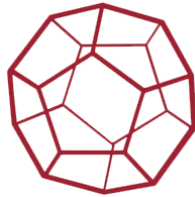


Building Stones for an Understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha

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by

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Preface

Steiner endeavors here to bring about an understanding and inner experience of the most decisive event in the history of humanity, the Mystery of Golgotha. He shows how all the different streams in history come together in the deed of Christ. As Steiner explains, whether a trend in the course of evolution is healthy or not can be determined by its relation to the Christ-Impulse.



Synopsis

The purpose of the following synopses is to facilitate reference to the particular themes dealt with in the lectures.

Lecture One

The urgent need today to develop concepts and ideas that are rooted in reality. An illustration from the story of Cardinal Acton and the papal fund. The book *Christianity As Mystical Fact* a first attempt to interpret the Mystery of Golgotha from a spiritual standpoint. The origin of the Gospel teachings to be found in the ancient Mysteries. The problem of the dating of the Gospels. The accepted view of their late provenance refuted by the story of Rabbi Gamaliel II. The Mystery of Golgotha cannot be understood without a knowledge of the tripartite division of man. With the loss of the old clairvoyance it was no longer possible to interpret ancient texts. Saint-Martin still spoke out of traditional insights or "imagination".

Early attempts to preserve knowledge of the tripartite division of man in Gnosticism. Romanism opposed to knowledge of the spirit and the abolition of the spirit was decreed by the eighth Ecumenical Council of 869. A turning point in the history of Western thought. The schism between the Eastern Church and the Roman Church evidence that knowledge of the spirit was lost. Philosophy, e.g. Wundt, and natural science only accepted the dichotomy of man. Forces are now preparing to abolish the soul - Marx and Engels see the soul as a superstructure erected on the foundation of material processes. Natural science regards belief in the soul as an outmoded superstition.

The Mystery teachings in Palestine were a preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. Sadducees attempted to suppress this knowledge. Hence Roman wars of first century directed to extermination of Jews and those associated with Mystery teachings. The need today to awaken man to the spirit in order to combat the materialism to which he has succumbed, e.g. Darwinism.

27th March, 1917



Lecture Two

The idea of the trichotomy of man necessary for an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. Aristotle's views on the nature of the soul - one part tied to physical body and is the by-product of parental inheritance. The spiritual part of the soul (the "Active Reason") participates in the "nous" and is immortal. Mediaeval philosophy and to some extent Christian philosophy today dominated by Aristotelianism.

Brentano's attempt to interpret Aristotle. Concluded that Aristotle rejected palingenesis had therefore had to accept creationism and post-existence. Brentano concurred with Aristotle.

Originally man had direct experience of the spirit, through the Mysteries. Belief that the Christian Easter Mystery was a transference of Pagan ritual to the person of Jesus. Danger of identifying Pagan Mystery Cults with Christian festivals, e.g. the Phrygian Easter festival (the Attis Cult).

Original conception (based on primordial wisdom) of difference between the animal and human organisms. Former bears within it the seeds of death; latter not originally ordained to die. "Man not born to die, yet dies" - the answer of the Mysteries to this enigma; knew that man had become mortal through a moral defect, not as the consequence of natural law. The soul had corrupted the body and was the seat of mortality. If evolution were to continue unchanged, souls would be lost. Need for Earth to receive a new impulse. This the Christ incarnation. Hence Mystery of Golgotha central point in human evolution. The Crucifixion, a heinous crime, the source of man's salvation! Christ died to redeem the souls of men; His mission to bring man back to God, to transform human nature and make it one with the divine nature.

3rd April, 1917



Lecture Three

The Christ cannot be discovered through mysticism or philosophy. The difference between faith and knowledge. Faith as a positive force exemplified in the healing of Jairus' daughter. The transference of power from one person to another by Christ. Only initiates had knowledge of this.

John the Baptist and baptism with water. Through total immersion the etheric body was loosened, leading to a temporary clairvoyance. John the Baptist sought to transpose the candidate for baptism into the condition of consciousness of the time before the Fall, to return to the age of innocence. The need to withdraw from the world. John the Baptist as anchorite: by withdrawal from the world man is saved from the consequences of the Fall. Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost. He wished man to remain in the world and yet participate in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The different purposes of the four Gospels. Christ brings a new impulse, first recognized by the devils He had healed. The magic power of Christ's words. He committed nothing to writing. Reasons for this. Recapitulation of the tripartite division of man. The three paths leading to the Spirit. Atheism as sickness of the soul, denial of Christ as misfortune of the soul, and denial of the Spirit as deception of the soul.

Kant and the moral world order. Moral ideas emasculated today; through Christ they become a concrete force in the world. Faith must lift our moral ideas to a new plane, The Christ Being prepares the coming Jupiter condition. The Mystery of Golgotha brings a new impulse in preparation for the Jupiter evolution. Christ will redeem the corruption of man's soul, the source of his mortality. The resurrection of the body at the end of time made possible by the Mystery of Golgotha.

10th April, 1917



Lecture Four

Faith and belief as positive forces. Botany and moral judgements. Goethe-Schiller meeting and the archetypal plant. Schelvers' view on plant reproduction: a-sexual reproduction the natural process. Goethe deplores emphasis on sexual reproduction in plant kingdom. The plant kingdom and kingdom of cold-blooded animals unable to fulfil their original potentialities. Deterioration in the kingdoms of nature due to man who succumbed to the Luciferic temptation.

Thinking involved in the Fall. Language before the Fall - the "lost word". The relation between respiration and metabolism. In the sixth epoch those who believe in moral standards will be treated medically. The State will

determine moral values. In the sixth and seventh epochs the method of reproduction will be transformed. Women will become sterile.

The appearance of the etheric Christ in the present century. The Christ Impulse in world evolution. Need for faith; morality stems from faith. The courage necessary to unite the kingdom of the world and the Kingdom of Heaven. Mystery of Golgotha must be incorporated again in the whole cosmic order.

12th April, 1917



Lecture Five

Herman Grimm and the modern approach to history. Sees Christ as the pivot of the historical development of mankind. The centuries before and after the Mystery of Golgotha not understood today.

Goethe and botany. His perception of the "Idea" behind phenomena, of the spirit present in the plant kingdom. His objection to the naturalism of Haller and Schopenhauer's view that the perception of light and colour is subjective. Approved of Schelver's belief that plant reproduction was originally a-sexual. In nineteenth century perception was limited to the sensible world, hence loss of spiritual vision. Rationalism leads to the death of creative Imagination. Hunzinger's book - history a closed book; man cannot penetrate to the inner life of the spirit. The Baptist's words - the need to change our "attitude of mind".

In the Mysteries the neophyte was initiated into the secrets of nature. The teachings given only to those worthy of them. Imperial Rome unveiled the Mystery teachings. Caligula and Nero fully initiated. The secrets of waking consciousness and sleep consciousness taught in the Mysteries. Caligula was only able to communicate with the Moon Gods, hence his judgements were without moral values. Nero the first psychoanalyst. He knew that the old order was doomed, that a new turning-point in evolution had been reached. His obsessive fear. His determination to set fire to Rome and ultimately to destroy the whole world.

