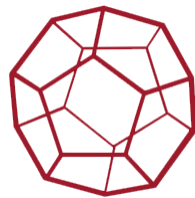


The Mission of Christian Rosenkretz

GA 130



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by

Rudolf Steiner

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Foreword

In connection with the Congress held by the "Federation of European Sections of the Theosophical Society" in Budapest in the year 1909, Dr. Steiner gave a Lecture-Course entitled: "Theosophy and Occultism of the Rosicrucians." The Mystery of Golgotha is there indicated as the great turning-point between the old, now already fading Mystery-wisdom and the wisdom in its new form of revelation wherein account is taken of the faculty of thought possessed by a maturer humanity and of the advance of culture and civilisation. Theosophia, the Divine Wisdom, could not, as in earlier times, flow as inner illumination into the hardened constitution of man. Intellect, the more recent faculty of the soul, was directed to the world of sense and its phenomena. Theosophy was rejected by the scholars with a shrug of the shoulders and the very word brought a supercilious smile from the monists. Dr. Steiner, however, was trying to restore to this word its whole weight and spiritual significance and to show how the roots of all later knowledge lie in Theosophy, how it unites East and West, how in it all the creeds are integral parts of one great harmony.

This had also been the fundamental conception of the Founder of the Theosophical Society but she understood nothing of the essence of Christianity and disputed its unique significance. Her tendency to place too much reliance upon spiritualistic communications drew her into the net of an oriental stream only too ready to use this instrument for its own ends — to begin with under the cloak of Neo-Buddhism then represented in the person of Charles Leadbeater, a former priest of the Anglican Church. Annie Besant, a pupil of Charles Bradlaugh, a free-thinker and the most brilliant orator of the day in the field of political and social reform, had also been so deeply influenced by spiritualistic communications that on the advice of William Stead she went to Madame Blavatsky towards the end of the latter's life and became her ardent follower. Stead's spiritualistic circle was influential and the Theosophical Society, with its much purer spiritual foundations, had here a dangerous rival.

Dr. Steiner brought light to bear upon all these developments, upon their aims and aberrations, and raised Theosophy to heights far transcending the narrow sphere of the Theosophical Society. Alarmed by this, the Indian inspirers behind the Adyar Society, with their nationalistic aims, took their own measures. — The imminence of a return of Christ was announced and

the assertion made that he would incarnate in an Indian boy. A newly founded Order, the "Star in the East," using the widespread organisation of the Theosophical Society, was expected to achieve the aim that had met with failure in Palestine.

Not very long after the Budapest Congress, these developments began to be felt in the sphere of Dr. Steiner's lecturing activities. Disquieted by the beginnings of the propaganda for the Star in the East, Groups begged Dr. Steiner to speak about these matters. This caused alarm to the organisers of the Genoa Congress, who thought that the scientific as well as the esoteric discussions with Dr. Steiner would be too dangerous a ground, and for extremely threadbare reasons the Congress was cancelled at the last moment. Many of those taking part were already on their way — we too. A number of Groups in Switzerland took advantage of this opportunity to ask Dr. Steiner for lectures. They wanted to understand the meaning and significance of the Michael Impulse which denotes the turning-point in the historic evolution of the Mystery-wisdom. The Intelligence ruled over in the spiritual world by the hierarchy of Michael had now come down to humanity. It was for men to receive this Intelligence consciously into their impulses of will and thenceforward to play their part in shaping a future wherein the human "I" will achieve union with the Divine "I." For this goal of the future men must be prepared, a transformation wrought in their souls; they must "change their hearts and minds." To bring this about was the task of Rudolf Steiner. The moment had arrived for treading the path which liberates the Spirit from the grip of the material powers. The first healthy step to be taken along this path by the pupil of spiritual knowledge, is study.

As the theme chosen for Genoa had been "From Buddha to Christ," it was natural that the lectures now given in Switzerland should shed the light of Spiritual Science not only upon the earlier connections between the Buddha and Christ Jesus but also upon the lasting connections indicated by the Essene wisdom contained in the Gospels. This is the theme which gives these studies their special character — which could only be brought out by outlining the historical development of the Mystery-wisdom. The ancient revelations of the Mysteries had shed light into many forms of culture, but were now spent; symptoms of decay and increasing sterility of thought were everywhere in evidence. Then, from heights of Spirit, the Michael Impulse came down to the Earth — in order gradually to stir and flame through the hearts of men. The intellect was pervaded by spiritual fire, the lower human "I" lifted nearer to the ideal of times to come: union with the

Divine "I." To awaken understanding of these goals, to establish them firmly on the ground of their spiritual origins and to place them in living pictures before the souls of men — such was the task of Rudolf Steiner.

This brought the inevitable counterblow from the opposing powers; into this they knew they must drive their wedge. The development of the human being in freedom, this gift bestowed by Michael, must be checked and the hearts and minds of men incited to resistance. In his *Four Mystery Plays*, Rudolf Steiner has given us living pictures of this: the human being between Lucifer and Ahriman — now succumbing to their promptings, now overcoming them, but nevertheless bearing them in the soul like a poison that may at any time begin to work. We too shall continue to bear this picture and its substance in our souls.

The full content of the lectures, however, has not been preserved, for we possess no good transcriptions. The fact that no really reliable and expert stenographer was available at the time seems like a counterblow from the opposing powers. Besides the abbreviated reports of the Cassel lectures, we have in some cases only fragments, in others, scattered notes strung together. But the essential threads have been preserved and an attempt at compilation has been made. The attempt does not always succeed from the point of view of convincing style, but the impetus for effort in thought and study will be all the stronger.

The activities of the Star in the East led, finally, to the exclusion of the German section from the Theosophical Society; this, however, had been preceded by the forming of a Union which included people in other countries who opposed this piece of Adyar sectarianism and led to the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society. For a time, care was necessary to prevent confusion as between the two Societies and so for the Movement associated with him, Rudolf Steiner chose the name Anthroposophy — the Divine Wisdom finding its fulfilment in man. Theosophy and Anthroposophy are one, provided the soul has cast away its dress. And Rudolf Steiner showed us how this can be done.

The new Indian Messiah soon cast off the shackles of the renown that had been forced upon him and retired to private life in California. Annie Besant was obliged to renounce her cherished dream and died at a very great age. It is rumoured that the question of the dissolution of the Adyar Society was considered but that this proved impossible owing to the extensive material possessions. Jinarajadasa, my good friend from the days of the founding of the Italian Section, succeeded Annie Besant as President. The branch of

the Theosophical Society which had seceded at the time of the Judge conflict and to which Madame Blavatsky's niece belonged, had found in Mrs. Catharine Tingley a leader of energy and initiative, but she too had died.

The old conditions have now faded away. Those grotesque edifices of phantasy can no longer be associated with the Anthroposophical, formerly Theosophical, Movement, for they have crumbled to pieces. We can allow the word Theosophy again to come to its own, as did Rudolf Steiner when he was trying to restore to this word its primary and true significance.

Besides laying emphasis on the essential character of Spiritual Science in the post-Christian era, the aim of the lectures given in 1911 and 1912 was to explain karma as the flow of destiny and to point to its intimate workings. The lines of development running through the lectures have survived only as pictures of memory; the transcriptions often failed to catch the threads of the logical sequence and the notes or headings jotted down and collected here and there are really no more than indications. But the direction of the spiritual impulses given by Dr. Steiner has been preserved, and justifies, maybe, the attempt at compilation. Through meditative study these impulses will be able to work in us and deepen our souls.



1

The Dawn of Occultism in the Modern Age I

27 January 1912, Kassel

The lecture today will be historical in character and the day after tomorrow I shall speak of matters which will give us deeper insight into the impulses contained in the thinking, the will and the deeds of Rosicrucianism. We can only understand the work of Rosicrucianism today when we realise that it was never a model laid down once and for all but assumes a different form in every century. The reason for this is that Rosicrucianism must always adapt itself to the conditions of the times. It is quite obvious to us that the fundamental impulses of Spiritual Science must find their way into the culture of the present age; but we know, too, that the culture of the West presents difficulties. Spiritual Science cannot make different human beings of us from one day to the next, because through our karma we have been born into Western culture. Our task is not as simple as that of the representatives of communities based upon race or the tenets of a particular religion. For our fundamental principle must be that we are not rooted in the soil of a specific creed but regard the different systems of religion as forms and variations of the one, universal spiritual life. It is the seed of spiritual truth in all religions for which Spiritual Science must seek. As a Westerner, the theosophist may very easily be misunderstood, above all by the different religious confessions and schools of thought in the world. If we rightly understand our task as spiritual scientists we must hold fast to the principle of *historical development*, realising that Spiritual Science is an integral part of this development. Each one of you here has been incarnated in every epoch of culture — indeed more than once. What is the purpose of these reincarnations? Why must the human being pass through all these different schoolings in the periods of culture and civilisation? It was this question which brought Lessing to avow his belief in the idea of reincarnation. Lessing thought to himself: Human beings have lived through all the earlier periods of culture and they must return again and again in order to learn new things and to be able to connect the old with the new. There must be a purpose in the fact that we pass through different incarnations, and the purpose is that in each of them the human being shall add new experiences to the old.

As you have often heard, there are great differences between the successive epochs of culture. Today we shall speak in closer detail of an extremely important period: the thirteenth century. Human beings in incarnation at that time lived through an experience which has not fallen to the lot of others. What I am now about to say is known to all who have reached a certain high level of spiritual life and who are now again in incarnation.

In the thirteenth century, spiritual darkness fell for a time upon all human beings, even the most enlightened, and also upon the Initiates. Whatever knowledge of the spiritual worlds existed in the thirteenth century came from tradition or from men who in still earlier times had been Initiates and were able to call up remembrances of what they had then experienced. But for a brief space of time it was impossible even for these men to have direct vision of the spiritual world. Darkness was obliged to fall for this short period in order that preparation might be made for the intellectual culture which was to be characteristic of our modern age. The point of importance is that we *have* this kind of culture today in the Fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Culture in the Greek epoch was quite different. Instead of the modern, intellectual kind of thinking, *direct perception* was then the dominant faculty; the human being was one, as it were, with what he saw and heard, even with what he thought. He did not cogitate and reason as he does today, and needs must do, for this is the task of the Fifth post-Atlantean epoch.

In the thirteenth century, it was necessary for especially suitable personalities to be chosen out for Initiation, and the Initiation itself could only take place after that brief period of darkness had come to an end. The name of the place in Europe where the happenings of which I am about to speak came to pass cannot yet be communicated, but before very long this too will be possible.

We shall, speak today of the dawn of occultism in the modern age. Twelve men were living at the time of the darkness, twelve men of deep spirituality who came together in order to further the progress of humanity. They did not all of them possess the power of direct vision of the spiritual world, but they were able to bring to life within them remembrances of what they had experienced through earlier Initiation. And by the dispensation of the karma of humanity, the heritage left by the ancient culture of Atlantis was embodied in seven of these twelve men. In my book *Occult Science* it is said that the seven wise Teachers of the ancient, holy Indian civilisation bore within them the surviving wisdom of Atlantis. The

seven men were incarnated again in the thirteenth century and formed part of the Twelve; it was they who were able to look back to the seven streams of the ancient Atlantean wisdom and to the continuations of these seven streams. The task assigned to each of these seven individualities was to make one of the seven streams of wisdom fruitful both for the culture of the thirteenth century and of our modern age. These seven individualities were joined by four others; unlike the first seven, these other four were not able to look back to times of the primeval past; they looked back to what mankind had acquired from occult truths during the four epochs of post-Atlantean culture. The first of the four looked back to the period of ancient India, the second to that of ancient Persia, the third to that of Egyptian-Chaldean-Babylonian-Assyrian culture, and the fourth to that of the Graeco-Latin age. These four joined the seven in that "College" of wise men in the thirteenth century; the twelfth had fewer remembrances; he was more intrinsically intellectual than the rest and it was his task to cultivate and foster the external sciences. These twelve individualities did not live only in the sphere of occultism as cultivated in the West, but could also be "incorporated" as it were in men who possessed some genuine knowledge of occultism. Goethe's poem *Die Geheimnisse* [footnote: *The Mysteries* by Rudolf Steiner] gives a certain indication of this. — Thus there were twelve outstanding individualities and to them came a Thirteenth who, after the period of darkness had come to an end was to be chosen out for the kind of Initiation demanded by the culture of the West. The circumstances are very mysterious and I can only give you the following information in the form of a narrative. To me it is objective truth, but you yourselves can put it to the test by gathering together what has been said by anthroposophical Spiritual Science during the last few years, added to what you know of history since the thirteenth century.

