Story of My Life*, von Baltz relates the interest which Steiner showed for contemporary music. He acquired great knowledge through attending many concerts of contemporary music.

Chapter II. Man has a delirious craving for the conquering of outer space and thus reaches a kind of threshold. This is musically expressed through screaming dissonances, disturbed rhythms, and incomprehensible melodies. In the 18th century, music spoke in pictures of old mysteries; in the 19th century, self-will imprinted itself on the compositions. In the 20th century, music tries to separate itself entirely from the human being, losing itself in "objectivity," only to return to the human being again. A strong will to organise is now visible, but hardly the ability to achieve it. This is the moment where one can make the step to Spiritual Science.

Von Baltz compares the twice-seven regions of initiation from Steiner's *Theosophy* with the musical equipment, the diatonic scale. With the coming of the ability to experience the spiritual world, natural laws begin to sound as the music of the spheres.

Chapter III. Space is filled with "arithmetic" currents of forces and the effects of all sounds ever expressed. It is an eternal memory, a kind of Akashic record. The wisdom of the world weaves in sounds, and can be brought down to man through speech. Ear and larynx belong to each other.

Chapter IV. Von Baltz here cites Steiner's account of the spiritual history of the sense-organs, and of the musician's need to be born into a family which, like the Bach family, has already developed the right organs through heredity.

Chapter V. Mozart's gifts are explained, in quotations from Steiner, as the fruits of a former incarnation.

Chapter VI. Von Baltz quotes from *Occult Science* the part which describes how harmony of the spheres enters into the liquid state of the earth, creating forms. The physicist, Chladni, and his sound figures are referred to.

Chapter VII. In 1908, von Baltz says, Steiner talked for the first time about the spirit beings who become helpers within the artist. The arts should be united and reconciled. Wagner is quoted, showing his wish to unite Beethoven and Shakespeare.

The new art which unites movement and sound, is created as Eurythmy. The morality of music depends on the morality of the composer. Good music is accompanied by good spirits, bad music by bad spirits.

Von Baltz gives the following autograph book entry made by Steiner:

In art, man redeems the spirit, fettered in the world;
In music he redeems the spirit fettered in himself.

Chapter VIII. Christ, who comes as the redeemer in the darkest hour of humanity, can become the impulse for the new art.

Chapter IX. The importance of the year 1909. Kandinsky and Schönberg. The beginning of Steiner's teaching of the 12 senses. The discovery of the inner spiritual organs. Important books and lecture cycles of Steiner from this period include *Das Wesen der Künstler; Metamorphosen des Seelenlebens; Anthroposophy, Psychosophy, Pneumatosophy*. The relationship of harmonics (overtones) to vowels and consonants is shown.

Chapter X. This concerns the idea of *Entfaltung*, which means "un-folding," though it is usually translated as "development." Goethe's theory of metamorphosis is applied to music and to the whole of Anthroposophy.

Chapter XI. Steiner's lectures of 1908 and 1914 are compared. A new dynamic appears in the later ones. In one of these lectures Steiner says that architecture, sculpture and painting are related to Saturn, Sun and Moon, but music is the real art of our earth evolution. Working from outside, music creates the world-forms, but inwardly it can become the image of initiation. Through a meeting with the *Doppelgänger*, great musical works have been created; not, however, through full consciousness of the meeting, but through an alternation of full consciousness and dream.

Chapter XII. In a history by Steiner of the senses, the ear is shown as a winged larynx. In 1917 Steiner discovers the threefold

nature of man's physical body and of music as melody, harmony and rhythm.

Chapter XIII. In 1914 Steiner spoke of the moral experience of colour and sound, and of the musical intervals as spiritual revelation. Initiation can be achieved through various intervals. For progress in art, the reconciliation of the arts has to come.

Chapter XIV. Von Baltz here gives a list of lectures between 1904 and 1924 in which Steiner speaks about major and minor.

Chapter XV. In the forms of the old Goetheanum, musical forces had flowed so strongly into the architectural ones, that the building could not be understood by the majority of people. The coming of Christ should be revealed in the realm of music.