The teaching of history in schools ignores the full significance of the Crucifixion. A quotation from Barris - Christianity adapted to meet the needs of modern society. The need to study history in depth and to learn

to winnow the chaff from the grain.

14th April, 1917

Lecture Six

Events of today a continuation of events in the early years of Christianity. The Roman emperors, initiated by Imperial decree, gained limited knowledge of cosmic events. They had a presentiment that the advent of Christ was a turning-point in human evolution. The policy of Tiberius to merge pagan Mystery teachings with the Mystery cult of the Roman Empire, failed; also the policy of Hadrian.

Quotation from Philo - the need "to give heed to the ancestry of the soul and to ignore temporal things". Barrès quoted again.

Christian teaching conflicted with the fundamental principles of the Roman empire. Licinius' decision to challenge Christianity. Organized a public festival at Heliopolis to ridicule baptism. Result - the actor, Gelasinus, becomes a convinced Christian.

The Sibylline Oracles predict the downfall of Rome. Nero sets fire to Rome. Constantine the Great, aware of the prophecy of the Sibylline Oracle, wished to combine his brand of Christianity with the ancient Mysteries and thus deny Christianity to the public. The mission of Christianity was to unveil the Mysteries. Survival of the spirit of Rome in jurisprudence, etc; Constantine knew of the existence of a primordial wisdom which had been preserved in Troy by initiate-priests. His decision to transfer the capital to Byzantium. Constantinople founded A.D. 326. Pallas Athene as the symbol of ancient wisdom. The legend of the Palladium. The spiritual impulses in Constantine and early Christianity have influenced the cultural development of the West.

17th April, 1917

Lecture Seven

Importance of Julian the Apostate for the historical evolution of the West. His early life. The failure of his Christian education on account of his lively interest in Greek culture and neo-Platonic teachings. Initiated into Eleusinian Mysteries: aware of the ancient Sun mystery. Wisdom of ancient times still known to Julian. His wish to preserve the continuity of the ancient pagan Mysteries. Rome promulgated laws against the celebration of pagan rites. Julian forbids teachers in the schools and universities, who did not believe in the ancient Gods, to expound ancient writings. His plan to continue pagan Mystery teachings failed.

Augustine and Manichaeism. Survival of this doctrine in the Faust legend. "Manushya" describes the spiritual aspect of man, "anthropos" the psychic aspect and "homo" the corporeal aspect. Julian seeks initiation into the Persian Mysteries - this the real aim of his military campaign. Dewar's lecture before the Royal Institution. Scientific concepts only valid between 7000 B.C. and A.D. 7000. Distinction between "mystical marriage" and "chymical marriage". Assassination of Julian. Triumph of abstract thinking, e.g. Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason". Julian's polemic against Christianity anticipated the criticisms of liberal nineteenth-century theology. Julian attempted to ensure continuity of pagan Mysteries by a revival of Manichaeism. Unable in his time to reconcile old principle of Initiation with Christianity. Reactions of Cato and Machiavelli to spiritual knowledge. Drach suggested dogma and ritual of Roman Church a revival of paganism - concealed from the faithful. If the Mass a pagan sacrifice then Julian's purpose to some extent achieved.

19th April, 1917



Lecture Eight

The need for spiritual knowledge to understand the Mystery of Golgotha. The persistence of pagan cults at this time. Temple statues and local shrines as symbols of spiritual impulses behind the Mysteries. Destruction of pagan temples and Mysteries by the Church and the Roman emperors. A portrait of Constantine. The purpose of animal sacrifices - to restore the old clairvoyance.

The Mithras Mysteries emphasised self-knowledge from within, through the physical organism; the Eleusinian Mysteries self-knowledge from without, through contact with solar and lunar forces. The sacrament of the Mass as a continuation (with modifications) of pagan rites, e.g. ordination, a continuation of ancient principle of Initiation.

Difficulty of understanding ancient writers, e.g. Aristotle, with modern cognition. Franz Brentano's attempt to revive Aristotelianism.

The mystical path leads to inner solitude which becomes a potent force leading to the inner experience of Christ. The need to overcome the world and ties of the blood in order to establish spiritual relationships. The idea of the resurrection as a living reality. It is possible to have a mystical experience of the Mystery of Golgotha. In the first century Christ was spiritually present in the Mysteries in order to reform them. Pagan Mysteries could not lead to the Christ.

The Stoic philosophy and the idea of a league of nations. This idea revived by Kant. Brooks Adams' book, *The Law of Civilisation and Decay*.

In future the power of the spirit must become instinctive in man. Need to quicken spiritual forces in man. Out of the spirit new creative possibilities will come.

24th April, 1917



Lecture Nine

There is an urgent need today for new impulses, thoughts and ideas. Discussion of Kjellen's book *The State as Organism*. The lecture then reverts to the history of the early Church. Its destructiveness. The survival of pagan rites in the ceremonies of the Church. The Mithraic Mysteries - the aim was to bring the neophyte in touch with the group-soul. The need for him to be in communion with the dead, with the ancestral spirit. The "Raven", the first stage of initiation and its relation to the legends of Barbarossa and Charles the Great. The six other stages of initiation and their function.

Nietzsche's will to power and the transvaluation of values. The lecture then reverts to Kjellen and his central theme. The false analogy between the cells of the human organism and the cells of the State.

The social order must have a spiritual basis. Freedom of thought and its implications - Men's fear of spiritual knowledge today. Hermann Bhar and individualism. His conflicting ideas. He defends the concealed proselytizing of Scheler. The failure of reason - truth non-existent. Dehumanization of man leads to 1914. Bahr's call for a spiritual renewal, but only through the Catholic Church. Men's fear of Spiritual Science. Bahr a typical example. The need for spiritual courage. Nietzsche's radical views on Christianity.

1st May, 1917



Lecture Ten

In early times the spiritual world was known through clairvoyance or initiation. Today many believe spiritual world closed to mankind. Reasons for this. Much can be learned from the examples of Otto Ludwig and Swedenborg. Ludwig's inner experience when composing or reading poetry. Synaesthesia. This not clairvoyant perception, but a step towards spiritual vision. Materialism erects barriers against spiritual vision. Possible to attain this vision through spiritual training, e.g. exercises in the book Knowledge of the Higher Worlds.

Swedenborg received spiritual enlightenment at the age of fifty-five. His views on the interrelation of body and soul. His "vision" of the disciples of Aristotle, Descartes and Leibnitz showed that "spiritual influence" is decisive.

Difference between human evolution before the Mystery of Golgotha and after the Mystery when immortality could no longer be known through the body. Aristotle's idea of immortality. Mankind today still under the influence of the Conciliar decree of 869, abolishing the spirit.

Julian's rejection of Christianity in the age of Constantine. His fear of the invasion of social order by Christianity. Origen and Clement of Alexandria, though imbued with Greek culture, able to recognize real significance of

the Mystery of Golgotha. Clement's conception of the Logos. Visible world a manifestation of the Music of the Spheres. Human form made in the image of the Logos.

Fear that Spiritual Science implies a revival of ancient Gnosis. Spiritual Science must participate in the development of Christianity today. In conflict between faith and science, faith must be supported by gnosis and gnosis by love and love by the "Kingdom".