It was known to the College of the twelve wise men that a child was to be born who had lived in Palestine at the time of Christ and had been present when the Mystery of Golgotha had taken place. This Individuality possessed great powers of heart and a quality of deep, inward love which circumstances had since helped to unfold in him. An Individuality of extraordinary spirituality was incarnated in this child. It was necessary, in this case, for a process to be enacted which will never be repeated in the same form. The following does not describe a typical Initiation but is an altogether exceptional happening. It was necessary for this child to be removed from the environment into which he was born and to be placed in the care of the Twelve at a certain place in Europe. But it was not the

external measures adopted by the twelve wise men that are of essential importance; what is important is the fact that the child grew up with the Twelve around him, and because of this, their wisdom was able to stream into him. One of the Twelve, for example, possessed the Mars-wisdom and therewith a definite quality of soul — a mood-of-soul tempered by the form of culture standing under the influence of Mars. The forces of the Mars culture endowed this soul with the faculty, among others, of presenting the occult sciences with fiery enthusiasm and ardour. Similar planetary influences were also at work in other faculties distributed among the Twelve. The development of the child's soul proceeded harmoniously under the influences pouring from the twelve wise men. And so the child grew up, under the unceasing care of the Twelve. Then, at a certain time, when the child had grown into a young man of about 20, he was able to give expression to something that was a kind of reflex of the twelve streams of wisdom — but in a form altogether new, new even to the twelve wise men. The metamorphosis was accompanied by violent organic changes. Even physically the child had been quite unlike other human beings; he was often very ill and his body became transparent, as though filled with light. Then there came a time when for some days the soul departed altogether from the body. The young man lay as if dead ... And when the soul returned it was as though the twelve streams of wisdom were born anew. He spoke of new experiences. There had come to him, from the Mystery of Golgotha, an experience similar to that of Paul before Damascus. Thereby it was possible for all the twelve world-conceptions, religious and scientific — and fundamentally there are only twelve — to be gathered together, synthesised in *one*. The twelve basic world-conceptions were gathered together into one whole which could do justice to them all. Of what was taught we shall speak the day after tomorrow. It remains now to be said that the young man died very soon afterwards. His life on Earth had been brief. His mission had been to create a synthesis of the twelve streams of wisdom in the sphere of thought and to bring forth the new impulse which he could then bequeath to the twelve wise men who were to carry it further. A great and significant impetus had been given. The name of the Individuality from whom this impulse originated was Christian Rosenkreutz. The same Individuality was born again in the fourteenth century and this earthly life lasted for more than a hundred years. In the new earthly life he brought to fruitfulness, in the outer world too, all that he had lived through in that brief space of time. He traveled all over the West and over practically the whole of the then known world in order to receive anew the

wisdom which in the previous life had quickened in him the new impulse — the impulse which, as a kind of essence, was to filter into the culture of the times.

This new impulse also came to expression in the exoteric world. The inspiration of the being of whom we have spoken, worked, for example, in Lessing. It is not, of course, possible to give external proof of this, but Lessing's whole mode and manner of thinking is such that the Rosicrucian impulse is perceptible to one who is versed in these matters. Again in the nineteenth century — an age so ill-adapted for the ideas of karma, reincarnation and the like — this impulse worked exoterically. It is an interesting fact that towards the end of the 'forties of the nineteenth century a certain scientific body offered a reward for the best philosophical treatise on the subject of the immortality of the soul. Among the treatises submitted was one by Wiedenmann, accepting the principle that the soul has many earthly lives. Naturally, this essay does not speak of reincarnation in the same way as Spiritual Science; but it is interesting that such a writing should have appeared at that time and have been awarded the prize. And other psychologists of the day also acknowledged their belief in repeated earthly lives. The thread of belief in reincarnation and karma was never entirely broken. Moreover the early writings of the Founder of the Theosophical Society, the great H. P. Blavatsky, are explicable only when we recognise the Rosicrucian inspiration underlying them.

Now it is of the greatest importance for us to know that whenever the Rosicrucian inspiration is given, in each century, the bearer of the inspiration is never outwardly designated as such. His identity has been known only to the very highest Initiates. Today, for example, it is only permissible to speak of happenings of a hundred years ago; for this is the period of time which must have elapsed before they may be spoken of openly. The temptation to pay fanatical veneration to authority vested in some personality — than which there is no greater evil — would be too great for men. This danger is already too near at hand. Silence is a necessary precaution not only against the wiles of ambition and pride — which it might be possible to resist — but paramountly on account of the occult, astral attacks which would be directed all the time against such an individual. Hence the rule that these things may not be spoken of until a hundred years have elapsed. Such studies must help us to realise that the fulcrum of historical development is contained in Rosicrucianism.

By a simple comparison, let me explain to you what is meant by this. — Think of a pair of scales. There must be only one fulcrum, for if there were two, no weighing would be possible. One such fulcrum is also necessary in the process of historical development. Eastern world conceptions do not admit this, nor do they recognise historical evolution in this sense; and the same applies to Schopenhauer. But it is the task of humanity of the West to recognise the flow of history — and it is the mission of Rosicrucianism to promote a kind of thinking which admits the reality of a fulcrum or pivotal point in the flow of history. In regard to what will now be said, the religious confession to which a man may belong is of no consequence. For it can be substantiated from the Akasha Chronicle that the day which represents the pivotal point in the evolution of mankind is the 3rd April in the year 33 A.D. Knowledge of the fact that the pivot of evolution lies at this point is an essential part of Rosicrucianism. — What was it that really happened then? *The crisis in the world of the demons!* And what does this mean?

We know that in earlier times human beings possessed the faculty of primitive clairvoyance. This clairvoyance became progressively feebler, almost to the point of extinction. The fact is that hitherto the human being had been conscious mainly in the astral body and less in the "I." The crisis came about because of the darkening of the ancient clairvoyance. Man's vision extended only into the lowest regions of the spiritual world. The "I" lived still in the astral world; but the beings and powers which the "I" was able to behold, deteriorated into greater and greater impurity. Man no longer had any vision of the good powers, but as he looked into the astral world he saw only these evil beings. The only means of salvation was the cultivation and development of the "I." The beginning of this was the enactment of the baptism given by John in the Jordan. What was the experience of one thus baptised? He was first subjected to the physical process of immersion in the water which caused the separation of the astral and etheric bodies from the physical body. This enabled him to perceive that a crisis was at hand in the world of the demons. And those who had been baptised knew: We must change our hearts! The time is at hand when the Spirit is to stream directly into the "I." Such a man felt that these terrible astral beings were within him, always penetrating into him.

A power transcending the astral was about to come into operation — the power of the "I." Through the "I" it will be possible for communities of human beings to gather together in freedom of soul, communities no longer determined by ties of blood. And now picture to yourselves a man possessed by demons of the most evil kind who know that they are facing a crisis. Picture to yourselves again that to such a man there comes One

Whose mission it is to oppose the demons. What must the demons feel under such circumstances? Ill at ease in the very highest degree! And so indeed it was: in the presence of Christ Jesus the demons were ill at ease. Rosicrucianism has within it the impulse by which the demons must be countered. Through this impulse the "I" is to be made supreme — but in this respect little progress has been achieved.

Returning to the point at which the lecture began, it is not difficult to realise that it will be harder for us as Anthroposophists to make our voice heard in the world than it will be for any others. The adherents of other views of the world will have less persecution to suffer than Anthroposophists. For nothing makes men more uneasy than to describe to them the true nature of the Christ. But our conviction is based upon the results of genuine occult science and this conviction must be sustained with all the forces of which we are capable.



2

The Dawn of Occultism in the Modern Age II

29 January 1912, Kassel

Today we will lead on from the lecture of the day before yesterday to certain matters which can promote a deep personal understanding of the anthroposophical life. If we pass over our life in review and make real efforts to get to the root of its happenings, very much can be gained. We shall recognise the justice of many things in our destiny and realise that we have deserved them. — Suppose someone has been frivolous and superficial in the present incarnation and is subsequently struck by a blow of fate. It may not be possible, externally, to connect the blow of fate directly with the frivolousness, but a feeling arises, nevertheless, that there is justice in it. Further examination of life will reveal blows of fate which we can only attribute to chance, for which we find no explanation whatever. These two categories of experiences are to be discovered as we look back over our life. Now it is important to make a clear distinction between apparent *chance* and obvious *necessity*. When a man reviews his life with reference to these two kinds of happenings, he will fail to reach any higher stage of development unless he endeavours to have a very clear perception of everything that seems to him to be chance. We must try, above all, to have clear perception of those things we have *not* desired, which go right against the grain. It is possible to induce a certain attitude of soul and to say to ourselves: How would it be if I were to take those things which I have not desired, which are disagreeable to me and imagine that I myself actually *willed* them? In other words, we imagine with all intensity that we ourselves willed our particular circumstances.

In regard to apparently fortuitous happenings, we must picture the possibility of having ourselves put forth a deliberate and strong effort of will in order to bring them about. Meditatively as it were, we must induce this attitude to happenings which, on the face of them, seem to be purely fortuitous in our lives. Every human being today is capable of this mental exercise. If we proceed in this way, a very definite impression will ultimately be made upon the soul; we shall feel as though something were striving to be released from us. The soul says to itself: "Here, as a mental image, I have before me a second being; he is actually there." We cannot get rid of this image and the being gradually becomes our "Double." The

soul begins to feel a real connection with this being who has been imagined into existence, to realise that this being actually exists within us. If this conception deepens into a vivid and intense experience, we become aware that this "imagined" being is by no means without significance. The conviction comes to us: this being was already once in existence and at that time you had within you the impulses of will which led to the apparently chance happenings of today. Thereby we reach a deep-rooted conviction that we were already in existence before coming down into the body. Every human being today can have this conviction. — And now let us consider the question of the successive incarnations of the human being. What is it that reincarnates? How can we discover the answer to this question?

There are three fundamental and distinct categories of experiences in the life of soul. Firstly, our mental pictures, our ideas, our thoughts. In forming a mental picture, our attitude may well be one of complete neutrality; we need not love or hate what we picture inwardly, neither need we feel sympathy or antipathy towards it. Secondly, there are the moods and shades of feeling which arise by the side of the ideas or the thoughts; the cause of these moods in the life of feeling is that we like or love one thing, dislike or abhor another, and so forth. The third kind of experiences in the life of soul are the impulses of will. There are, of course, transitional stages but speaking generally these are the three categories. Moreover it is fundamentally characteristic of a healthy life of soul to be able to keep these three kinds of experiences separate and distinct from each other. Our life of thought and mental presentation arises because we receive stimuli from outside. Nobody will find it difficult to realise that the life of thought is the most closely bound up with the present incarnation. This, after all, is quite obvious when we bear in mind that speech is the instrument whereby we express our thoughts; and speech, or language, must, in the nature of things, differ in every incarnation. We no more bring language with us at the beginning of a new incarnation than we bring thoughts and ideas. The language as well as the thoughts must be acquired afresh in each incarnation. Hebbel once wrote something very remarkable in his diary. — The idea occurred to him that a scene in which the reincarnated Plato was being soundly chastised by the teacher for his lack of understanding of Plato would produce a very striking effect in a play! A man does not carry over his thought and mental life from one incarnation to another and takes practically nothing of it with him into his post-mortem existence. After death we evolve no thoughts or mental pictures but have direct *perceptions*, just as our physical eyes have perceptions of colour. After

death, the world of concepts is seen as a kind of net stretching across existence. But our feelings, our moods of heart and feeling — these we retain after death and also bring their forces with us as qualities and tendencies of soul into a new earthly life. For example, even if a child's life of thought is undeveloped, we shall be able to notice quite definite tendencies in his life of feeling. And because our impulses of will are linked with feelings, we also take them with us into our life after death. If, for example, a man lends himself to fallacy and error, the effect upon his life of feeling is not the same as if he lends himself to truth. For a long time after death we suffer from the consequences of false mental presentations and ideas. Our attention must therefore turn to the qualities and moods of feeling and the impulses of the will, when we ask: What is it that actually passes on from one incarnation to another?

Suppose something painful happened to us ten or twenty years ago. In thought today we may be able to remember it quite distinctly and in detail. But the actual pain we felt at the time has all but faded away; we cannot re-experience the stirrings of feeling and impulses of will by which it was accompanied. Think for a moment of Bismarck and the overwhelming difficulties of which he was conscious in taking his decision to go to war in 1866; think of what tumultuous feelings, what teeming impulses of will were working in Bismarck at that time! But even when writing his memoirs, would Bismarck have been conscious of these emotions and resolves with anything like the same intensity? Of course not! Man's memory between birth and death is composed of thoughts and mental pictures. It may, of course, be that even after ten or twenty years, a feeling of pain comes over us at the recollection of some sorrowful event, but generally speaking the pain will have greatly diminished after this lapse of time; in thought, however, we can remember the very details of the event. If we now picture to ourselves that we actually willed certain painful events, that in reality we welcomed things which in our youth we may have hated, the very difficulty of this exercise rouses the soul and thus has an effect upon the life of feeling. Suppose, for example, a stone once crashed down upon us. — We now try with all intensity to picture that we ourselves willed it so. Through such mental pictures — that we ourselves have willed the chance events in our life — we arouse, in the life of feeling, memory of our earlier incarnations. In this way we begin to realise how we are rooted in the spiritual world, we begin to understand our destiny. We have brought with us, from our previous incarnation, the will for the chance events of this life.

To devote ourselves in meditation to such thoughts, and elaborate them, is of the highest importance. Between death and a new birth too, much transpires, for this period is infinitely rich in experiences — purely spiritual experiences, of course. We therefore bring with us qualities of feeling and impulses of will from the period between death and a new birth, that is to say, from the spiritual world. Upon this rests a certain occurrence of very great importance in the modern age, but one of which little notice is taken. The occurrence is to be found in the lives of many people today but usually passes by unnoticed. It is, however, the task of Anthroposophy to point to such an occurrence and its significance. Let me make it clear by an example. — Suppose a man has occasion to go somewhere or other and his path happens to take him in the wake of another human being, a child perhaps. Suddenly the man catches sight of a yawning chasm at the edge of the path along which the child is walking. A few steps farther and the child will inevitably fall over the edge into the chasm. He runs to save the child, runs and runs, entirely forgetting about the chasm. Then he suddenly hears a voice calling out to him from somewhere: "Stand still!" He halts as though nailed to the spot. At that moment the child catches hold of a tree and also stops, so that no harm befalls. If no voice had called at that moment the man must inevitably have fallen into the chasm. And now he wonders from whom the voice came. He finds no single soul who could have called, but he realises that he would quite certainly have been killed if he had not heard this voice; yet however closely he investigates he cannot find that the warning came from any physical voice.