Chapter XVII. One of the important thoughts here given concerns the "twelvehood" of the tempered chromatic scale and "the bending of the spiral of the 13 senses into a circle of 12 senses." Another tells about the dangers on the path to higher knowledge through music, similar to those experienced on the path of meditation.

Novalis is one the poets penetrated by music to such an extent that he withdraws from the other senses to create a kind of general musical mood, a harmony which works like a universal sense.

With the thoughts about Orpheus and the description of special aspects of the Jewish people, the book ends on a major chord of hope.

F. Rauter.

Living with Colour

Goethe's Theory of Colour. Applied by Maria Schindler. (New Knowledge Books. 45/-.)

THIS is a greatly enlarged and revised version of the author's *Pure Colour*, published in 1946. It is designed primarily to lead the reader in a quite practical way to experience colours and their relationships for himself, with the aid of simple exercises and experiments. It deals also with Goethe's theory of colour in wider contexts, drawing on Rudolf Steiner's indications to show how the Goethean scale of colours can be related to stages of cosmic evolution. Finally, we are given extracts from Goethe's scientific writings and the complete text of his "Researches into the Elements of a Theory of Colour." The volume is most handsomely produced, with 42 plates in colour and other illustrations and diagrams in black and white: for anyone interested in the experience and use of colour, it would make a splendid gift.

C.W.

Poetry and Science

Words in the Mind. By Charles Davy. (Chatto and Windus. 25/-.)

READERS of *Towards a Third Culture* will remember how Charles Davy applied the concept of the evolution of consciousness to shed light on the controversy about the "two cultures," literary and scientific. In his new book he applies it to the subjective dilemma of modern poets, critics and philosophers. These feel the values of the old or literary culture; how do they account for them—in particular for the magical effect of poetry on the mind—in terms of the natural-scientific consciousness of today?

Paul Valéry's case is discussed in detail. "In Valéry the two cultures met and almost sterilised one another." Having written poetry as a young man, for twenty years he ceases to do so, his scientific studies persuading him that the activity is not meaningful. Then he takes it up again, rather as Jung took up with the gods: agnostic about its significance, but finding it valuable for exploring and expressing himself.

Verse translations of his two long poems are given at the end of the book.

Mr. Davy explores also many other dilemmas—of French and English poets and critics, of Marxists and existentialists, finding in them all variations on the sort of subjective life which goes along with the scientific or "onlooker" consciousness. The book ends with a short discussion of the place of the arts in the modern world.

There is little overt Anthroposophy in it. The question is investigated mainly in non-anthroposophical terms. In doing so Mr. Davy has produced a book of absorbing interest, and one which anthroposophists will find useful in relating themselves to many contemporary trends.

L.C.

Initiation Story

A Commentary on the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz. By Margaret Bennell and Isabel Wyatt. (The Michael Press. 8/6.)

THIS booklet provides an abridged version of the original narrative, retaining as far as possible the phraseology of the first English translation (1690), together with a commentary and extensive notes, and with numerous references to relevant lectures by Rudolf Steiner.

The narrative is an initiation story, telling in allegorical pictures how the author found his way to the Castle and describing the strange experiences, tests and ordeals he underwent there. Allegory

as a form of writing is not very congenial to the modern consciousness; it has to be decoded before its full meaning is conveyed. But the *Chymical Wedding* offers an immense amount of subject-matter for study and meditation, and Miss Bennell and Mrs. Wyatt have rendered a great service, especially to students of Anthroposophy, by making readily available an outline of the story, accompanied by a most helpful elucidation of its intricacies and its often recondite allusions.

C.W.