The war of 1914 and failure to diagnose essential causes. Verworn's book, *The Mechanism of Spiritual Life*. Fustel de Coulanges' view that social institutions have religious origin. State originally had spiritual origin. Plato's *Dialogues* a continuation of Mystery teachings: aim to prepare soul to commune with the dead. Christ revealed through inner personal experience.

Example of dream experience. Dream picture veils a real experience of meeting with souls of the dead: not a memory of everyday life. Dante and spiritual vision. Quotation from *Divine Comedy*.

Need today to bridge gap that separates us from realm where the dead and the higher Beings dwell and to become aware of forces today which are hostile to Anthroposophy.

8th May, 1917



Lecture 1

Berlin, 27th March, 1917

In the course of these lectures I shall be obliged to draw your attention again and again to a characteristic of our inquiry that must pervade every aspect of Spiritual Science today. We must endeavour to ensure that the concepts, ideas and representations that we form and with which we live, are not only firmly grounded in logic, but also in reality. We must strive for ideas that are steeped in reality. In the matter of our inquiries which have a specific end in view - I will indicate this presently - it will not be superfluous to remind you that an idea may be true in a certain sense and yet fail to reach down to reality. Of course what we really mean by ideas steeped in reality will only emerge gradually, but one may arrive at an understanding of such ideas by means of simple analogies. I propose therefore by way of introduction to use an analogy to illustrate my meaning.

What I am about to say seems unrelated to, or apparently unrelated to our subsequent inquiry; it is simply an introductory exposition. From the sixteenth century until 1839 all the Roman Cardinals were obliged to swear a solemn oath. During the pontificate of Pope Sixtus V (1585–90) a sum of five million scudi had been deposited in the Castel Sant' Angelo to be used only in times of need. And since the Church attached great importance to this, the Cardinals were obliged to swear a solemn oath to preserve the fund intact. In 1839, under the pontificate of Pope Gregory XVI, Cardinal Acton ([note 1](#)) [[original note 1](#)] refused to take the oath; he wanted the Cardinals to be released from their oath to preserve the fund.

If nothing more had been heard of the story, all kinds of plausible theories might have been advanced to explain why this remarkable prince of the Church sought to prevent the Cardinals from swearing an oath, still required of them at that time, to preserve the fund which was so important to the Holy See. And all these plausible theories might have been perfectly logical, but they broke down in the face of certain pertinent facts that were known only to Cardinal Acton, namely, that since 1797 the fund no longer existed, for it was already exhausted. The Cardinals therefore had been permitted to swear an oath to preserve a treasure that no longer existed.

Acton refused to be a witness to the deception. Thus all the ingenious arguments that might have been advanced by those who were unaware that the fund was already exhausted would have collapsed.

If we meditate upon such an example as this - it often seems superfluous to reflect upon such obvious cases, but we must think about them and compare them with other situations in life - if we meditate upon such an example as this, we can grasp the difference between concepts rooted in reality and those which are not. Now I must draw your attention to the unreality of ideas today because, as you will see later, this is closely connected with the subject of these lectures, a subject that I must touch upon once again from the point of view of Spiritual Science. I will endeavour to relate the investigations which we have already undertaken to the study of a certain aspect of the Mystery of Christ. My last contribution to this subject will serve as a framework for that aspect of the Christ Mystery which I now propose to examine. But first of all I should like to put before you certain things which are seemingly unrelated to our main theme because they will provide an invaluable background to our studies.

In my book *Christianity As Mystical Fact*, which appeared some years ago, I ventured to indicate a certain way in which one could approach the Mystery of Christ. This book (which in its new edition was one of the last books to be confiscated by the old régime in Russia) was a first attempt to interpret Christianity from a spiritual standpoint, a standpoint which in the course of centuries has been more or less lost to Christianity during its development in the West. Now I should like to emphasize one thing in particular, for this will determine whether the arguments advanced in my book are valid or not. In this book I have adopted a definite attitude towards the Gospels. I do not wish to enter into further details at the moment, for my point of view is explicitly stated in the book. But if I am justified in my point of view we shall have to assume that the origin of the Gospels is not nearly so late as contemporary Christian theology often assumes, but that an early date must probably be assigned to them. You know that from the standpoint of Spiritual Science the origins of the Gospel teaching are to be found in the ancient Mystery teachings. We must see the Mystery of Golgotha as a fulfilment of these ancient teachings. Now such a spiritual conception will run counter to the exegeses of modern historians and theologians who will regard it no doubt as historically unsound. Now it is fairly evident that the Gospels did not exercise any significant influence during the first century, or at least during the first two-thirds of this century. There are indeed Christian theologians today who

doubt whether any evidence can be adduced that in the first century of the Christian era people of consequence thought of, or even believed in, the person of Jesus Christ.

Now it will become increasingly evident that if the careful research of the present day broadens its scope and shows itself to be catholic as well as conscientious, then there will be an end to its many scruples. Of course it is possible to draw all kinds of conclusions from certain discrepancies between the Christian and Jewish records. But the fact that the Apocryphal Gospels, i.e. those not officially recognized by the Christian church, are very little known today and are virtually ignored, especially by Christian theologians, militates against these conclusions. The reason for this lack of recognition is that, to a large extent, Christianity, and especially the Mystery of Golgotha, are not apprehended with sufficient spirituality. There was no real understanding of the Pauline distinction between the psychic and the spiritual man. (Corinthians I, 15:44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.) Consider for a moment our division of man into body, soul and spirit, one of the fundamental conceptions of Anthroposophy. In reality, Paul who was familiar with the atavistic character of the truths of the ancient Mysteries implied the same as we imply today when we speak of soul and spirit as two members of human nature. This distinction between soul and spirit has virtually been lost in the West. But we cannot understand the real nature of the Mystery of Golgotha unless we have a clear understanding of the distinction between psychic man and spiritual man.

Now first of all I should like to cite an example (which I also referred to some years ago), in order to show you that the facts of external history are often falsely interpreted, especially in relation to the recent investigations into the life of Jesus. I refer to the generally accepted view that the Gospels are of late provenance ([note 2](#)). Now many objections can be raised against this view on purely historical grounds. It can be shown, for example, that in the year A.D. 70 Rabbi Gamaliel II was involved in a lawsuit with his sister over an inheritance. Rabbi Gamaliel II was the son of Rabbi Simeon who was the son of that Gamaliel of whom Paul was a pupil. The case came before a judge and it was difficult to determine whether the judge was a Roman with leanings towards Christianity, or perhaps a Jew with leanings towards Christianity. Now Gamaliel pleaded that he was the sole heir because, according to the Mosaic law, daughters could not inherit.

The judge demurred: "Since you Jews have lost your country the Thora is no longer valid; only the Gospel is valid, and according to the Gospel a sister can also inherit." There was no straightforward solution. What happened? Gamaliel II was not only covetous, but also cunning. He requested an adjournment of the proceedings. This was granted and in the interval he bribed the judge. At the second trial he appeared before the same judge who reversed the verdict. The judge confessed that at the first trial he had erred, that the Gospel could indeed apply to such cases, but did not annul the Mosaic law. And to confirm this he quoted Matthew 5:17 (Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.), in the version which we have today, but with the textual variations arising from the Greek text and the Aramaic text of the Gospel which existed at the time when this judgement was pronounced in the year A.D. 70. In his ruling the judge quoted the Matthew Gospel, whilst the Talmud which recounts the story takes the Matthew Gospel for granted.