In deep self-observation, many human beings living at the present time would be able to recognise a similar experience in their lives. But far too little attention is paid to such things. An experience of this kind may pass by without leaving a trace — then the impression fades away and no importance is attached to the experience. But suppose a man has been attentive and realises that it was not without significance. The thought may then occur to him: At that point in your life you were facing a crisis, a karmic crisis; your life should really have ended at that moment, for you had forfeited it. You were saved by something akin to chance and since then a second life has as it were been planted on the first; this second life is to be regarded as a gift bestowed upon you and you must act accordingly. When such an experience makes a man feel that his life, from that time onwards, has been bestowed upon him as a gift, this means that he can be accounted a follower of Christian Rosenkretz. For this is how Christian Rosenkretz calls the souls whom he has chosen. A man who can recall such an occurrence — and everyone sitting here can discover

something of the kind in their lives if they observe closely enough — has the right to say to himself: Christian Rosenkreutz has given me a sign from the spiritual world that I belong to his stream. Christian Rosenkreutz has added such an experience to my karma. — This is the way in which Christian Rosenkreutz chooses his pupils; this is how he gathers his community. — A man who is conscious of this experience knows with certainty that a path has been pointed out to him which he must follow, trying to discover how he can dedicate himself to the service of Rosicrucianism. If there are some who have not yet recognised the sign, they will do so later on; for he to whom the sign has once been given will never again be free from it. — That such an experience comes to a man is due to the fact that during the period between his last death and his present birth, he was in contact with Christian Rosenkreutz in the spiritual world. It was then that Christian Rosenkreutz chose us, imparting an impulse of will which leads us, now, to such experiences. This is the way in which spiritual connections are established. Materialistic thought will naturally regard all these things as hallucinations, just as it regards the experience of Paul at Damascus as having been an hallucination. The logical conclusion to be drawn from this is that the whole of Christianity is based upon an hallucination, therefore upon error. For theologians are perfectly well aware that the Event at Damascus is the foundation-stone of the whole of subsequent Christianity. And if this foundation stone itself is nothing but an illusion, then, if thought is consistent, everything built upon it must obviously be fallacy.

An attempt has been made today to show that certain happenings, certain experiences in life may indicate to us how we are interwoven in the spiritual fabric of world existence. If we develop the memory belonging to our life of feeling, we grow onwards into the spiritual life which streams and pulses through the world. Theoretical knowledge alone does not make men true theosophists; those who understand their own life and the life of other human beings in the sense indicated today — they and they alone are true theosophists. — Anthroposophy is a basic power which can transform our life of soul. And the goal of the work in our groups must be that the intimate experiences of the soul change in character, that through the gradual development of the memory belonging to the life of feeling we become aware of Immortality. The true theosophist or anthroposophist must have this conviction: If you so *will*, if you really apply the forces within you in all their strength, then you can utterly transform your character. We must learn to feel and perceive that the Immortal holds sway in ourselves and in everyone else. — What makes a man into a true

anthroposophist is that his faculties remain receptive his whole life long, even when his hair is white. The realisation that progress is possible always and forever will transform our whole spiritual life.

One of the consequences of materialism is that human beings become old prematurely. Thirty years ago, for example, children looked quite different; there are children today of 10 or 11 years old who give the impression of old and aged people. Human beings — especially adolescents — have become so precocious, so old beyond their years. They maintain that lies such as that of babies being brought by the stork should not be told to children, that children should be "enlightened" on such matters. Those who come after us will know that the souls of our children hover down as bird-like, spirit-forms from the higher worlds. To have an imaginative conception of many things still beyond our comprehension is of very great importance. As regards the case in question, it is possible to find a much better imaginative picture than the legend of the stork; the reality is that spiritual forces are in play between the child and his parents or teachers; a kind of secret magnetism is in operation. We must ourselves *believe* in any imaginative picture we give to the children. If it is a question of explaining death to them, we must point to another happening in Nature. We say to the children: "See how the butterfly flies out of the chrysalis. That is what happens to the human soul at death." — But we must ourselves believe that the Powers behind the Universe have given us, in the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis, an image of the soul going forth from the body. The World-Spirit has inscribed such a picture in Nature to draw our attention to what here transpires. It is infinitely important to be always capable of learning, of always remaining young, independently of our physical body. The great task of Theosophy, or Anthroposophy, is to bring to the world the rejuvenation of which it stands sorely in need. We must get beyond the banal and the purely material. To recognise Soul and Spirit as powers operating in life — this must be the aim of the work in our Groups. More and more we must be permeated with the knowledge that the soul can gain mastery over the external world.



3

The True Attitude to Karma

8 February 1912, Vienna

It was not without purpose that at the end of each of the two public lectures, I emphasised that Theosophy must not be regarded merely as a theory or a science, nor even a specific form of what is usually known as a body of knowledge, but must be something that can be transformed in the soul into actual life, into an elixir of life. What really matters is that we shall not only acquire knowledge through Theosophy but that there shall flow into us, from Theosophy, forces which help us not only in ordinary physical existence but through the whole compass of life — which includes physical existence and the discarnate condition between death and a new birth. The more we feel that Theosophy bestows upon us forces whereby life itself is strengthened and enriched, the more truly we understand it. When such a statement is made, people may ask: If Theosophy is to be a power that strengthens and infuses vigour into life, why is it necessary to absorb all this apparently theoretical knowledge? Why must we be troubled in our group-meetings with details about the preceding planetary embodiments of the Earth? Why is it necessary to learn about things that happen in remote ages of the past? Why are we also expected to familiarise ourselves with the more intimate, intangible laws of reincarnation, karma and so forth? ... Many people may think that Theosophy is just another kind of science, on a par with the many sciences existing in outer, physical life.

Now in matters of this kind, all considerations of convenience in life must be put aside; there must be scrupulous self-examination as to whether or not such questions are tainted by that habitual slackness in life which may all too justly be expressed by saying: Man is fundamentally unwilling to learn, unwilling to take hold of the Spiritual because this is inconvenient for him. We must ask ourselves: Does not something of this fear of inconvenience and discomfort creep into such questions? Let us admit that we really do begin by thinking that there is an easier path to Theosophy than all that is presented, for example, in our literature! It is often said light-heartedly that, after all, a man need only know himself, need only try to be a good and righteous human being — and then he is a sufficiently good Theosophist. Yes, my dear friends, but precisely this gives us the

deeper knowledge that there is nothing more difficult than to be a good man in the real sense and that nothing needs so much preparation as the attainment of this ideal.

As to the question concerning Self-Knowledge — that can certainly not be answered in a moment, as so many people would like to think. Today, therefore, we will consider certain questions which are often expressed in the way indicated above. We will think of how Theosophy comes to us, seemingly, as a body of teaching, a science, although in essence it brings self-knowledge and the aspiration to become good and righteous men. And to this end it is important to study, from different points of view, how Theosophy can flow into *life*.

From among many pressing questions, let us take one in particular. — I am not referring to anything in the domain of science but to a question arising in everyday existence, namely, that of consolation for suffering, for lack of satisfaction in life. How, for example, can Theosophy bring consolation to people in distress, when they need consolation? Every individual must of course apply to his particular case what may be said about such matters. In addressing a number of people one can only speak in a general sense.

Why do we need consolation in life? Because something may distress us, because we have to suffer, to undergo painful experiences. Now it is natural for a man to feel that something in him rebels against this suffering. He asks: "Why have I to bear it, why has it fallen to my lot? Could not my life have been without pain, could it not have brought me contentment?" A man who puts the question in this way can only find an answer when he understands the nature of human karma, of human destiny. Why do we suffer? And here I am referring not only to outer suffering but also to inner suffering due to a sense of failure to do ourselves justice or find our proper bearings in life. That is what I mean by inner suffering. Why does life bring so much that leaves us unsatisfied?

Study of the laws of karma will make it clear to us that something underlies our sufferings, something that can be elucidated by an example drawn from ordinary life between birth and death. — I have given this example more than once. Suppose a young man has lived up to the age of 18 or so, entirely on his father; his life has been happy and carefree; he has had everything he wanted. Then the father loses his fortune, becomes bankrupt, and the youth is obliged to set about learning something, to exert himself. Life brings him many sufferings and deprivations. It is readily understandable that the sufferings are not at all to his liking. But now think

of him at the age of 50. Because circumstances obliged him to learn something in his youth, he has turned into a decent, self-respecting human being. He has found his feet in life and can say to himself: "My attitude to the sufferings and deprivations was natural at that time; but now I think quite differently about them; I realise now that the sufferings would not have come to me if in those days I had possessed all the virtues — even the very limited virtues of a boy of 18. If no suffering had come my way I should have remained a good-for-nothing. It was the suffering that changed the imperfections into something more perfect. It is due to the suffering that I am not the same human being I was forty years ago. What was it, then, that came together within me at that time? My own imperfections and my suffering ... and my imperfections sought out the suffering in order that they might be expunged and greater perfection attained."

This attitude can, after all, arise from quite an ordinary view of life between birth and death. And if we think deeply about life as a whole, facing our karma in the way indicated in the lecture yesterday, we shall finally be convinced that the sufferings along our path are sought out by our own imperfections. The vast majority of sufferings are, indeed, sought out by the imperfections we have brought with us from earlier incarnations. And because of these imperfections, a wiser being within us seeks for the path leading to the sufferings. For it is a golden rule in life that as human beings we have perpetually within us a being who is much wiser, much cleverer than we. The "I" of ordinary life has far less wisdom and if faced with the alternative of seeking either pain or happiness, would certainly choose the path to happiness. The wiser being operates in depths of the subconscious life to which ordinary consciousness does not extend. This wiser being diverts our gaze from the path to superficial happiness and kindles within us a magic power which, without our conscious knowledge, leads us towards the suffering. But what does this mean — "without our conscious knowledge?" It means that the wiser being is gaining greater mastery and this wiser being invariably acts within us in such a way as to guide our imperfections to our sufferings, allowing us to suffer because every outer and inner suffering expunges some imperfection and leads to greater perfection.

We may be willing to accept such principles in theory, but that, after all, is not of much account. A great deal is achieved, however, if in certain solemn and dedicated moments of life we try strenuously to make such principles the very life-blood of the soul. In the hurry and bustle, the work and the duties of ordinary life, this is not always possible; under these

circumstances we cannot always oust the being of lesser wisdom — who is, after all, part of us. But in certain deliberately chosen moments, however short they may be, we shall be able to say to ourselves: I will turn away from the hubbub of outer life and view my sufferings in such a way that I realise how the wiser being within me has been drawn to them by a magic power, how I imposed upon myself certain pain without which I should not have overcome this or that imperfection. — A feeling of the peace inherent in wisdom will then arise, bringing the realisation that even where the world seems full of suffering, there too it is full of wisdom! This is something that Theosophy has achieved for life. We may forget it again in the affairs of external life, but if we do not forget it altogether and repeat the exercise steadfastly, we shall find that a kind of seed has been laid in the soul and that many a darkling mood of distress or weakness will change into brightness, into a sense of vigour and strength. And then we shall have acquired from such moments, greater harmony and energy in the life of soul.

Then we may pass on to something else ... but the Theosophist should make it a rule to devote himself to these other thoughts only when the attitude towards suffering has become alive within him. We may turn, then, to think about the happiness and joys of life. A man who adopts towards his destiny the attitude that he himself has willed his sufferings, will have a strange experience when he comes to think about his joy and happiness. It is not as easy for him here, as in the case of his sufferings. It is easy, after all, to find the consolation for suffering, and anyone who feels doubtful has only to persevere; but it will be difficult to find the right attitude to happiness and joy. However strongly a man may bring himself to feel that he has willed his suffering — when he applies this mood-of-soul to his happiness and joy, he will not be able to avoid a sense of shame; he will have a thorough sense of shame. And he can only rid himself of this feeling of shame by saying to himself: "No, I have not earned my joy and happiness through my own karma!" This alone will put matters right, for otherwise the shame may be so intense that it becomes sheerly destructive in the soul. The only salvation is not to attribute our joys to the wiser being within us. This thought will convince us that we are on the right road, because the feeling of shame passes away. It is really so: happiness and joy in life are bestowed by the wise guidance of worlds without our assistance, as something we must receive as Grace, recognising always that the purpose is to give us our place in the totality of existence. Joy and

happiness should so work upon us in the secluded moments of life that we feel them as Grace, Grace bestowed by the supreme Powers of the world who want to receive us into themselves.

Whereas through pain and suffering we are thrown back upon ourselves, brought nearer to perfection, through happiness and joy we have the feeling of peaceful security in the arms of the Divine Powers of the world, and the only worthy attitude is one of thankfulness. Nobody who in quiet hours of self-contemplation ascribes happiness and joy to his own karma, will unfold the right attitude to such experiences. If he ascribes joy and happiness to his karma, he is succumbing to a fallacy whereby the Spiritual within him is weakened and paralysed; the slightest thought that happiness or delight have been deserved, weakens and cripples us inwardly. These words may seem harsh, for many a man, when he attributes suffering to his own will and individuality, will resolve to be master of himself, too, in experiences of happiness and joy. But even a cursory glance at life will indicate that by their very nature, joy and happiness tend to obliterate something in us. This weakening effect of delights and joys in life is graphically described by the lines in Faust: "And so from longing to delight I reel; and even in delight I pine for longing." Anybody who gives a single thought to the influence of joy, taken in the personal sense, will realise that there is something in joy which tends to produce a kind of intoxication in life and obliterates the Self.