The Christian Community Press

34 Glenilla Road, London, N.W.3.

Telephone PRImrose 3587

- GROWING POINT.** Alfred Heidenreich. 16s. Postage 1s.
A lively first-hand account of the origins of the Movement for Religious Renewal, the Christian Community, and Rudolf Steiner's decisive contribution to its foundation.
- RUDOLF STEINER ENTERS MY LIFE.** Friedrich Rittelmeyer. 4th Edition. Five little-known photographs of Rudolf Steiner. 18s. Postage 1s.
An account of Rudolf Steiner's personality as experienced by one of his most intimate pupils, who became the first Head of the Christian Community.
- THE CATACOMBS.** Alfred Heidenreich. 2nd Edition. 35s. Postage 1s. 6d.
Contains 14 colour plates and 50 other full page illustrations. The letterpress offers a fascinating introduction to the life and spirit of early Christianity. A beautiful gift book.
- THE SUN DANCES.** Prayers and Blessings from the Gaelic. Collected and translated by Alexander Carmichael, chosen and with introduction by Adam Bittleston. 12s. 6d. Postage 1s.
"We urge everyone to buy this quite lovely book . . ."
— VICTOR GOLLANZ.
- THOUGH YOU DIE.** Stanley Drake. 12s. 6d. Postage 1s.
A practical and sympathetic study of the problem of old age, premature death, funeral services, suicide, destiny and reincarnation.
- GROWING UP IN RELIGION.** Evelyn Francis Derry. 18s. Postage 1s.
Deals with the child's need for God, prayer, worship, moral training, and a knowledge of spiritual facts; and describes how these can be met in infancy, childhood and youth.

The Christian Community

A bi-monthly Journal for the New Age of Christianity,
published by the Christian Community in Great Britain

- ★ Fundamental Studies of the Impact of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy on modern Christianity
- ★ Studies of the Old and New Testaments in relation to religious life to-day
- ★ Articles on the New Approach to Christian Theology, and the Relation of Christianity to other World-Religions
- ★ Studies on the Sacraments, and on the Christian Festivals of the Year
- ★ Reviews of New Books on Religious, Social and Cultural Topics

Christian Community Press,
34, Glenilla Road, London, N.W.3

Subscription Rates: 15/- per annum. U.S.A. \$2.50.
Single copies, 2/6 post free.

The Golden Blade

Copies of the following back-issues are still available

The contents include:—

1951

The Cosmic Word and Individual Man RUDOLF STEINER
The Heavenly Hierarchies ADAM BITTLESTON
Evolution and Creation E. L. GRANT WATSON
Form in Art and in Society OWEN BARFIELD
The Chess-Gazing Boy CHARLES WATERMAN
 Price 3/-

1958

Rudolf Steiner: Recollections
 by Some of his Pupils

Special number devoted to a complete translation of the German symposium, *Wir Erleben Rudolf Steiner*.

Contributors include George Adams, Emil Bock, Herbert Hahn, Ernst Lehrs, Maria Roschl-Lehrs, Guenther Wachsmuth, F. W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven.

Price 11/6

1962

Boundaries of Natural Science RUDOLF STEINER
Bacon and Modern Science JOHN WATERMAN
Exploring Space GEORGE ADAMS
Studies of Threefold Man C.D.
Subud at First-Hand KATHARINE TREVELYAN
 Price 4/3

1953

From Philosophy to Anthroposophy RUDOLF STEINER
The Threefold Structure of the World GEORGE ADAMS
Michael and St. George (I) ISABEL WYATT
 "Going Through the Mill" MAURICE WOOD
The Feast of Torro JOHN BOLSOVER
 Price 3/9

1960

Supersensible Experiences RUDOLF STEINER
Earth-Evolution in the Future RUDOLF STEINER
The Trinity in Man and Nature CANON A. P. SHEPHERD
Phaenix MAURICE WOOD
Mr. Koestler and the Astronomers OWEN BARFIELD
 Price 4/-

1965

The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge RUDOLF STEINER
The Foundation Stone and World History A. C. HARWOOD
Rudolf Steiner and the Dead KALMIA BITTLESTON
The Essence and Meaning of Number BERNARD NESFIELD-COOKSON
Alchemilla and the Alchemists F. H. JULIUS
 Price 8/6

Postage 1/- for each copy.

From the Rudolf Steiner Bookshop, 35 Park Road, London, N.W.1.