It would be possible to adduce considerable evidence to show that there is no reliable historical evidence for not assigning an early date to the Gospels. Historical research will one day vindicate completely the evidence from purely spiritual sources which forms the basis of my book *Christianity As Mystical Fact*.

Now everything relating to the Mystery of Golgotha conceals the most profound mysteries for the present age. These mysteries will be resolved with the progressive advance of Spiritual Science. There are many pointers which indicate that these questions are not so simple as people fondly imagine today. For example, the relationship between Judaism and primitive Christianity in the first century of our era is virtually ignored. There are theologians who study certain Jewish writings in order to find evidence for their various theories. But one can easily demonstrate that these Jewish writings on which they rely did not exist in the first century. One thing appears to be demonstrable historically, namely, that in the second third of the first century a relatively harmonious relationship existed between Judaism and Christianity - in so far as one can speak of Christianity at that period. Generally speaking, when enlightened Jews discussed certain questions with the followers of Jesus Christ they easily arrived at an understanding. One need only recall the case of the celebrated Rabbi Elieser who made the acquaintance of a certain Jacob (as he calls him) towards the middle of the first century. The latter admitted to being a disciple of Jesus and had healed in His name. Rabbi Elieser conferred with the aforesaid Jacob and declared in the course of the

conversation that what Jacob had said, and especially the fact that he had healed the sick in the name of Jesus, was in no way contrary to the spirit of Judaism.

Now this relatively easy harmony between Christian and Jew peculiar to earlier times came to an end towards the close of the first century. From that time even enlightened Jews became implacable enemies of everything Christian. The Jewish texts which are held to be of importance today date from the second century and testify to a growing discord between Christian and Jew. As we follow the deterioration of this relationship we see how a hatred of Christianity first emerged in Judaism and was associated with a progressive transformation within Judaism itself. Although the modern Hebrew scholars are versed in the Old Testament from their own standpoint, they are unaware of other forces that were still active in Judaism at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha and so frequently failed to grasp the major issues with which a serious historical investigation of this period is concerned. We must realize that in the first century the learned Jewish Rabbis gave a totally different interpretation of the Old Testament from that which is given today. Since the nineteenth century the capacity to interpret ancient texts has largely been lost. Certain things which still existed even in the eighteenth century as a sacred tradition in the form of truths derived from the old atavistic clairvoyance, no longer had any meaning to nineteenth-century man. Those who speak of such matters today, even when they refer to a much earlier epoch, are regarded as addlebrained!

In my last lecture I drew your attention to an important book *Des Erreurs et de la Vérité* by Saint-Martin (note 3). This book is undoubtedly a late product of its kind since it is inspired by ancient traditions which are now outmoded. None the less it still speaks from out of these traditional insights. I have recently quoted to you several extracts from this book which modern man is at a loss to understand. But if we accept the point of view of Saint-Martin we shall find that his book presents certain ideas which seem absurd to modern man, unless we are prepared to regard them as pure fantasy - and today almost everything of this nature is regarded as fantasy. Saint-Martin suggests that the human race has fallen from spiritual heights to the world of terrestrial existence. Today, many who are not confirmed materialists are still willing to tolerate theoretically the idea that the present human race can be traced back to a far-distant time when, with a certain part of its being, it stood at a far higher level than at the present time. Despite the materialistic character of Darwinism which assumes that man is descended from animal ancestry, there are

others however who believe in his divine origin where he was originally in touch with divine traditions. But when we pass from these abstract notions to the concrete statements of Saint-Martin, statements which are found in Saint-Martin only because they are associated with primeval traditions from the ancient epoch of clairvoyance, we discover that modern man is at a loss to understand them. What can the man of today who has a thorough knowledge of chemistry, geology, biology and physiology, etc. and who has also assimilated that curious amalgam called philosophy - what can such a man think when he learns from Saint-Martin that our present human condition is the consequence of the "Fall". Originally the human race had been differently constituted. Man, according to Saint-Martin, was originally equipped with a crossbow and a coat of mail. Thanks to the coat of mail he was able to prove himself in the hard struggle which was his lot. He has now lost the coat of mail which was originally part of his organism. He was also armed with a lance of bronze which could inflict wounds like fire. With this lance he could overcome elementary beings in the spiritual battle which faced him. And in the place where he originally dwelt he had seven trees at his disposal and each of these trees had 16 roots and 490 branches. He has now forsaken his former dwelling; he has fallen from his high estate.

If one were to claim for these views the same validity and reality as the geologist claims for his theories about primeval ages, I doubt if he would be considered to be in his right mind. One need only come along with all kinds of symbols and allegories and people are satisfied. But Saint-Martin was not speaking symbolically; he was speaking of realities which he believed had really existed. Of course in describing certain things which existed when the Earth in its original state was more spiritual than in later times, he had to appeal to "Imaginations". [original note 2] But "Imaginations" represent realities; they should not be interpreted symbolically. Their imaginative content must be accepted at its face value. I mention this in passing. I cannot at the moment enter into details. I only wish to show the radical difference between the language of the eighteenth century in which a book such as *Des Erreurs et de la Vérité* was written and the language which alone passes current today. The style and idiom of Saint-Martin have completely died out.

Since the Old Testament, for example, can only be understood if we are conversant with certain things which are related to imaginative conceptions, it is clear that in the nineteenth century especially the possibility of understanding the Old Testament has been lost. But the further back we go the more we find that at the time of the Mystery of

Golgotha there existed in Judaism, in addition to the exoteric Scriptures of the Old Testament, a genuine esoteric doctrine. It is to this esoteric doctrine that must be attributed in large measure the possibility of interpreting the Old Testament in the right way. Now it is impossible to interpret the Bible in the right way unless we evaluate its statements against a background of spiritual facts.

At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha it was Romanism that was most averse to this particular aspect of the Jewish Mysteries. There has hardly ever been perhaps in the history of the world a more deep-seated antagonism than between the spirit of Rome and the Mystery tradition preserved by the initiates of Palestine. We must not, of course, regard the Mystery tradition as it existed in Palestine at that time as Christian, but only as a prophetic prefiguration of Christianity. On the other hand, however, we can only comprehend the ferment within Christianity when we see it against the historical background of the Mystery teachings of Palestine. This Mystery teaching was full of hidden knowledge about the "spiritual man" and provided ample indications of how human cognition could find a path to the spiritual world. Ramifications of this Mystery teaching were also to be found to some extent in the Greek Mysteries and to a lesser extent in the Roman Mysteries. The essence of the Palestinian Mysteries found no place in Romanism, for Rome had evolved a special form of community or social life which was only possible if the spiritual man was ignored. The key to Roman history therefore is to be found in the establishment of a community life under Rome that more or less excluded the spirit. In such a society it would be meaningless to speak of the threefold division of man into body, soul and spirit. The further back we go the more we realize that the understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha in ancient times depended upon this tripartite division of man into body, soul and spirit. Paul for his part spoke of the psychic man and the spiritual man. But this was bound to offend Roman susceptibilities and explains much that followed later.