This is not meant to be a sermon against joy or a suggestion that it would be good to torture ourselves with red-hot pincers or something of the kind. Indeed it is not so! To recognise something for what it truly is, does not mean that we must flee from it. It is not a question of fleeing from joy, but of receiving it calmly and tranquilly whenever and in whatever form it comes to us; we must learn to feel it as Grace and the more we do so, the better, for thereby we enter more deeply into the Divine. These words are spoken, then, not in order to preach asceticism but to awaken the right attitude of soul to happiness and joy.

If anyone were to say: Joy and happiness have a weakening, deadening effect, therefore I will flee from them (which is the attitude of false asceticism and forms of self-torture) — such a man would be fleeing from the Grace bestowed upon him by the Gods. And in truth the self-torture practised by the ascetics and monks in olden days was a form of resistance against the Gods. We must learn to regard suffering as something brought by our karma and to feel happiness as Grace breathed down to us by the Divine. Joy and happiness should be to us the sign of how closely the Gods

have drawn us to themselves; suffering and pain should be the sign of how remote we are from the goal before us as intelligent human beings. Such is the true attitude to karma and without it we shall make no real progress in life. Whenever the world vouchsafes to us the good and the beautiful, we must feel that behind this world stand those Powers of whom the Bible says: "And they saw that it [the world] was good." But in our experiences of pain and suffering we must recognise what, in the course of incarnations, man has made of the world which in the beginning was good and what he must amend by educating himself to resolute endurance of these sufferings.

I have been speaking merely of two ways of accepting karma. From one aspect, our karma consists of suffering and happiness; and we accept our karma with the right kind of will — as if we ourselves have willed it — when we adopt the true attitude to the suffering and the happiness that come our way. But we can do still more. — And this will be the theme of the lectures today and tomorrow.

Karma does not reveal itself only in the form of experiences of suffering or joy. As our life runs its course we encounter — in a way that can only be regarded as karmic — many human beings with whom, for example, we make a fleeting acquaintance, others who as relatives or close friends are connected with us for a considerable period of our life. We meet human beings who in our dealings with them bring sufferings and hindrances along our path; or again we meet others who give us the greatest help. The relationships are manifold. We must regard these circumstances too as having been brought about by the will of the wiser being within us the will, for example, to meet a human being who seems to run across our path accidentally and with whom we have something to adjust or settle in life. What is it that makes the wiser being in us wish to meet this particular person? The only intelligent line of thought is that we want to come across him because we have done so before in an earlier life and our relationship had already then begun. Nor need the beginning have been in the immediately preceding life — it may have been very much earlier. Because in a past life we have had dealings of some kind with this man, because we may have been in some way indebted to him, we are led to him again by the wiser being within us, as it were by magic. Here, of course, we enter a many-sided and extremely complicated domain, of which it is only possible to speak in general terms. But all the indications here given are the actual results of clairvoyant investigation. The indications will be useful to every individual because he will be able to particularise and apply what is said to his own life. — A remarkable fact comes to light. About the middle of life

the ascending curve passes over into the descending curve. This is the time when the forces of youth are spent and we pass over a certain zenith to the descending curve. This point of time — which occurs in the thirties — cannot be laid down with absolute finality, but the principle holds good for everyone. It is the period of life when we live most intensely on the physical plane. In this connection we may easily be deluded. It will be clear that life as it was before this point of time has been a process of bringing out what we have brought with us into the present incarnation. This process has been going on since childhood, although it is less marked as the years go by. We have chiseled out our life, have been nourished as it were by the forces brought from the spiritual world. These forces, however, are spent by the point of time indicated above. Observation of the descending line of life reveals that we now proceed to harvest and work over what has been learned in the school of life, in order to carry it with us into the next incarnation. This is something we take into the spiritual world; in the earlier period we were taking something from the spiritual world. It is in the middle period that we are most deeply involved in the physical world, most engrossed in the affairs of outer life. We have passed through our apprenticeship as it were and are in direct contact with the world; we have our life in our own hands. At this period we are taken up with ourselves, concerned more closely than at any other time with our own external affairs and with our relation to the outer world. But this relation to the world is created by the intellect and the impulses of will which derive from the intellect — in other words, those elements of our being which are most alien to the spiritual worlds, to which the spiritual worlds remain closed. In the middle of life we are, as it were, farthest away from the Spiritual.

A certain striking fact presents itself to occult research. Investigation of the kind of encounters and acquaintanceships with other human beings that arise in the middle of life shows, curiously, that these are the persons with whom, in the previous or in a still earlier incarnation, a man was together at the beginning of his life, in his very earliest childhood. The fact has emerged that in the middle of life — as a rule it is so, but not always — a man encounters, through circumstances of external karma, those persons who in an earlier life were his parents; it is very rarely indeed that we are brought together in earliest childhood with those who were previously our parents; we meet them in the middle period of life. This certainly seems strange, but it is the case, and a very great deal is gained for life if we will only try to put such a general rule to the test and adjust our thoughts accordingly. When a human being — let us say, about the age of 30 —

enters into some relationship with another ... perhaps he falls in love, makes great friends, quarrels, or has some different kind of contact, a great deal will become comprehensible if, quite tentatively to begin with, he thinks about the possibility of the relationship to this person once having been that of child and parent. Conversely, this very remarkable fact comes to light. — Those human beings with whom we were together in earliest childhood — parents, brothers and sisters, playmates or others around us during early childhood — they, as a rule, are persons with whom in a previous incarnation we formed some kind of acquaintanceship when we were about 30 or so; in very many cases it is found that these persons are our parents or brothers and sisters in the present incarnation. Curious as this may seem, let us only try to see how the principle squares with our own life and we shall discover how much more understandable many things become. Even if the facts are otherwise, an experimental mistake will not amount to anything very serious. Contemplation of life during hours of quiet seclusion infuses it with meaning and brings rich reward; but no attempt must ever be made to arrange life according to our own predilections. We must not deliberately go in search of people who may happen to be congenial to us, whom we should have welcomed as parents. Preconceptions and predilections must never be allowed to give rise to illusions. You will realise that a real danger lies here. Countless preconceptions lurk within us but in these difficult matters it is a very healthy exercise to try to get rid of them.

You may ask me: What is there to be said about the descending curve of life? The striking fact has emerged that at the beginning of life we meet those human beings with whom in a previous incarnation we were connected in the middle period of life; further, that in the middle of the present life, we revive acquaintanceships which existed at the beginning of a preceding life. And now, what of the descending curve of life? During that period we are led to persons who may also, possibly, have had something to do with us in an earlier incarnation. They may, in that earlier incarnation, have played a part in happenings of the kind that so frequently occur at a decisive point in life — let us say, trials and sufferings caused by bitter disillusionments. In the second half of life we may again be brought into contact with persons who in some way or other were already connected with us; this meeting brings about a shifting of circumstances and much that was set in motion in the earlier life is cleared up and settled. These things are diverse and complex and indicate that we should not adhere rigidly to any hard and fast pattern. This much, however, may be said. — The nature of the karma that has been woven with those who

come across our path especially in the second half of life, is such that it cannot be absolved in one life. Suppose, for example, we have caused suffering to a human being in one life; the thought may come easily that in a subsequent life we shall be led to this person by the "wiser being" within us, so that we may make amends for what we have done to him. The circumstances of life, however, may not enable compensation to be made for *everything* — but often only for a part. This necessitates the operation of complicated factors which enable such surviving remnants of karma to be adjusted and settled during the second half of life.

This conception of karma can shed light upon our dealings and companionship with other human beings. But there is still something else in the course of our karma to consider — something that in the two public lectures was referred to as the process of ripening, the acquisition of a real knowledge of life (if the phrase does not promote arrogance, it may be used). It is well to consider how we grow wiser. We can become wiser through our faults and mistakes and this is something for which we can only be thankful. In one and the same life it is not often that we have the opportunity of applying the wisdom gained from our mistakes and it therefore remains with us as potential power for a later life. But the wisdom, the real knowledge of life that we may acquire — what is it, in reality? I said yesterday that we cannot carry our thoughts and ideas directly with us from one life into the other; I said that Plato himself could not have taken his ideas directly with him into a later incarnation. What we carry over with us takes the form of will, of feeling, and in reality our thoughts and ideas, just like our mother-tongue, come as something new in each life. For most of the thoughts and ideas are contained in the mother-tongue, whence we acquire them. This life between birth and death yields us thoughts and ideas which really always originate from that same incarnation. Yes, but if this is so, we shall have to say to ourselves that it depends upon our karma! — However many incarnations we pass through, the ideas that arise in us are always dependent upon the one incarnation as apart from the others. Whatever wisdom may be living in your thoughts and ideas has been absorbed from outside, it is dependent upon your karma. Very much lies in these words for they indicate that whatever we may know in life, whatever knowledge we may amass, is something entirely personal, that we can never transcend the personal by means of what we acquire for ourselves in life. In ordinary life we never reach the level of the "wiser being" but always remain at that of the less wise. Anyone who flatters himself that he can learn more of his higher Self from what he acquires in the world, is harbouring an illusion for the sake of

convenience. This actually means that we can gain no knowledge of our higher Self from what we acquire in life. Very well, then, how are we to attain any knowledge of the higher Self? We must ask ourselves quite frankly: To what does our knowledge really amount? It amounts to what we have acquired from experience — that and nothing more, to begin with. A man who aspires to Self-Knowledge without realising that his soul is only a mirror in which the outer world is reflected, may persuade himself that by penetrating within his own being he can find the higher Self; certainly he will find something, but it is only what has come into him from outside. Along this cheap, easygoing path no headway can be made. Rather we must ask about those other worlds where in truth the higher Self abides and the only available teachings here are those contained in Theosophy, for example, concerning the different incarnations of the Earth and the like. Just as we inquire about the environment of a child, about what is around the child, we must ask the same questions concerning the higher Self. Theosophy teaches us of the worlds to which the higher Self belongs, through telling us of Saturn and its secrets, of the Moon, of the evolution of the Earth, of Reincarnation and Karma, of Devachan, Kamaloca and so forth. By such teachings alone we can learn about the *higher Self*, about the Self which transcends the physical plane. And anyone who refuses to study these secrets is merely pandering to his own ease. For such a soul is always whispering: "Look within yourself — there you will find the Divine Man." And what does such a man find? In reality nothing but experiences which have been gleaned from the outer world and then deposited within him! We find the Divine Man only when we seek for what is mirrored into this earthly world from realms outside and beyond it. Things which may sometimes be difficult and uncomfortable — *they* are true Self-Knowledge, true Theosophy! From Theosophy we receive illumination concerning the Self — our own higher Self. For where, in reality, is the Self? Is the Self within our skin? No, the Self is out-poured over the world; everything that is and has been in the world is part and parcel of the Self. We learn to know the Self only when we learn to know the world.

These apparent theories are, in truth, the ways to Self-Knowledge! A man who thinks he can find the Self by delving into his inner life and anchoring there, whispers to himself: "You must be a good and righteous man, you must be selfless!" ...Well and good, but it is often very obvious that such a man is becoming more and more egotistical. On the other hand, a man who wrestles with the great secrets of existence, who tears himself away from the wheedlings of the personal self and rises to what abides and can be found in the higher worlds — such a man is led to the true Self-

Knowledge. When we think deeply about Saturn, Sun, Moon, we lose ourselves in cosmic Thought. — "Cosmic thoughts are living in thy thinking" — so says a soul who thinks in the sense of Theosophy; and he adds: "Lose thyself in cosmic thoughts." The soul in whom Theosophy has become creative power, says: "In thy feeling, cosmic powers are weaving" — adding: "Experience thyself through cosmic powers." ... not through powers which wheedle and cajole. This experience will not come to a man who closes his eyes, saying: "I want to be good and righteous." It will come only to the man who opens his eyes of Spirit and sees the Powers of yonder worlds mightily at work, realising that he is embedded in these cosmic Powers. And the soul who gathers strength from Theosophy says: "In thy willing, cosmic Beings work," adding: "Create thyself anew from powers of will!" In a man who has *this* conception of Self-Knowledge, transformation is wrought — through the might of cosmic realities.

Dry and abstract as this may seem, in truth it is no theory but something that thrives and grows like a seed of corn sown in the Earth. Forces shoot out in every direction and become plant or tree. So indeed it is. The feelings that come to us in Spiritual Science give us the power to create ourselves anew. "Create thyself anew from power of will!" Thus does Theosophy become the elixir of life and our gaze extends over the worlds of Spirit; forces pour into us from these worlds; we receive their forces and know ourselves, then, in all the depths of our being. Not until we bear World-Knowledge within us can we pass, step by step, away from the being of lesser wisdom within us, the being who is separated from the Guardian of the Threshold, to the "wiser being." We penetrate through all that is concealed from one who does not yet desire the real strength but to which he can be led through Theosophy.