Rudolf Steiner Press and Bookshop

35 Park Road
 LONDON, N.W.1
 PAD 9514

The Bookshop supplies all Works by Rudolf Steiner in English and German, as well as many books by other authors on Spiritual Science. Recent publications include:

- CHRIST AND THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.** The Search for the Holy Grail
 Six Lectures, Leipzig, December 1913. Cloth, 17/6
- THE DEAD ARE WITH US**
 Single Lecture, Nuremberg, February 1918. Paper, 4/6
- THE KINGDOM OF CHILDHOOD**
 Seven Lectures, Torquay, August 1924. Cloth, 18/-
- THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE**
 Ten Lectures, Basle, September 1909. Cloth, 24/-
- THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW**
 Twelve Lectures, Berne, September 1910. Cloth, 26/-
- THREE STREAMS IN THE EVOLUTION OF MANKIND**
 Six Lectures, Dornach, October 1918. Cloth, 18/-
- MAN IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULTISM, THEOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHY**
 Ten Lectures, Christiania, June 1912. Cloth, 21/-
- STUDY OF MAN**
 Fourteen Lectures, Stuttgart, 1919. Cloth, 25/-
- THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILD**
 Single Lecture, 1909. Paper, 5/-

Postage Extra on all Books

THE NEW SCHOOL
KINGS LANGLEY, HERTS. K.L. 2505
(40 minutes from London)

Co-educational day and boarding school of 290 children, giving a full Nursery, Primary and Secondary education in accordance with the methods of Rudolf Steiner.

For further information apply to **THE SECRETARY**

What Rudolf Steiner Says
concerning
**INITIATION AND
MEDITATION**
by
ARNOLD FREEMAN

Rudolf Steiner's "Anthroposophy" offers mankind an alternative world-outlook to present-day materialism. His life-work points to new beginnings for education, art, medicine, agriculture, etc. But what he basically did was to establish for mankind to-day a "School of Initiation" . . . This little book endeavours to state what Rudolf Steiner has to say about studentship in this school.

Price: 12/6 (by post: 13/2)

From the Centre at 79, Nether Edge Road, Sheffield, 7; or from the Rudolf Steiner Bookshop, 35, Park Road, London, N.W.1.

Star & Furrow

Journal of the Bio-dynamic
Agricultural Association
Published Twice Yearly

Current issue includes:

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF
LAURENCE EASTERBROOK**

Robert Waller

CAMOMILE *Heinz Grotzke*
(reprinted from 'Bio-Dynamics')

QUALITY IN FOOD *George Corrin*

SOME THOUGHTS ON ECOLOGY
John Soper

Obtainable from

**THE B.D.A.A. SECRETARIAT
BROOME FARM, CLENT,
STOURBRIDGE, WORCS.**

Price 2/6

Post Free

Courier
Printing Service

Have produced this issue
of "The Golden Blade"

Printers by
letterpress and small
litho processes.

Design and layout
can be undertaken.

Blockmakers

**Courier Printing and
Publishing Co. Ltd.**
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
Telephone 30272

**WYNSTONES
SCHOOL**

WHADDON, GLOUCESTER

A Steiner School in the West of
England, giving a complete course
of education from 7-18 through
twelve school classes, with pre-
school Kindergarten.

**Boys and Girls
Day and Boarding**

Recognised by
the Ministry of Education

For information, apply to—
THE SECRETARY,
Wynstones School, Whaddon,
Gloucester
(Telephone: Gloucester 22475)

MICHAEL HALL, FOREST ROW

Co-educational School on the principles of Rudolf Steiner
Day and Boarding

Recognised by the Ministry of Education

Prospectus from:

The Bursar, Michael Hall, Forest Row, Sussex

132
Old Oak Rd.

Owen Barfield

UNANCESTRAL VOICE

The fuss about Lady Chatterley and the persistent preoccupation with D. H. Lawrence which the Trial disclosed; the sublime detachment of Beats, Mods and Rockers and their like from all historically accredited values; the right, or at least a possible attitude from which to approach the punishment and/or treatment of criminals; the predicament of theology and the poverty of historicism in the twentieth century; the semantic dependence of communication in the present on expression in the past—and the revolt against it; the crisis in contemporary physics . . . is there any single thread running through all this tangle of phenomena?

To this question the congenitally scrutinizing lawyer, who is the principal character in this book, has an unexpected answer, or series of answers, thrust upon him in an unexpected way. He listens, strictly "without prejudice," to what he "hears," reflects further on it in the light of his own involvement in the tangle, and invites the candid reader, if he will, to do the same.

Unancestral Voice by Owen Barfield, 30/- net.

FABER AND FABER

Courier Co. Ltd. Tunbridge Wells, Kent.