Now you know that the doctrine which is outmoded today but which in the early centuries sought to preserve the threefold division of man and the cosmos was Gnosticism (note 4). In later centuries Gnosticism was proscribed and finally suppressed so that it disappeared completely. I do not say that it ought to have survived; I simply wish to register the historical fact that Gnosticism held promise of a spiritual conception of a Mystery of Golgotha and was ultimately suppressed. Events now took a strange turn. Roman traditionalism was increasingly influenced by Christianity and the further this influence penetrated the less Rome

understood its relationship to the "spiritual man", and certain gnostic Christians gave increasing offence by continuing to speak of body, soul and spirit. In circles where Catholic Christianity had become the official religion there were repeated attempts to suppress the idea of the spirit. They felt that all reference to the spirit should be ignored, otherwise the old ideas of the tripartite division of man might revive again. So matters pursued their course. When we make a careful study of the early Christian centuries we find that many problems that are usually accounted for in other ways are seen in their true light when we realize that, as Christianity fell increasingly under the influence of Rome, the avowed object of Rome was progressively to eliminate the idea of the spirit. When we recognize that Western Christianity had of necessity to dethrone the spirit, innumerable questions of conscience and of epistemology are resolved. And this development ultimately led to the eighth Ecumenical Council of 869 (note 5). This Council laid down a dogma according to which it was contrary to Christianity to speak of body, soul and spirit, but truly Christian to speak of man as consisting of body and soul alone. The actual wording may not have been quite so explicit, but was later interpreted in this way. At first the Council simply stated that man possessed an intellectual soul and a spiritual soul. This formula was coined to avoid any reference to the spirit as a special entity, for the avowed object of the Council was to suppress all knowledge of the spirit.

This decree had unforeseen consequences. Contemporary philosophers begin their investigations by studying body and soul as if they were independent entities. If you were to ask, for example, a man like Wundt, on what grounds he accepted only the dichotomy of man, he would reply in good faith that it was on factual grounds since, from the evidence of direct observation, there was no sense in speaking of body, soul and spirit, but only of the body which looks outward and of the soul which looks inward. This is self-evident, he would reply. He had no idea that this was the consequence of the decree of the eighth Ecumenical Council. Even today philosophers do not mention the spirit. They follow the dogma laid down by the eighth Ecumenical Council. Precisely why they deny the spirit, though not openly, they do not know, any more than the Roman Cardinals knew what they were swearing to when they took an oath to preserve intact the fund which no longer existed. The real creative forces of history are all too seldom taken into consideration. Today anyone who rejects the conclusion of "unprejudiced science", as it is called, which maintains that man consists of body and soul alone, is decried as an ignoramus, simply because the scientists themselves are unaware that their assumptions are

based on the decrees of the Council of 869. And so it is with many other things. This Council is important because it sheds considerable light upon the evolution of Western thought.

You know that Western Christendom was deeply divided by the schism between the Eastern Church and the Church of Rome on doctrinal questions which still divide them today. The dogmatic ground of dissension - for which, of course, there are other, deep-seated motives - stemmed from the famous question of filioque ([note 6](#)). In a later Council (the Orthodox Church recognized only the first seven Councils) the Latin Church recognized the double Procession, namely, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. This was declared to be heretical by the Eastern Church which maintained that the Holy Ghost proceeds only from the Father. The great confusion over this dogma could only arise because the conception of the spirit had become blurred. All understanding of the spirit had been gradually lost. This is undoubtedly connected with the fact that, from the beginning of the Fifth postAtlantean epoch onwards, man had to be denied for a time all perception of the spirit. In face of this truth, the events described above are only, so to speak, the tip of the iceberg. We must probe beneath the surface if we are to arrive at a valid point of view which is rooted in reality.

Now the period of evolution which played an important part in the establishment of this dogma of the dichotomy of man has not yet ended. The Christian theologians of the Middle Ages who still subscribed to the existing traditions - for it was only orthodox Church doctrine that maintained that man consisted of body and soul, whilst the alchemists and others who were still familiar with the old traditions knew of course that he was a trichotomy - these theologians knew how difficult it was to hold orthodox opinions whilst at the same time they had to admit that the heretical doctrine of man's trichotomy contained a kernel of truth. We see the frantic attempts of these theologians to evade this issue. If we do not recognize this dilemma we shall fail altogether to understand mediaeval theology.

Now this evolutionary period is far from concluded for it coincides with an important impulse in the development of Western civilization. And because, in the course of the twentieth century, many changes will be wrought which we must be aware of if we wish to understand our present epoch, I must refer to this period once again. Originally (if such a word may be used of something that has arisen in comparatively recent times) the being of man was divided into body, soul and spirit. The course of evolution was

such that by the ninth century it had become possible to abolish the spirit. But matters did not rest there. These important changes are simply overlooked today. The complete transformation of thinking by Saint-Martin, for example, has been completely ignored hitherto. Having abolished the spirit, matters did not end there. There is now a growing tendency to abolish the soul in its turn. As yet only the first steps in this direction have been taken; but today the time is ripe for the abolition of the soul. But man fails to recognize contemporary tendencies which are of decisive importance. Already powerful evolutionary impulses are at work which are preparing to abolish the soul (note 7). There will be no need to summon Councils as in the ninth century. Things are done differently today. I must repeat that I have no wish to criticize, I merely place the facts before you.

Considerable progress has been made towards the abolition of the soul in many spheres. The nineteenth century, for example, saw the rise of dialectical materialism which is the basic tenet of (German) social democracy today. If we look upon Engels and Marx as the major "prophets" of dialectical materialism - the Biblical term is perhaps out of place in this context, but we may perhaps risk it here - they are also the direct descendants, historically speaking, of the Church Fathers of the eighth Ecumenical Council. We see here an unbroken line of development. The steps taken by the Church Fathers towards the abolition of the spirit were carried a stage further by Marx and Engels in their comprehensive attempt to abolish the soul. According to the materialistic theory of history spiritual impulses are of no account, the driving forces of history are material forces or economic factors - the struggle for material wellbeing. What appertains to the soul is simply a superstructure on the solid foundation of material processes. It is important to recognize the genuine catholicity of Marx and Engels and to note in these aspirations of the nineteenth century the true consequence of the abolition of the spirit.

The development of the modern scientific outlook is another factor which has contributed to the abolition of the soul. This outlook - I am speaking not of the positive achievements of the scientific "Weltanschauung", which accepts only the reality of the corporeal and regards everything pertaining to the soul as an epiphenomenon, a superstructure on what is corporeal - this scientific outlook is the direct consequence of that development which we have just seen in the decisive impulses of the eighth Ecumenical Council. But the majority of mankind will probably not believe in this possibility until, originating from certain centres of world evolution, the abolition of the soul will receive more or less legal sanction. It will not be long before decrees are promulgated in several States declaring that those

who take seriously the existence of the soul are not of sound mind, and only those will be regarded of sound mind who recognize the "truth", namely that thinking, feeling and willing are the necessary by-products of certain physiological processes. Various steps have already been taken in this direction, but so long as they are confined to the realm of theory they can have no deep or lasting influence or significance. It is only when they are translated into practice in the social order that they exercise a deep and lasting influence. The first half of the present century will scarcely be over before those who are clear-sighted will be faced with an alarming situation by the abolition of the soul, akin to the abolition of the spirit that occurred in the ninth century.