4 Intimate Workings of Karma

9 February 1912, Vienna

There was one point in the lecture yesterday upon which I should not like misunderstanding to arise, but a conversation I had today indicated that this might be possible. It is, of course, difficult to formulate in words, matters connected with the more intimate workings of karma and one point or another may well not be quite clear at the first time of hearing. In the lecture yesterday it was said that we have to regard our sufferings as having been sought out by the "wiser being" within us in order that certain imperfections may be overcome, and that by bearing these sufferings calmly we may make progress along our path. That, however, was not the point on which misunderstanding might occur. — It was the other point, namely, that happiness and joy must not be regarded as due to our own merit or individual karma, but deemed a kind of Grace whereby we are interwoven with the all-prevailing Spirit. Please do not think that the emphasis here lies in the fact that joy comes to us as a mark of favour from the Divine-Spiritual Powers; the emphasis lies in the fact that these experiences are made possible through *Grace*. That is what our attitude must be if we are to reach a true understanding of our karma. Happiness and joy are acts of Grace. A man who imagines that the happiness and joy in his karma indicate a desire on the part of the Gods to single him out and place him above others, will never achieve this goal. We must never imagine that happiness is vouchsafed as a mark of favour or distinction but rather as a reason for feeling that we have been recipients of the Grace out-poured by the Divine-Spiritual Beings. It is this realisation of Grace which makes progress possible; the other attitude would throw us back in our development. Nobody should ever believe that joy comes to him because of special merit in his karma; far rather he should believe that joy comes to him without such merit. Joy and happiness should move us to deeds of compassion and mercy — which we shall perform more effectively than if we are suffering the pangs of sorrow. The realisation that we must make ourselves worthy of Grace — that is what brings us forward. There is no justification for the very prevalent view that one whose life abounds with happiness, has deserved it. This is the very attitude that must be avoided. Please, then, take this as an indication, in order that no misunderstanding may arise.

Today we will amplify our study of karma and of certain experiences in the world, to the end that Spiritual Science may become a real life-force within us. Observation of life and its happenings will reveal, to begin with, experiences of two kinds. On the one hand we shall say to ourselves: "Yes, there a misfortune befell me, but thinking about this misfortune, I can see that it would not have come my way if I had not been careless or negligent." This realisation, however, will not always be within the power of the ordinary consciousness; many a time we shall find it impossible to see any connection between the misfortune and the circumstances of our present life. With respect to much that befalls us, ordinary consciousness can only conclude that it was pure chance, unconnected with anything else. It will also be possible to make this distinction in respect of undertakings which may either be successful or the reverse. In many cases we shall realise that failure was inevitable because of laziness, inattentiveness, or something of the kind, on our part; but in many others we shall be quite unable to discover any connection. It is a useful exercise to take stock of our own experiences and distinguish between things which have failed through no fault of our own, and others where we shall ask with surprise: How could they possibly have succeeded?

We will try to get to the bottom of all these matters, and of events which, on the face of them, seem to be pure chance, without apparent cause. We shall therefore be considering fortuitous events and achievements seemingly unrelated to our actual faculties.

We will proceed in rather a curious way. — As an experiment, we will imagine that we ourselves have *willed* whatever may have happened to us. Suppose a loose tile from the roof of a house once crashed down upon us. We will picture, purely by way of experiment, that this did not happen by chance, and we will deliberately work on the idea that we ourselves climbed on that roof, loosened the tile and then ran down so quickly that we arrived simultaneously at the same spot as the falling tile! Again we will imagine that we ourselves have been responsible, deliberately responsible, for contracting, say, a chill for which there has been no perceptible cause ... rather like the case of the unfortunate lady who, being discontented with her lot, deliberately provoked a chill and died of it! In this way, therefore, we imagine that things otherwise attributable to chance have been deliberately and carefully planned by ourselves. And we will also apply the same procedure to matters which are obviously dependent upon the faculties and qualities we happen to possess. If, for example, we have missed a train we particularly wanted to catch, we shall not blame external circumstances but picture to ourselves that it was due to our own

slackness. If we think this out by way of experiment, we shall gradually succeed in creating a kind of being in imagination — a very curious being, who was responsible for all these things, for a stone having crashed upon us, for some illness, and so forth. We shall realise, of course, that this being is not we ourselves; we simply picture such a being vividly and distinctly. And then a strange experience will be associated with this being. We shall realise that he is a creation of pure phantasy, but that we cannot liberate ourselves from him or from the thought of him — and strange to say, he does not remain as he was; although he becomes alive in us, changes his nature in us, nevertheless the impression is that he is actually present. More and more the certainty arises that we ourselves have had something to do with the things thus built up in imagination. There is no suggestion whatever that we once actually did them; but such thoughts do, nevertheless, correspond, in a *certain way* with something we ourselves have done. We shall say to ourselves: "I have done this or that and I am having now, for some reason or other, to suffer the consequences." This is a very good exercise for unfolding in the life of feeling a kind of memory of earlier incarnations. The soul seems to feel: I myself was there and prepared these things myself.

You will readily understand that it is not easy to awaken remembrance of previous incarnations. For just think what mental effort is required to recall something even recently forgotten; genuine mental effort is required. Experiences which occurred in earlier incarnations have passed into the depths of forgetfulness and a great deal must come to the assistance of memory, if they are to be recollected! One exercise has now been described. Besides what was said in the public lectures, let it be added here that a man will notice this kind of memory arising in his life of feeling: in former time, you yourself made preparation for this or that! The principles indicated should not be ignored for if we obey them we shall find that more and more light will be shed upon life and that strength will constantly increase. Once the feeling has arisen that we ourselves were present, with our own acts, we shall have quite a different attitude to events confronting us in the future; our whole life of feeling will be transformed. Whereas formerly we may have felt anxiety or fear when something has happened to us, we now have a kind of inner remembrance. When something comes as a shock, our feeling tells us that it is for a purpose. And that is a kind of remembrance of an earlier incarnation! Life becomes much more tranquil, more intelligible, and that is what men need — not only those who are filled with the longing for Theosophy, but those too who stand outside. There is no sort of validity in

the question people so often ask: How can earlier incarnations matter, since we do not remember them? The right attitude towards earthly existence will certainly awaken remembrance, only it is a memory belonging to the heart, to the life of feeling, that must be developed — not the kind of memory that is composed of thoughts and concepts.

I considered it important, during this particular visit, to bring home to you how much can be put into practical application and how Theosophy can become actual *experience* in those who pursue it actively.

Now besides what accrued in earlier incarnations, other factors too are of importance in a man's karma. For life also continues between death and a new birth and is, moreover, fraught with happenings and experiences during that period; the consequences of these experiences in the spiritual world appear in our earthly life — but in a peculiar form which often makes us inclined to attribute such occurrences to chance. Nevertheless they can be traced to significant experiences in the spiritual world.

I want to speak to you today of something which may seem remote from the first part of the lecture. But you will see that it is important for every human being and that seemingly chance occurrences may be deeply indicative of mysterious connecting-threads in life.

I am now going to speak of an historical fact that is not preserved in history books but in the Akasha Chronicle. To begin with I remind you that the souls of all of us have been incarnated many times in earthly bodies, among the most diverse conditions of life, in ancient India, Persia, Egypt and Greece; again and again our eyes have looked out upon different environments and conditions of existence and there is purpose and meaning in the fact that we pass through one incarnation after another. Our present life could not be as it is if we had not lived through these other conditions. A strange experience fell to the lot of men living in the thirteenth century of our era, for very exceptional conditions broke in upon humanity at that time — roughly speaking not quite 700 years ago. Conditions were such that the souls of men were completely shut off from the spiritual world; spiritual darkness prevailed and it was impossible even for highly developed individuals to achieve direct contact with the spiritual world. In the thirteenth century, even those who in earlier incarnations had been Initiates were unable to look into the spiritual world. The gates of the spiritual world were closed for a certain period during that century and although men who in former times had received Initiation were able to call up remembrances of their earlier incarnations, in the thirteenth century

they could not themselves gaze into the spiritual worlds. It was necessary for men to live through that condition of darkness, to find the gates to the spiritual world closed against them. Men of high spiritual development were, of course, also in incarnation at that time, but they too were obliged to experience the condition of darkness. When about the middle of the thirteenth century, the darkness lifted, strange happenings transpired at a certain place in Europe — the name cannot now be given but sometime it may be possible to communicate it in a Group lecture. Twelve men in Europe of great and outstanding wisdom, whose spiritual development had taken an unusual course, emerged from the condition of twilight that had obscured clairvoyant vision. Of these twelve wise men, seven, to begin with, must be distinguished. Remembrance of their earlier Initiations had remained in these seven men, and this remembrance, together with the knowledge still surviving was such that the seven men recapitulated in themselves conditions they had once lived through in the period following the Atlantean catastrophe — the ancient Indian epoch of culture. The teachings given by the seven holy Rishis of India had come to life again in the souls of these seven wise men of Europe; seven rays of the ancient wisdom of the sacred Atlantean culture shone forth in the hearts of these seven men who through the operations of world-karma had gathered at a certain place in Europe in the thirteenth century and had found one another again. To these seven came four others. In the soul of the first of these four, the wisdom belonging to the ancient Indian culture shone forth — he was the eighth among the twelve. The wisdom of the ancient Persian culture lived in the soul of the ninth; the wisdom of the third period — that of Egyptian-Chaldean culture — lived in the soul of the tenth, and the wisdom of Graeco-Latin culture in the soul of the eleventh. The wisdom of culture as it was in that particular age — the *contemporary* wisdom — lived in the soul of the twelfth. In these twelve men who came together to perform a special mission, the twelve different streams in the spiritual development of mankind were represented. The fact that all true religions and all true philosophies belong to twelve basic types is in itself a mystery. Buddhism, Brahmanism, Vedanta philosophy, materialism, or whatever it be — all of them can be traced to the twelve basic types; it is only a matter of setting to work with precision and accuracy. And so all the different streams of man's spiritual life — the religions, the philosophies and conceptions of the world spread over the Earth — were united in that "College" of the Twelve.

After the period of darkness had passed and spiritual achievement was possible again, a Thirteenth came, in remarkable circumstances, to the Twelve. I am telling you now of one of those events which transpire secretly in the evolution of mankind once and once only. They cannot occur a second time and are mentioned not as a hint that efforts should be made to repeat them but for quite other reasons. When the darkness had lifted and it was possible again to unfold clairvoyant vision, the coming of the Thirteenth was announced in a mysterious way to the twelve wise men. They knew: a child with significant and remarkable incarnations behind him is now to be born. They knew that one of his incarnations had been at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. It was known, therefore, that one who had been a contemporary of the Events in Palestine was returning. — the birth of the child in these unusual circumstances during the thirteenth century could not have been said to be that of an individuality of renown. — In speaking of previous lives there is a deplorable and only too widespread tendency to go back to important historical personages. I have come across all kinds of people who believe that they were incarnated as some historical personage or figure in the Gospels. Only recently a lady informed me that she had been Mary Magdalene and I could only reply that she was the twenty-fourth Mary Magdalene I had met during my life! In these matters the most scrupulous care must be taken to prevent fantastic notions arising.

History tells us very little about the incarnations of the Thirteenth. He was born many times, with great and profound qualities of heart. It was known that this Individuality was to be born again as a child and that he was destined for a very special mission. This knowledge was revealed to the twelve seers who took the child entirely into their charge and were able to arrange that from the very beginning he was shut off from the outside world. He was removed from his family and cared for by these twelve men. Guided by their clairvoyance, they reared the child with every care, in such a way that all the forces acquired from previous incarnations were able to unfold in him. A kind of intuitive perception of this occurrence has arisen in men who know something of the history of spiritual life. Goethe's poem *Die Geheimnisse* has been recited to us many times. Out of a deep, intuitive perception, Goethe speaks in that poem of the College of the Twelve and has been able to convey to us the mood of heart and feeling in which they lived. The Thirteenth is not "Brother Mark," but the child of whom I have been telling you and who almost immediately after his birth was taken into the care of the Twelve and brought up by them until the age of early manhood. The child developed in a strange and remarkable way. The

Twelve were not in any sense fanatics; they were full of inner composure, enlightenment and peacefulness of heart. How does a fanatic behave? He wants to convert people as quickly as possible — while they, as a rule, do not want to be converted. Everybody is expected immediately to believe what the fanatic wants them to believe and he is angry when this does not happen. In our day, when someone sets out to expound a particular subject, people simply do not believe that his aim may be not to voice his own views but something quite different, namely, the thoughts and opinions of the one of whom he is writing. For many years I was held to be a follower of Nietzsche because I once wrote an absolutely objective book about him. People simply cannot understand that the aim of a writer may be to give an objective exposition. They think that everyone must be a fanatic on the subject of which he happens to be speaking!

The Twelve in the thirteenth century were far from being fanatics; they were very sparing with teaching clothed in words but because they lived in communion with the boy, twelve rays of light as it were went out of them into him and were resolved, in his soul, into one great harmony. It would not have been possible to give him any kind of academic examination; nevertheless there lived within him, transmuted into feeling and sensitive perception, all that the twelve representatives of the twelve different types of religion poured into his soul. His whole soul echoed back the harmony of the twelve different forms of belief spread over the Earth. In this way the soul of the boy had very much to bear and worked in a strange way upon the body. And it is precisely for this reason that the process of which I am telling you now may not be repeated: it could only be enacted at that particular time. Strangely enough, as the harmony within the boy's soul increased, the more delicate his body became — more and more delicate, until at a certain age of life it was transparent in every limb. The boy ate less and less until finally he took no nourishment at all. Then he lay for days in a condition of complete torpor: the soul had left the body, but returned after a few days. The youth was now inwardly quite changed. The twelve different rays of the mind of humanity were united in a single radiance and he gave utterance to the greatest, most wonderful secrets; he did not repeat what the first, or the second, or the third had said, but gave forth in a new and wonderful synthesis, all that they would have said had they spoken in unison; all the knowledge they possessed was gathered into one whole and when voiced by the Thirteenth this new wisdom seemed actually to have come to birth in him. It was as though a higher Spirit were speaking in him. Something entirely and essentially new was

thus imparted to the twelve wise men. Wisdom in abundance was imparted to them, and to each individually, greater illumination of what had been known to him hitherto.

I have been describing to you the first School of Christian Rosenkreutz, for the Thirteenth is the Individuality known to us by that name. In that incarnation he died after only a brief earthly existence; in the fourteenth century he was born again and lived, then, for more than a hundred years. Thus in the thirteenth century his life was brief, in the fourteenth century, very long. During the first half of this later incarnation he went on great journeys in search of the different centres of culture in Europe, Africa and Asia, in order to gather knowledge of what had come to life in him during the previous century; then he returned to Europe. A few of those who had brought him up in the thirteenth century were again in incarnation and were joined by others. This was the time of the inauguration of the Rosicrucian stream of spiritual life. And Christian Rosenkreutz himself incarnated again and again.

To this very day he is at work — during the brief intervals, too, when he is not actually in incarnation; through his higher bodies he then works spiritually into human beings, without the need of spatial contact. We must try to picture the mysterious way in which his influence operates.

And here I want to begin by giving a certain example. Those who participate consciously in the happenings of the occult, spiritual life outspread around us, had a strange experience from the 'eighties on into the 'nineties of last century; one became aware of certain influences which emanated from a remarkable personality (I am only mentioning one case among many). There was, however, something not quite harmonious about these influences. Anyone who is sensitive to influences from contemporaries living far away in space would, at that time, have been aware of a certain radiance emanating from a certain personality, but a radiance not altogether harmonious. When the new century had dawned, however, these influences resolved into harmony. What had happened? I will now explain it to you.

On 12th August, in the year 1900, *Solowioff* had died — a man far too little appreciated or understood. The influences of his ether-body radiated far and wide, but although Solowioff was a great philosopher, in his case the development of the *soul* was in advance of that of the *head*, the *intellect*; he was a great and splendid thinker but his conscious philosophy was of far less importance and value than what he bore within his soul: to the very

time of his death the head was a factor of hindrance and so, as an occult influence, a lack of harmony was perceptible. When Solowioff was dead and the ether-body, separated from the head was able to radiate more freely in the ether-world, when he was liberated from the restrictions caused by his own thinking, the rays of his influence shone out with wonderful brilliance and power.

People may ask: How can such knowledge really concern us? This very question is illusion, for the human being is through and through a product of the spiritual processes around him; and when certain occultists become aware of the *reality* of these processes, that is because they actually see them. But spiritual processes operate, too, in others who do *not* see. — Everything in the spiritual world is interconnected. Whatever influence may radiate from a highly developed Frenchman or Russian is felt not only on their own native soil, but their thought and influence has an effect over the *whole* Earth. Everything that comes to pass in the spiritual world has an influence upon us and only when we realise that the soul lives in the spiritual world just as the lung within the air, shall we have the right attitude!

The forces in the ether-bodies of highly developed Individualities stream out and have a potent effect upon other human beings. The ether-body of Christian Rosenkreutz, too, works far and wide into the world. And reference must here be made to a fact that is of the greatest significance in many human lives; it is something that transpires in the spiritual world between death and a new birth and is not to be ascribed to "chance."

Christian Rosenkreutz has always made use of the short intervals of time between his incarnations to call into his particular stream of spiritual life those souls whom he knows to be ripe; between his deaths and births he has concerned himself, as it were, with choosing out those who are ready to enter his stream. But human beings themselves, by learning to be attentive, must be able to recognise by what means Christian Rosenkreutz gives them a sign that they may count themselves among his chosen. This sign has been given in the lives of very many human beings of the present time, but they pay no heed to it. Yet among the apparently "chance" happenings in a man's life there may be such a sign — it is to be regarded as an indication that between death and a new birth Christian Rosenkreutz has found him mature and ready; the sign is, however, given by Christian Rosenkreutz on the physical plane. This event may be called the mark of Christian Rosenkreutz. Let us suppose that a man is lying in bed ... in other places I have mentioned different forms of such a happening but all of

them have occurred ... for some unaccountable reason he suddenly wakes up and as though guided by instinct looks at a wall otherwise quite dark; in the half-light of the room. He sees, written on the wall: "Get up now, this minute!" It all seems very strange, but he gets up and goes out of the house; hardly has he done so than the ceiling over his bed collapses; although nobody else would have been in danger of injury, he himself must inevitably have been killed. The most thorough investigation proves that no single being on the physical plane warned him to get up from the bed! If he had remained lying there, he would certainly be dead. — Such an experience may be thought to be hallucination, or something of the kind; but deeper investigation will reveal that these particular experiences — and they come to hundreds of people — are not accidental. A beckoning call has come from Christian Rosenkretz. The karma of the one called in this way always indicates that Christian Rosenkretz bestows the life he may claim. I say explicitly: such experiences occur in the lives of many people at the present time, and it is only a question of being alert. The occurrence does not always take such a graphic form as the example quoted, but numbers of human beings nowadays have had such experiences.

Now when I say something more than once during a lecture, I do so quite deliberately, because I find that strange conclusions are apt to be drawn from things that are half — or totally forgotten. I say this because nobody need be discouraged because he has had no such experience; this need not really be the case, for if he searches he will find something of the kind in his life. Naturally, I can only single out a typical occurrence. There, then, we have in our life, a fact of which we may say that its cause does not lie in a period of actual incarnation; we may have contacted Christian Rosenkretz in the spiritual world. I have laid particular stress on this outstanding event of the call. Other events, too, could be mentioned, events connected directly with the spiritual world and to be found during the life between death and a new birth; but in our special circumstances we shall realise the significance of this event which is so intimately connected with our spiritual Movement.

Such a happening surely indicates that quite a different attitude must take root in us if we want to have a clear vision of what actually plays into life. Most human beings rush hectically through life and are not thoughtful or attentive; many say that one should not brood but engage in a life of action. But how much better it would be if precipitate deeds were left undone and people were to brood a little — their deeds, then, would be far more mature! If only the beckoning call were heeded with composure and attentiveness! Often it only seems as if we were brooding. It is precisely

through quiet composure that strength comes to us — and then we shall follow when karma calls, understanding too, when it is calling. These are the things to which I wanted to call your attention today, for they do indeed make life more intelligible.

I have told you of the strange event in the thirteenth century, purely in the form of historical narrative, in order to indicate those things to which men must pay attention if they are to find their proper place in life and understand the beckoning call of Christian Rosenkreutz. To make this possible the preparation by the Twelve and the coming of the Thirteenth were necessary. The event in the thirteenth century was necessary in order that in our own time and hereafter, such a beckoning or other sign may be understood and obeyed. Christian Rosenkreutz has created this sign in order to rouse the attention of men to the demands of the times, to indicate to them that they belong to him and may dedicate their lives to him in the service of the progress of humanity.



5

The Christ Impulse as Living Reality

18 November 1911, Munich

Christ works as a macrocosmic Power and is not a teacher like the other teachers of humanity. He has united Himself with the Earth, as a reality, as power, as very life.

The loftiest teachers of the successive epochs are the Bodhisattvas who already in the pre-Christian era pointed to Christ in His full reality of being; again in the post-Christian era they point to Him as a Power Who is now united with the Earth. Thus the Bodhisattvas work both before and after Christ's physical life on Earth. He who was born as the son of a King in India, 550 years before Christ, lived and taught for twenty nine years as a Bodhisattva, and then ascended to the rank of Buddha; thereafter he was never again to appear on the Earth in a body of flesh but from then onwards he worked from the spiritual world. When this Bodhisattva had become Buddha, he was succeeded by the new Bodhisattva whose mission it is to lead mankind to an understanding of the Christ Impulse. All these things had come to pass before the appearance of Christ on the Earth. About the year 105 B.C. there was living in Palestine a man greatly defamed in rabbinical literature. His name was Jeshu ben Pandira and he was an incarnation of this new Bodhisattva. Jesus of Nazareth is an essentially different being, in that when he (Jesus of Nazareth) reached the age of 30, he became the bearer of Christ, at the Baptism by John in the Jordan. It was Jeshu ben Pandira from whom the Essene teachings were mainly derived. One of his pupils bore the name of Matthew, and he too pointed to the Mystery of Golgotha. Jeshu ben Pandira was stoned by his enemies and his corpse was hung on a cross as a further mark of contempt. His existence can be established without the help of occult research for plenty is said about him in rabbinical literature, although the information is either misleading or deliberately falsified. He bore within him the Individuality of the new Bodhisattva and was the successor of Gautama Buddha. The name of his pupil Matthew passed over to later pupils. The content of the Gospel known by that name had already been in existence since the time of the first Matthew, in the form of a description of the rituals contained in the ancient Mystery-scripts. In the life of Christ Jesus, the essential content of these Mysteries became reality on the physical

plane. What were previously only pictures from the Mysteries, seeds as it were of subsequent happenings, now became reality. Thus the Christ Mystery had already been known prophetically, had indeed been enacted in the ceremonies of the ancient Mysteries, before it became, once and once only, an actual event on the physical plane.

It is also necessary for us to know that one of the characteristics of the incarnations of the Bodhisattva is that in his youth he cannot be recognised as such. Between his thirtieth and thirty-third years a great revolution takes place in the soul and the personality is fundamentally transformed. For example, a Moses- or Abraham-Individuality can take possession of the personality of a Bodhisattva at this time of his life.

About 3,000 years after our present time, this Bodhisattva will become the Maitreya Buddha. And then his influence from the spiritual world will flow into the hearts of men as a magic, moral power. The stream going forth from the Maitreya Buddha will unite with the stream of Western spiritual life connected with Christian Rosenkreutz.

The Bodhisattva who once lived as Jeshu ben Pandira comes down to the Earth again and again in a human body and will continue to do so in order to fulfil the rest of his task and particular mission which cannot, as yet, be completed. Although its consummation can already be foreseen by clairvoyance, there exists no larynx capable of producing the sounds of the speech that will be uttered when this Bodhisattva rises to the rank of Buddha. In agreement with oriental occultism, therefore, it can be said: 5,000 years after Gautama Buddha, that is to say, towards the end of the next 3,000 years, the Bodhisattva who is his successor will become Buddha. But as it is his mission to prepare human beings for the epoch connected paramountly with the development of true morality, when, in the future, he becomes Buddha, the words of his speech will contain the magic power of the Good. For thousands of years, therefore, oriental tradition has predicted: Maitreya Buddha, the Buddha who is to come, will be a Bringer of the Good by way of the word. He will then be able to teach men of the real nature of the Christ Impulse and in that age the Buddha stream and the Christ stream will flow into one. Only so can the Christ Mystery be truly understood. So mighty and all-pervading was the Impulse poured into the evolution of mankind that its waves surge onwards into future epochs. In the fourth epoch of post-Atlantean civilisation this Impulse was made manifest in the incarnation of Christ in a human,

physical body. And we are now going forward to an epoch when the Impulse will manifest in such a way that human beings will behold the Christ on the astral plane as an Ether Form.

Yesterday we heard that in still later epochs men will be able to behold Him in even higher forms in the aesthetic and moral spheres. But when we speak in this way of the Christ Impulse we are concerned with ideas which will be resolutely opposed above all by the Churches of Christendom. Great and incisive measures have been and are necessary in the onward progress of human evolution in order to promote increasing understanding of the Christ Impulse. Hitherto, indeed, such understanding has been lacking. And anyone who casts an eye at modern theology will perceive not only the futility of the attitude maintained by the opponents of Christianity, but also by those who claim to be steadfast adherents. The theosophical Movement in the West should have become that stream of spiritual life which out of true and genuine sources awakens understanding for Christianity in the modern age, but such endeavours met with strong opposition.

It is important to understand the real sources of Christianity, but owing to lack of time they cannot all be mentioned today. We shall speak only of those which have been accessible to mankind since the thirteenth century.

Since the thirteenth century, the Movement connected with the name Christian Rosenkreutz has been an integral part of the spiritual life of mankind. Spiritual measures of a very definite kind were necessary in the thirteenth century to enable the influence connected with this name to become part of the spiritual life of the modern age. At that time, when the spiritual world was entirely shut off from human vision, a "College" of twelve wise men came together. All the spiritual knowledge of the world and its secrets then existing was gathered into this College — distributed as it were in different sections. By means of certain occult processes there had been transmitted to seven of these twelve wise men, the wisdom that had passed over from Atlantis into the holy Rishis. In four others lived the wisdom of the sacred mysteries of the Indian, Persian, Egyptian and Graeco-Latin epochs respectively. And what existed in those days of the kind of culture which was to characterise the Fifth post-Atlantean epoch — this constituted the wisdom of the twelfth. The whole range of spiritual life was accessible to these Twelve.

Now it was known at that time that a certain Individuality who had been a contemporary of the Mystery of Golgotha, was to be born, again as a child. Meanwhile, through a number of incarnations, this Individuality had

unfolded a power of deep and fervent piety, devotion and love. The College of the twelve wise men took this child into their care soon after he was born; shut off from the outside, exoteric world, he came under no influence save theirs; they were his teachers as well as caring for his bodily needs. The manner of the child's development was altogether unique; the profound spirituality he bore within him as the fruit of many incarnations came to expression, too, in his outer, bodily form. He was a weak and sickly child, but his body became marvelously transparent. He grew up and developed in such a way that a radiant, shining Spirit indwelt a body that had become transparent. Through the processes of a profoundly wise form of education, all the wisdom from the ages preceding and during post-Atlantean times which the twelve wise men were able to give forth, rayed into his soul. By way of the deeper soul-forces, not by way of the intellect, the treasures of all this wisdom united in the soul of this child. He then fell into a strange condition. For a certain period of time he ceased to take nourishment; all external functions of life were as though paralysed, and the whole of the wisdom received by the child rayed back to the Twelve. Each of them received back what he had originally given, but now in a different form. And those twelve wise men felt: Now, for the first time, the twelve great religions and world-conceptions have united into one interconnected whole, have been given to us! And henceforward there lived in the twelve men what we call *Rosicrucian Christianity*.