It cannot be repeated too often that it is insight into these things which matters, insight into the impulses which have determined man's destiny in the course of historical evolution. It is only too true that the materialist education of today induces a more or less soporific condition. It inhibits clear thinking, precludes a healthy perception of reality and blinds man to the really important factors in historical evolution. And so today, even those who would fain satisfy their longing for spiritual knowledge lack the strength of will to kindle an awareness of certain impulses inherent in our evolution and to make serious efforts to see things as they really are.

Now there existed in Palestine certain Mystery teachings which were a preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha and in respect of which the Mystery of Golgotha was seemingly a fulfilment. I referred to this when I said that in the Mystery of Golgotha the greatest mystery drama of all time was enacted on the stage of world history. In that event, we may ask, why did Romanism develop such a strong antipathy to Christianity in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha, and how was it that this apathy entailed in particular the abolition of the spirit?

These things are more closely related than is suspected by those who only study them superficially. Today few are prepared to admit that Marx and Engels are the direct heirs of the Church Fathers. That is of no great moment, but it leads to something of far greater moment if we bear the following in mind. At the trial before the Sanhedrin, which condemned Jesus Christ, the Sadducees played a leading part. Who were the Sadducees (those who have rightly been given the name of Sadducees) (note 8) at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha? They were a sect which wished to eradicate, to suppress everything that proceeded from the ancient Mysteries. They had a fear, a horror of every form of Mystery cult. The courts and the administration were in their hands. They were

completely under the influence of the Roman State; in effect they were the servile agents of Rome. There is unmistakable evidence that they purchased preferment for large sums of money and then recouped themselves by dunning the Jewish population of Palestine. It was they who realized - and thanks to their Ahrimanic, materialistic outlook they were quick to perceive this - that Rome was threatened if it should come to be accepted in any way that the drama of Christ was related to the fundamental teachings of the Mysteries. They had an instinctive feeling that Christianity would give birth to something that would gradually overthrow the authority of Rome. And this accounts for those fierce wars of extermination which Rome waged against Judaism in Palestine during the first century and in later centuries. These wars of extermination were prosecuted with the avowed object of exterminating not only the Jews but all those who knew anything of the reality and traditions of the ancient Mysteries. Everything associated in any way with the Mystery teachings, especially in Palestine, was to be destroyed root and branch.

As a consequence of this suppression of the Mystery teachings the perception of the spiritual in man was lost, the path to the spiritual in man was closed. It would have been dangerous for those who later sought to abolish the spirit under the influence of Rome, of Romanized Christianity, if many of those who had been initiated in the ancient Mystery schools of Palestine had still survived, if those who still preserved a memory of the spirit and could still bear witness to the fact that man consisted of body, soul and spirit. The policy of Romanism was to establish a social order in which the spirit had no place, to encourage an evolutionary trend that would exclude all spiritual impulses. This could not have been realized if too many people had known the interpretation of the Mystery of Golgotha that was adumbrated in the Mysteries. It was instinctively felt that nothing of a spiritual nature could emerge from the Roman State. From the union of the Church and the Roman State was born jurisprudence. In this the spirit had no part. It is important to bear this in mind.

It is important to realize that we are now living in an age when we must awaken the spirit once more, so that it can participate in the affairs of men. You can imagine how difficult this will be since materialism is so deeply ingrained. I believe it will be long before it is generally recognized that dialectical materialism is a true continuation of the eighth Ecumenical Council, before people understand the real implication of the term filioque which was responsible for the schism between the Western Church and the Eastern Church, between Rome and Byzantium. Today people are content to speak of these matters in a superficial way, to pass surface judgements.

For the understanding of many things we shall have to appeal to feeling, and feeling can be wisely directed if one thing is kept clearly in mind. The feeling to which I refer and with which I will conclude this lecture today is the following:

When we study the history of Europe from the rise of Christianity onwards, we are no longer satisfied with that "fable convenue" which passes for history and which is the hidden cause of so much misery today. And when we have sufficient courage to reject this parody of history, we shall develop a feeling which will serve as a guiding principle in our enquiries into the evolution of Christianity today. We shall discover that nothing has met with so many hindrances, so much incomprehension and misrepresentation as the evolution of Christianity. And nothing has been so difficult as its propagation. When one speaks of miracles, there is no greater miracle than this, namely, that Christianity has survived. Not only has it established itself, but we live in an age when it must prevail, not only against those who would abolish the spirit, but also against those who would abolish the soul. And it will prove victorious, for Christianity will develop its greatest strength in face of bitterest opposition. By actively resisting the abolition of the soul we shall develop the power to perceive the spirit once again. When, under the influence of the spirit prevailing today (you will forgive the misuse of the word in this context) laws will be promulgated declaring those who regard the spirit as a reality to be of unsound mind - of course these laws will not be couched in specific terms, but under the brutal impact of the modern scientific outlook they will find their way on to the statute book - when this new modernized version of the decree of the eighth Ecumenical Council appears, then the time will have come for the spirit to be restored to its rightful place.

We shall then be forced to recognize that vague, nebulous concepts are of no avail. We must become aware of the deep origin, of the deep-seated feelings underlying these nebulous concepts, for they often conceal the materialism to which modern man has succumbed and which he refuses to admit to himself. And because he refuses to admit this to himself, because he will not acknowledge this openly, he pays the penalty; materialism corrupts his thinking. But Saint-Martin says in the more important passages of his book: "These things are not to be spoken of." Certainly, it will be a long time before certain things can be discussed openly. None the less many things will have to be proclaimed loud and clear in order to awaken mankind to the true state of affairs. And in the not too far-distant future this warning will serve to reveal the origin of those hidden tendencies

behind the evolutionism of Darwin, the source from which the sensual, perverse tendencies of the present materialistically orientated Darwinism has sprung.

But I do not wish to end on a melancholy note. I will not pursue the matter further, but simply direct your attention to these questions. Today I wished to prepare an outline plan which will serve as a basis for a special study of the Mystery of Golgotha. In my next lecture I will endeavour to fill in the details.

Notes

Note 1. Numerals in brackets in the texts refer to Notes by the translator at the end of each lecture.

Note 2. In Spiritual Science the first level of higher consciousness is given the name of "Imagination" or "Imaginative Knowledge". It is the result of inwardly strengthened thinking, giving rise to a consciousness filled with living images or pictures.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Cardinal Acton - Charles Januarius Acton (1803–47) Cardinal 1842. Uncle of the famous historian, Lord Acton (1834–1902).

Note 2. The dating of the Synoptic Gospels by Protestant theologians is as follows: Matthew, A.D. 70–75; Mark, *circa* A.D. 65; Luke, A.D. 50–55; and John, post A.D. 100. Roman Catholic theologians give the following dates: Matthew, post A.D. 70; Mark, A.D. 65–75; Luke, A.D. 70–80; John, A.D. 100.

Note 3. Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803). Under the pseudonym of "The Unknown Philosopher" wrote on occultism and mysticism. Influenced by Pasqually, Swedenborg and Boehme. Alleged to have founded a Martinist Rite, a modification of the Rite des Elus Coëns. Was a firm opponent of the prevailing materialism of his day and emphasised the need for faith and good works. In later life withdrew from Lodge activities into mysticism.