The child lived only a short time longer. In the external world we give the name Christian Rosenkreutz to this Individuality. But it was not until the fourteenth century that he was known by this name. In the fourteenth century he was born again and lived then for more than a hundred years. Even when he was not incarnated in the flesh, he worked through his ether body, always with the purpose of influencing the development of Christianity in its true form as the synthesis of all the great religions and systems of thought in the world. And he has worked on into our own time, either as a human being or from his ether-body, inspiring all that was done in the West to establish the synthesis of the great religions. His influence today is waxing and growing greater all the time. Many a person of whom we do not expect it, is a pupil chosen by Christian Rosenkreutz. Even today it is possible to speak of a sign by means of which Christian Rosenkreutz calls to one whom he has chosen. Many people can apprehend this sign in their life; it may express itself in a thousand ways, but these different manifestations all lead back to a typical form which may be described as follows. —

The choice may, for example, happen in the following way. — A man embarks upon some undertaking; he spares no effort to make it successful and forges straight ahead towards his goal. While he is ruthlessly making his way in the world (he may be a thorough materialist), suddenly he hears a voice saying: "Stop what you propose to do!" ... And he will be aware that this was no physical voice. But now suppose that he does abstain from his project. If he has actually done this he may realise that if he had continued ruthlessly towards his goal, he would certainly have been led to his death. These are the two fundamentals: that he knows with certainty, firstly, that the warning came from the spiritual world, and secondly, that death would have come to him had he persisted in his undertaking. It is therefore revealed to one who is to become a pupil: You have actually been saved, moreover by a warning proceeding from a world of which, to begin with, you know nothing! So far as circumstances of the earthly world are concerned, death has already come to you and your further life is to be regarded as a gift ... And when the man in question realises this he will be led to the resolve to work in a spiritual movement. If the resolve is taken, this means that he has actually been chosen. This is how Christian Rosenkreutz begins to gather his pupils around him, and many human beings, if they were sufficiently alert, would be conscious of such an event in their inner life.

The human beings of whom it can be said that they were, or will now be, united in this way with Christian Rosenkreutz, are those who should be the pioneers of a deeper understanding of esoteric Christianity. This stream of spiritual life connected with Christian Rosenkreutz provides the highest means for enabling the Christ Impulse to be understood in our present time. The beginning was already made long, long ago — a hundred years before the Mystery of Golgotha, through Jeshu ben Pandira whose essential mission was to make preparation for the coming of Christ. He had a pupil, Matthew, whose name subsequently passed over to a successor who was living at the time of Jesus of Nazareth. The greatest deed wrought by Jeshu ben Pandira was that he was the originator and preparer of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. The content of this Gospel derives from a ritual of Initiation and passages such as that concerning the Temptation, and others, too, originate from enactment's in the ancient Mysteries. All these processes in the evolution of humanity were to become fact on the physical plane too. And this was what was written down, in outline, by the pupil of Jeshu ben Pandira.

Jeshu ben Pandira was not spared from the hard fate he himself predicted; he was stoned and his corpse suspended on a cross. The original chronicle was preserved in the hands of a few of his adherents, in deep secrecy. We can best realise what happened to it later on, from what the great Church Father Jerome himself says, namely that he had received the document of the Matthew Gospel from a Christian sect. The original record was held at that time in the secret keeping of a small circle and through certain circumstances came into the hands of Jerome. He was charged by his Bishop with the task of translating it. Jerome himself narrates this; but he says at the same time that because of the form and manner of the transcription, it should not pass into the hands of the outside world. He wanted to translate it in such a way that its secrets would remain secret — and he says, furthermore, that he himself does not understand it. The character of what came into existence in this way was such that in secular language one man could express it in one way and another in a different way. And this is how it has come down to posterity. In reality, therefore, the world does not yet possess the Gospels in their true form. There is every reason and justification for spiritual research today to shed new light upon the Gospels. Spiritual research goes back to the Akasha Chronicle because there and there only are they to be found in their original form.

Let there be no mistake about it. — Christianity in its true form has yet to be raised from the ruins. One sign among many others indicates how necessary this is. For example, in the year 1873, in France, a count was taken of those who could be said to belong inwardly and genuinely to Catholicism. They amounted to one-third; the other two-thirds proved no longer to be adherents in the real sense — and these two-thirds were certainly not composed entirely of people who never feel the need of religion! Life today is such that the religious longings of men do indeed incline towards Christ; but the true sources of Christianity must be rediscovered. And it is to this end that the stream of spiritual life going out from Jeshu ben Pandira flows into unity with the other stream which, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, is connected with the name of Christian Rosenkreutz.



6 The Starry Heaven Above Me — The Moral Law Within Me

19 December 1912, St.Gallen

Theosophy teaches us that the processes in operation between death and a new birth are connected with the conditions prevailing in the Cosmos. A very significant difference has here to be considered. Changes may take place within us during physical existence, but not, in the same sense, during the period between death and a new birth. Suppose, for example, between birth and death we have been related in some way to a human being, or have shared experiences with a friend. And now, after his death, we have learnt from him something that was *not* a common experience between us on the Earth. How is a relationship established after death? How can our feelings towards him give expression to sympathy or antipathy? When we ourselves have passed through the gate of death and are followed, later on, by someone with whom we had a certain relationship in physical life, this must necessarily remain unchanged for a long time after death; for after death we cannot add anything new to the old relationship. After passing into the spiritual world we are still subject to our own, individual karma. The time when this karma can be transformed comes only in a new life and can only be adjusted or fully discharged in a new incarnation. An individual among the Dead cannot, in spiritual existence, work upon the other Dead in such a way as to change their life. But it is possible for a man still living on the Earth to have an effect upon one who has passed through death. Take the following case as an example. — Two human beings who love one another have different attitudes to Theosophy: one of them loves and the other hates it; hence there is a spirit of opposition between them.

If the human being is able to speak of the freedom of his will, this is because the "I"-consciousness takes far deeper paths than does the astral consciousness; in the depths of soul, therefore, a man often yearns for what, in his conscious life, he hates. How can we be of help to one of the Dead? We must be united with him by a spiritual bond. We can help, for example, by quietly reading to him; uniting ourselves with him inwardly and lovingly, we can take him with us through a sequence of thoughts, we can send ideas and imaginations up to him in the higher worlds. Such

services of friendship are always helpful. Reading in this way is of benefit, although in earthly life the man may have been too indifferent, too easy-going; we can lighten his sufferings even when there was no evidence in his life that he longed for these things. Much blessing is often sent from the physical plane into the spiritual worlds, in spite of the great gulf which separates the life between birth and death from the life between death and a new birth. Many living people will feel that they are intimately connected with the Dead; they will also be conscious that they help the Dead. The first souls with whom we come into contact after death are those with whom we had already formed close ties on the Earth, not those who were unknown to us on Earth. A direct continuation of the earthly life takes place after death. The soul is *inside* whatever it perceives, fills it through and through.

During the period of Kamaloca, the ether-form of man expands as far as the orbit of the Moon. All human beings occupy the same space; they are not "in each other's way" during the Kamaloca-period. After this period of Moon-existence we inhabit the Mercury sphere; then the Venus-sphere, then the Sun-sphere; here we live within a sphere of higher spirituality, for the astral elements of the Moon-sphere have been overcome. Life in each of the planetary spheres depends upon the mood and quality of soul acquired during the Moon-period; the life of those who have unfolded the quality of moral fellow-feeling differs from the life of those who are egoists. The former open themselves to humanity. Above all we shall be able to form a connection with those with whom we were together in earthly life. The nature of these relationships will depend upon whether we have been a comfort or a source of trouble to the others. A man of inferior morality will become a spiritual hermit; a truly moral man, on the contrary, a sociable inhabitant of the Mercury-sphere.

During the following Venus condition, we expand to the outermost circumference of the Venus-sphere. A man who in earthly life had no religious feelings, who had received into himself nothing of the Eternal, the Divine, who during the Mercury-period had no bonds with other human souls, will become a hermit even during the Venus-period; but there too he is a sociable being if, during the Mercury-period he was together with other kindred spirits and warm mutual relationships existed between them. Atheists become hermits in the Venus-period; monists are condemned to live in the prison-house of their own souls, so that the one is shut off from the other. A hermit has a dull, torpid kind of consciousness from which other human souls are excluded. A sociable being has a bright, clear consciousness which, finds its way into the other being. Man ascends

higher and higher into the world of the stars; but the more dimly he lives through these regions, the more rapidly he skims through the ages and therefore returns the more quickly to reincarnation — this applies, for example, to those who were criminals or idiots in their previous existence. On the other hand, the clearer consciousness has been in the world of the stars, the more slowly does the soul return to incarnation. Man must have been fully conscious out in the Cosmos if he is to be capable of building and shaping the physical brain of his subsequent life. — The condition of existence in which he becomes an inhabitant of the Sun-sphere sets in about a century after death. During this Sun-period it is possible to acquire a certain relationship to all human beings. If a man has consciously received the Christ Impulse, the way to all other human beings is open for him. Since the Mystery of Golgotha, union can be achieved with the Christ Impulse, the supreme spiritual Power. But a man who has not received the Christ Impulse remains a hermit, even in the Sun-sphere.

When a human being with his aura is revealed to the clairvoyant during the Moon-period of existence, a seed or kernel, enclosed in a kind of auric cloud, is perceived within the vast ether-body. This aura is dark and remains so, even during the Mercury-period. During the Venus-period, one side of the auric cloud lights up; and if, as clairvoyants, we then observe the human being, we perceive that if he was a moral, religious man, he is able, from that time onwards, to have real contact with the Beings of the higher Hierarchies. If he was a good and righteous man he lives in spiritual contact with higher Beings during the Venus-period; if he was an unrighteous man he cannot know or recognise these higher Beings and is thus condemned to the pain of isolation.

Before the Mystery of Golgotha, in the first epoch of post-Atlantean culture, conditions were such that the Throne of Christ was to be seen upon the Sun. Those who had been good and righteous in their lives found their way to the Christ on the plane of Sun-existence. In the age of Zarathustra, the Christ was already on His way to the Earth and could not be found on the Sun. Since the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ has been united with the Earth. If, on the Earth, men have not received the Christ Impulse, they cannot find Christ between death and a new birth. When a man has become a Sun-dweller and has taken the Christ Impulse into himself, a multitude of facts, known as the Akasha Chronicle of the Sun, lie open before him. If, on the Earth, he had not found Christ, he cannot read the Akasha Chronicle on the Sun. We can learn to read this great script if, on the Earth, we have accepted the Mystery of Golgotha with warmth of heart — and then, on the Sun, we are able to perceive the Deeds of Christ on the Sun through the

millennia. Existence today is such that we are strong enough to become Sun-dwellers. — Later on we enter the sphere of Mars, then the spheres of Jupiter and Saturn and then, finally, the world of the fixed stars. On the path of return to the Earth, the ether-body of man shrinks and shrinks in size — until it is so tiny that he can incarnate again in a new human germ-cell.

Up to the period of Sun-existence, we stand under the leadership of Christ. From the Sun-existence onwards we need a Leader whose task it is to guide us to the further realms of cosmic space. Lucifer now comes to our side. If we have fallen prey to him on the physical plane, it is bad for us; but if on the Earth we have lightly understood the Christ Impulse, then we are strong enough on the Sun to follow even Lucifer without danger. From then onwards he has charge of the inner progress of the soul, just as on this side of the Sun, Christ has had charge of our ascent. If on the Earth we have received the Christ Impulse, Christ is the Keeper of the soul on the path to the Sun. Beyond the periphery of the Sun-sphere, Lucifer leads us out into the Cosmos *within* the periphery of the Sun, he is the Tempter.

If during the Sun-period we have been armed with the Christ Impulse, Christ and Lucifer guide us as Brothers. Yet how differently words spoken by Christ and by Lucifer are to be understood! As a wonderful precept there are the words of Christ: "In you lives the spark of the Divine, ye are Gods." (John 10:34). And then, Lucifer's words of temptation: "Ye shall be as Gods." (Genesis 3:5) These are similar utterances — but, at the same time, in dire antithesis! Everything depends upon whether here, on the Earth, man stands at the side of Christ or at the side of Lucifer.

Theosophy gives us a deep and profound understanding of the world. A certain knowledge must come to us in the physical body. On the Earth we must acquire understanding of Christ and Lucifer through Theosophy — otherwise we cannot pass with consciousness into cosmic space. The time is now beginning on the Earth when men must know quite consciously whether it is Christ or Lucifer who, after death, whispers these words into the soul. In the life between death and a new birth we must unfold a true understanding of Christ in order that we shall not be condemned to wander through the Cosmos in a state of sleep.