Note 4. Gnosticism. The word is derived from the Greek gnosis - knowledge. The name "Gnostics" is used to designate widely different sects which flourished in the second and third centuries. They speculated on problems of human destiny and professed to teach a knowledge of God and man. Our knowledge of Gnosticism was for long confined to criticisms by its opponents: Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, St. Epiphanius and others. The leading exponents of Gnosticism were the Ophites, Simon Magnus, Carpocrates, Basilides, Marcion and Valentinus. Many documents are lost or were destroyed as heretical. Today our knowledge is based upon the Pistis Sophia (fourth century), the Bruce Codex (fifth century), the Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae (now lost), the Manichaean writings found at Turfan in Chinese Turkestan (early in this century), the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gnostic writings in Coptic translation discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi in Egypt, the ancient Chenoboskion. Valuable for further study are: *The Gnostics and their remains, ancient and mediaeval*, C. W. King, 1887, with descriptive plates of talismans, gems, sigils, etc; *The Secret Book of the Egyptian Gnostics*, Jean Doresse (from the French), 1960. Very important: *The Gnostic Religion*, Hans Jonas, Paperback 1963.

In *Zeitgeschichtliche Betrachtungen*, Erster Teil, lectures VIII and IX, Dr. Steiner tells us that Gnosis was a wisdom knowledge, a "survival of ancient wisdom derived from the old clairvoyant insight into the spiritual world. It was suppressed by dogmatic Christianity from motives of hostility to Mystery wisdom, for Gnosis declared that Christ had descended upon earth through the realms of the spiritual Hierarchies and incarnated in the physical body of Jesus which had been prepared for 30 years to receive the Christ Being."

Note 5. The eighth Ecumenical Council or the fourth Council of Constantinople, 869, condemned Photius who was responsible for the Greek schism (see filioque). A note in the German edition says that it was the abuse of the Pauline distinction between the "psychic" man and the "spiritual" man which decided the Church of Rome to reject the idea of trichotomy.

Note 6. Filioque controversy. Filioque ("and the Son") was an addition by the Western Church to the Constantinopolitan Creed, namely, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son (called the double Procession of the Holy Ghost). This was the origin of the Greek schism and the chief ground of attack upon the Church of Rome by the Orthodox Church, which follows the Byzantine rite. Photius refused to accept the insertion of filioque in the Nicene Creed and the Photian schism finally triumphed in the

Orthodox Church. The addition of filioque was first met with at the third Council of Toledo 589, and was defended by Patriarch Paulinus at the Synod of Friuli 796. When introduced into the monastery at Jerusalem by Frankish monks in 847 it met with immediate opposition from Eastern monks. It was adopted at Rome after A.D. 1000 and declared to be a dogma of faith in the fourth Lateran Council 1215.

Note 7. In this context it is interesting to note that, in 1926, at an International Psychological Conference, Pavlov declared that we must abandon the misleading term "soul". "The proper study of psychology is physiology", he declared.

Note 8. The Sadducees adhered to the letter of the law. They were the dominant priestly party and were subservient to the Roman procurators of Judaea.



Lecture 2

Berlin, 3rd April, 1917

The Mystery of Golgotha for which I have already prepared the ground in recent lectures will be the subject of our enquiry today.

Let us recall the main points for consideration. I mentioned on the last occasion that in order to arrive at a true understanding of the world we must study the tripartite division of the cosmos and man in the light of the three principles of body, soul and spirit. It is most important to be aware of this fact at the present time, especially in the field of Anthroposophy. I should like to remind you that this idea of trichotomy forms the central theme of my book *Theosophy*. No doubt you have all read this book and will know that this idea forms the nucleus of the whole book. I quote the relevant passage:

"The spirit is eternal; the body is subject to life and death in accordance with the laws of the physical world; the soul-life which is subject to destiny mediates between these two (body and spirit) during life on Earth."

Now at the time of the publication of this book I felt it was necessary to define clearly this idea of trichotomy. For by laying special, even decisive emphasis upon this idea we are really in a position today to understand the cosmos and at the same time to understand the central event of our Earth evolution - the Mystery of Golgotha.

In my last lecture I spoke of the solid body of opposition we encounter today when we set out to study both cosmos and man in the light of the threefold principle of body, soul and spirit, not simply as something of secondary importance, but as the central theme of our study. I have shown how the idea of the spirit was lost in the course of the spiritual evolution of the West. I mentioned that the idea of the spirit was proscribed by the eighth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople and that this proscription not only influenced the development of religious ideas and sentiments, but left a deep impression upon the thinking of recent times. In consequence there are few modern philosophers who are able to distinguish clearly between soul and spirit. And even amongst those who imagine themselves to be objective, one encounters everywhere the dogmatic assertion, stemming from the eighth Ecumenical Council, that man consists of body and soul

alone. He who is familiar with the spiritual life of the West, not only as it is reflected in the more superficial realms of philosophy, but as it has implanted itself in the thinking and feeling of all men, even of those who have not the slightest interest in philosophical ideas, sees everywhere the effects of the proscription of the idea of the spirit. And when, in recent times, a tendency developed to draw upon certain aspects of the wisdom teaching of the East as a corrective to Western teachings, the borrowings were presented in such a light that one would scarcely suspect that the cosmos and man are founded on the threefold principle of body, soul and spirit. For in the division of man into gross body, etheric body and astral body, derived purely from astral observation, Sthula Sharira, Linga Sharira - Prâna as it was then called - Kâma, Kâma-Manas and the various other divisions introduced from the East - in all these divisions which are an arbitrary collocation of seven principles, there is no indication of what should be regarded of vital importance, namely, that our "Weltanschauung" should be permeated with this idea of trichotomy.

There is no doubt that this idea of man's threefold nature has been suppressed. The spirit, it is true, has often been a focus of discussion today, but the discussions are little more than empty words. People are unable to distinguish nowadays between mere words and realities. Hence many expositions are taken seriously which are little more than a farrago of words, such as the philosophy of Eucken.

We cannot understand the essential nature of the Mystery of Golgotha if we decide to reject the tripartite division of man. As I pointed out in my last lecture, the abolition of the spirit was first decreed by the eighth Ecumenical Council, but preparations had been underway for some time. The ultimate abolition of the spirit is connected with a necessary stage in the spiritual evolution of the West. We shall perhaps be able to approach the Mystery of Golgotha most easily from the standpoint of the tripartite division of man if we recall how Aristotle, the leading representative of Greek thought, envisaged the soul. The Middle Ages were also dominated by Aristotelian philosophy and though people are unwilling to admit it, modern thought still draws upon the concepts of the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the later evolution of thought was already anticipated in Aristotle a few centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha, and it was with the help of his ideas that the leading minds of the Middle Ages sought to understand the Mystery of Golgotha. These things are of paramount importance and we must really make an effort to investigate them with an open mind.

What was Aristotle's conception of the human soul? I will tell you as briefly as possible the Greek view of the soul as presented by an enlightened mind such as Aristotle. His conception of the soul - and we have here the views of the most famous European of the fourth century B.C. - was roughly as follows.