Theosophy must be an influence, too, in little things. More and more it will become apparent whether, or not, forces of life have been acquired between death and a new birth. There will be human beings born with dried up, withered bodies, because owing to their antagonism to

Theosophy they have been unable to gather life-forces from the Cosmos. Understanding of Theosophy is necessary for the sake of Earth-evolution itself! If men have opened their souls to Theosophy, the knowledge that before this life they were in a spiritual world, will bring them happiness. "The starry heavens above me the moral law within me" — this realisation alone gives the world its greatness. Man says to himself: "In the world of the stars I received the essence and content of my inner life; what I lived through in the cosmic expanse flashes up now within my soul. The existence of evil impulses in my soul is due to the fact that during my sojourn in the world of the stars I did not try to receive its forces or the Spirit-Power of Christ." We have, indeed, yet to learn how to achieve union with the Macrocosm. Today the human being can have only a dim premonition of what happens between death and a new birth. He feels: In earthly existence I live within my soul and bear in my Spirit the forces of the starry heavens. If a man meditates deeply on this concept it will become a great and might power within him.



7

The Mission of Gautama Buddha on Mars

18 December 1912, Munich

Friends have expressed the wish that I should speak today on the subject of the lecture here a year ago, when it was said that the Initiation of Christian Rosenkreutz took place in very special circumstances in the thirteenth century and that since then this Individuality has worked unceasingly in the spiritual life. Today we shall hear still more of Christian Rosenkreutz as we study the great task which devolved upon him at the dawn of the age of intellect in order that provision might be made for the future of humanity.

A being like Christian Rosenkreutz, who is present in the world as a great and eminent occultist has to reckon with the conditions peculiar to his epoch. The intrinsic character of spiritual life as it is in the present age, arose for the first time when modern natural science came upon the scene with men like Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, Galileo and others. Human beings today are taught about Copernicus in their early schooldays and the impressions then received remain with them their whole life long. In earlier times it was quite different. — Try to picture what a contrast there is between a man of the modern age and one who lived centuries ago. Before the days of Copernicus, everyone believed that the Earth remains at rest in cosmic space with the sun and the stars revolving around it. The very ground slipped from under men's feet when Copernicus came forward with the doctrine that the Earth is moving with tremendous speed through the universe! We should not underestimate the effects of such a revolution in thinking, accompanied as it was by a corresponding change in the life of feeling. All the thoughts and ideas of men were suddenly different from what they had been before the days of Copernicus! And now let us ask: What has occultism to say about this revolution in thinking?

One who asks from the standpoint of occultism, what kind of world-conception can be derived from the Copernican tenets, will have to admit that although these ideas can lead to great achievements in the realm of natural science and in external life, they are incapable of promoting any understanding of the spiritual foundations of the world and the things of the world — for truth to tell there has never been a worse instrument for

understanding the spiritual foundations of the world than the ideas of Copernicus — never in the evolution of the human mind! The reason for this is that all these Copernican concepts are inspired by Lucifer. Copernicanism is one of the last attacks, one of the last great attacks made by Lucifer upon the evolution of man. In earlier, pre-Copernican thought, the external world was, indeed, maya: but much traditional wisdom, much truth concerning the world and the things of the world still survived. Since Copernicus, however, man has maya around him not only in his material perceptions but his concepts and ideas in *themselves* are maya. Today men regard it as self-evident that the sun stands firmly at the centre with the planets revolving around it in ellipses. In no far distant future, however, it will be realised that the view of the world of stars held by Copernicus is much less correct than the earlier, Ptolemaic view. The view of the world held by the school of Copernicus and Kepler is, in many respects, convenient, but as an explanation of the macrocosm it is not the truth.

And so Christian Rosenkretz, confronted by a world conception which is itself a maya, an illusion, was obliged to take a stand with regard to it. It devolved upon him to rescue occultism in an age when all the concepts of science were themselves maya — for with its material globes in cosmic space the Copernican world system was maya, even as concept. Thus towards the end of the sixteenth century, there took place one of those Conferences of which we heard here a year ago in connection with the Initiation of Christian Rosenkretz himself in the thirteenth century. — In this later occult Conference of leading Individualities, [footnote: See *East in the Light of the West*, Chapter VI, etc.] Christian Rosenkretz was associated with certain other great Individualities concerned with the leadership of humanity. There were present not only personalities in incarnation on the physical plane but entelechies operating in the spiritual worlds; and the Individuality who in the sixth century before Christ had been incarnated as Gautama Buddha also participated.

The occultists of the East rightly believe — for they know it to be the truth — that the Buddha who in his twenty-ninth year rose from the rank of Bodhisattva to that of Buddha, had incarnated then for the last time in a physical body. It is absolutely true that when the individuality of a Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha, he no longer appears on the Earth in physical incarnation. But this does not mean that he ceases to be active in the affairs of the Earth. The Buddha continues to work for the Earth, although he is never again present in a physical body but sends down his influence from the spiritual world. The "Gloria" heard by the Shepherds in the fields proclaimed from the spiritual world that the forces of Buddha

were streaming into the astral body of the Child Jesus described in St. Luke's Gospel. The words of the Gloria came from Buddha who was working in the astral body of the Child Jesus. This wonderful message of Peace and Love is an integral part of Buddha's contribution to Christianity. But later on too, the Buddha works into the deeds of men — not physically but from the spiritual world — and he has co-operated in measures that have been necessary for the sake of progress in the evolution of humanity.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, for example, there was a very important centre of Initiation in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, in which the Buddha taught, in his spirit-body. In such Schools there are teachers who live in the physical body; but it is also possible for the more advanced pupils to receive instruction from one who teaches in an ether-body only. Among the pupils of the Buddha at that time was one who incarnated again a few centuries later. We are speaking, therefore, of a physical personality who centuries later lived again in a physical body and is known to us as St. Francis of Assisi. The quality characteristic of Francis of Assisi and of the life of his monks — which has so much similarity with that of the disciples of Buddha — is due to the fact that Francis of Assisi himself was a pupil of Buddha.

It is easy to perceive the contrast between the qualities characteristic of men who like Francis of Assisi were striving fervently for the Spirit and those engrossed in the world of industry, technical life and discoveries of modern civilisation. Many there were, including occultists, who suffered deeply at the thought that in the future two separate classes of human beings would inevitably arise. They foresaw the one class wholly given up to the affairs of practical life, convinced that security depends entirely upon the production of means of nourishment, the construction of machines, and so forth; whereas the other class would be composed of men who, like Francis of Assisi, withdraw altogether from the practical affairs of the world for the sake of the spiritual life. Left to itself, without intervention, history would inevitably have taken this course. But in the wise counsels of the spiritual worlds, steps were taken to avert the worst form of this evil on the Earth.

A Conference of the greatest and most advanced Individualities was called together by Christian Rosenkreutz. His most intimate pupil and friend, the great teacher Buddha, participated in these counsels and in the decisions reached. At that spiritual Conference it was resolved that henceforward Buddha would dwell on Mars and there unfold his influence and activity. Buddha transferred his work to Mars in the year 1604. And on Mars he

performed a deed similar to that performed by Christ on the Earth in the Mystery of Golgotha. Christian Rosenkretz had known what the work of Buddha on Mars would signify for the whole Cosmos, what his teachings of Nirvana, of liberation from the Earth would signify on Mars. The teaching of Nirvana was unsuited to a form of culture directed primarily to practical life. Buddha's pupil, Francis of Assisi, was an example of the fact that this teaching produces in its adepts complete remoteness from the world and its affairs. But the content of Buddhism which was not adapted to the practical life of man between birth and death was of high importance for the soul between death and a new birth. Christian Rosenkretz realised that for a certain purification needed on Mars, the teachings of Buddha were pre-eminently suitable. The Christ Being, the Essence of Divine Love, had once come down to the Earth to a people in many respects alien, and in the seventeenth century, Buddha, the Prince of Peace, went to Mars — the planet of war and conflict — to execute his mission there. The souls on Mars were warlike, torn with strife. Thus Buddha performed a deed of sacrifice similar to the deed performed in the Mystery of Golgotha by the Bearer of the Essence of Divine Love. To dwell on Mars as Buddha was a deed of sacrifice offered to the Cosmos. He was as it were the lamb offered up in sacrifice on Mars and to accept this environment of strife was for him a kind of crucifixion. Buddha performed this deed on Mars in the service of Christian Rosenkretz. Thus do the great Beings who guide the world work together, not only on the Earth but from one planet to another.

Since the Mystery of Mars was consummated by Gautama Buddha, human beings have been able to receive different forces from Mars during the corresponding period between death and a new birth. Not only does a man bring with him into a new birth quite different forces from Mars, but because of the influence exercised by the spiritual deed of Buddha, forces also stream from Mars into men who practise meditation as a means for reaching the spiritual world. When the modern pupil of Spiritual Science meditates in the sense indicated by Christian Rosenkretz, forces sent to the Earth by Buddha as the Redeemer of Mars, stream to him.

Christian Rosenkretz is thus revealed to us as the great Servant of Christ Jesus; but what Buddha, as the emissary of Christian Rosenkretz, was destined to contribute to the work of Christ Jesus — this had also to come to the help of the work performed by Christian Rosenkretz in the service of Christ Jesus. The soul of Gautama Buddha has not again been in physical incarnation on the Earth but is utterly dedicated to the work of the Christ Impulse. What was the word of Peace sent forth from the Buddha to the Child Jesus described in the Gospel of St. Luke? "Glory in the Heights

and on the Earth — Peace!" And this word of Peace, issuing mysteriously from Buddha, resounds from the planet of war and conflict to the soul of men on the Earth.

Because all these things had transpired, it was possible to avert the division of human beings into the two distinct classes — consisting on the one hand of men of the type of Francis of Assisi and on the other, men who live wholly in materialism. If Buddha had remained in direct and immediate connection with the Earth he would not have been able to concern himself with the "men of practical affairs"; and his influence would have made the others into monks like Francis of Assisi. Through the deed of Redemption performed by Gautama Buddha on Mars, it is possible for us, when we are passing through the Mars-period of existence between death and a new birth, to become followers of Francis of Assisi without causing subsequent deprivation to the Earth. Grotesque as it may seem, it is true nevertheless, that since the seventeenth century, every human being in the Mars-existence is, for a time, a Buddhist, a Franciscan, an immediate follower of Francis of Assisi. Francis of Assisi has since made only one brief incarnation on Earth as a child; he died in childhood and has not again incarnated. He is intimately linked with the work of Buddha on Mars and is one of his most eminent followers.

We have thus placed before our souls a picture of what came to pass through that great Conference at the end of the sixteenth century, resembling what had happened on Earth in the thirteenth century, when Christian Rosenkreutz gathered his faithful around him. Nothing less was accomplished than this. — It was possible to avert from humanity the threatened separation into two classes, so that men might remain inwardly united. And those who are intent upon esoteric development, in spite of their absorption in practical life, can achieve their goal because the Buddha is working from the sphere of Mars and not from the sphere of the Earth. Those forces which help to promote a healthy esoteric life are also attributable to the work and influence of Buddha.

In my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*, I have dealt with the methods that are appropriate for meditation today. The essential point is that in Rosicrucian training, development is such that the human being is not torn away from the earthly activities demanded of him by karma. Rosicrucian esoteric development can proceed without causing the slightest disturbance in any situation or occupation. Because Christian

Rosenkreutz was able to transfer the work of Buddha from the Earth to Mars, it has become possible for the influences of Buddha, from outside the Earth, to pour down to men.

Again, then, we have heard of one of the spiritual deeds of Christian Rosenkreutz but to understand these deeds of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries we must find our way to their esoteric meaning and significance. It would be good if people were to realise how entirely consistent the progress of Theosophy in the West has been since the founding of the Middle European Section of the Theosophical Society. Here in Switzerland, lecture-courses have been given on the four Gospels. The substance of all these lectures is contained in germ in my book *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, written twelve years ago. The book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* describes the Western path of development that is compatible with practical activities of every kind. Today I have indicated that a basic factor in these matters is the mission assigned to Gautama Buddha by Christian Rosenkreutz, for I have spoken of the significant influence which the transference of Buddha to Mars made possible in our solar system. And so stone after stone fits into its proper place in our Western Theosophy, for it has been built up consistently and in obedience to principle and everything that comes later harmonises with what went before. Inner consistency is essential in any conception of the world, if it is to stand upon the ground of truth. And those who are able to draw near to Christian Rosenkreutz see with wondering veneration by what consistent paths he has carried through the great mission entrusted to him. In our time this is the Rosicrucian-Christian path of development. That the great teacher of Nirvana is now fulfilling a mission outside the Earth, on Mars — this too is one of the wise and consistent deeds of Christian Rosenkreutz.



A Concluding Indication

A year ago we heard how the knowledge of a certain relationship to Christian Rosenkreutz may come to man involuntarily. But it is also possible to put a kind of question to one's own destiny: "Can I make myself worthy to become a pupil of Christian Rosenkreutz?" ... Let such a man try to place before his soul a picture of Christian Rosenkreutz, the great Teacher of the modern age, in the midst of the Twelve, sending forth Gautama Buddha into the Cosmos as his emissary at the beginning of the seventeenth century, thus bringing about a consummation of what came to pass in the sixth century before Christ through the Sermon at Benares. If this picture, with its whole import, stands vividly before the soul, if a man feels that something streaming from this great and impressive picture wrings from his soul the words: O Man, thou art not merely an earthly Being; thou art in truth a Cosmic Being! ... then he may believe with quiet confidence: "I can aspire to become a pupil of Christian Rosenkreutz." This picture of the relationship of Christian Rosenkreutz to Gautama Buddha is a potent and effective meditation.

Such is the aspiration I would fain bring to life in your souls ... Study of the world must always interest us profoundly, but this study must be the means whereby through our own development we are led on into the higher worlds.



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