When an individual incarnates he owes his physical existence to his father and mother. But he owes only his physical inheritance to his parents. The whole man, according to Aristotle, could never come into being solely through the union of father and mother, for this whole man is endowed with a soul. Now one part of the soul - let us remember that Aristotle distinguishes two parts of the soul - is tied to the physical body, expresses itself through the body and apprehends the external world through sense-perception. This part of the soul arises as a necessary by-product of man's parental inheritance. The spiritual part of the soul, on the other hand, the "Active Reason" as Aristotle calls it which participates through intellection in the spiritual life of the Universe, in the "nous", is immaterial and immortal and could never come into being through parental inheritance, but solely through the participation of God - or the "Divine" as Aristotle calls it - in the procreation of man through the parents.

It is thus that the whole man comes into existence. The whole man is born of the co-operation of God with the father and mother, and it is most important to realize that Aristotle understands the word "man" in this sense. From God man receives his spiritual soul or "Active Reason" as Aristotle calls it. This "Active Reason" which comes into being with each individual through Divine co-operation, evolves during life between birth and death. When man passes through the gate of death the physical body is given over to the Earth, and, with the body, the lower part of the soul, the "Passive Reason" in Aristotelian terminology, which is associated with the physical organism. The spiritual part of the soul, the "Active Reason", on the other hand, subsists according to Aristotle, and when "separated, appears just as it is", withdraws to a world remote from the phenomenal world and enjoys immortality. Now this immortal life is such that the man who performed good deeds whilst in the body is able to look back upon the fruits of his good deeds, but cannot change the karma of his past actions. We only understand Aristotle aright when we interpret his ideas as implying that through all eternity the soul looks back on the good or evil it has wrought.

In the nineteenth century especially, scholars were at pains to grasp this idea, for the style of Aristotle is economical to the point of obscurity. In his controversy with Eduard Zeller, the late Franz Brentano [original note 1] endeavoured throughout his life to gather every scrap of evidence which could throw light upon Aristotle's conception of the relationship between the spiritual part of man and the whole man. Aristotle's views passed over into the philosophy which was taught throughout the Middle Ages down to recent times and which is still taught in certain ecclesiastical circles today. Franz Brentano, who was actively interested in these ideas, in so far as they stemmed from Aristotle, came to the following conclusion.

The mind of Aristotle which, by virtue of its inherent disposition towards reflective thought transcended the limitations of materialism, could not have subscribed to the notion that the spiritual part of the soul was in any way material or could have evolved from man's parental inheritance. There were only two possible ways therefore, Brentano thought, in which Aristotle could envisage the soul. On the one hand, to accept the idea that the spiritual part of the soul was a direct creation of God working in conjunction with the parental inheritance, so that the spiritual part of the soul arose through Divine influence upon the human embryo and that this spiritual part did not perish at death, but entered upon eternal life. What other possibility was open to Aristotle, Brentano asks, if he rejected this idea? And he believed that Aristotle was right to accept this idea. There was only a second possibility; a third did not exist - and this was to admit not only the post-existence, but also the pre-existence of the soul before birth or conception. Now Brentano realized clearly that once we admit the possibility that the soul exists before conception then we are forced to concede that the soul does not experience a single incarnation only, but undergoes successive incarnations. And since, in later life, Aristotle rejects palingenesis, i.e. reincarnation, he had no option but to accept creationism, the doctrine that the soul is created ex nihilo with each embryonic life. This accepts post-existence, but denies pre-existence. Franz Brentano who had been a priest may be regarded as one of the last representatives of the positive side of Aristotelian scholastic philosophy. He thought it was eminently reasonable on the part of Aristotle to reject the doctrine of reincarnation and to recognize only creationism and post-existence.

And this view, despite its many modifications, forms the core of all Christian philosophy in so far as this philosophy rejects the idea of reincarnation. It is a strange phenomenon, both touching and tragic, to see how such an eminent scholar as Franz Brentano, who had resigned from the ministry, resolutely strove to clarify his ideas about creationism and yet

could not bridge the gap which separated him from the doctrine of reincarnation. What was the reason for this? It was evident that, despite his profound erudition, despite the vigour and acuity of his mind, the door to the spirit was closed to him. He could never attain to the idea of the spirit or recognize the spirit as separate from the soul. It is not possible to attain to the idea of the spirit without accepting the idea of reincarnation. The idea of reincarnation is inseparable from the idea of the spirit. In Aristotle's day the idea of the spirit had already begun to decline. In the key passages of Aristotle's writings we observe that when he touches upon the question of preexistence he becomes obscure or ambiguous.

All this is connected with something of the greatest importance, something which carries profound implications, namely, that a few centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha man had entered upon a stage of evolution when something akin to a mist shrouded the soul whenever the spirit was mentioned. This mist was not so dense then as it is now, but the first signs of the corruption of man's thinking in matters of the spirit were already manifest at that time. And this is connected with the fact that in the course of time mankind had undergone an evolutionary process. Over the centuries man's soul had changed and was no longer the same as it had been in primeval times. Because man possessed atavistic clairvoyance in those remote times he had direct experience of the spirit. He could no more doubt the existence of the spirit than he could doubt the existence of the phenomenal world. It was simply a question of the degree of spiritual perception he could attain. That it was possible to find the path to the spirit in past ages was never in doubt. Nor was there ever any doubt that during the life between birth and death the spirit dwelt in the souls of men so that by virtue of this spiritual endowment the human soul could participate in divine life. And this conviction which was founded on an immediate awareness of the spirit was at all times expressed in the cult of the Mysteries. It is a remarkable fact that one of the earliest Greek philosophers, Heraclitus, speaks of the Mysteries in such a way that we realize he is aware that in olden times they were of immense importance to mankind, but that they had already fallen into desuetude. Thus enlightened Greeks had already begun in the fifth century B.C. to speak of the decline of the Mysteries.

Rites of various kinds were enacted in the Mysteries, but it is only the central idea of these Mysteries which is of particular interest to us today. Let us dwell for a moment on this central idea of the Mysteries as they were practised up to the time of the Mystery of Golgotha and as late as the reign of the Emperor Julian the Apostate. In recent times attention has

been called to the anti-Christian nature of many aspects of these Mystery Cults. It has been pointed out that what we know as the "Easter Legend", the keynote to the Passion, the Death and Resurrection of Christ, can be found everywhere in the Mysteries. And the conclusion drawn from this was that the Christian Easter Mystery was simply a transference of the ancient pagan myth and ritual cults to the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed these legends and rites were so alike that many no longer questioned their identity and said: "What the Christians say of Christ, that He suffered, was crucified and rose again, that His resurrection gave promise of hope and salvation for man - all these Christian ideas are to be found in the Mystery Cults!" Pagan usages, they claimed, had been collected together, fused into the "Easter Legend" and transferred to the Person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Indeed in recent times people have gone even further. Strangely enough, even in the sphere of orthodox Christianity - one need only recall certain (Protestant) sects in Bremen - there was no longer any interest in the historicity of Jesus. They said that the various Mystery cults and legends had been collected over the years and had been centralized, so to speak, and that in the early Christian community the Christ legend had been developed out of them. I recall a discussion which took place here in Berlin a few years ago. During the tragic years of recent times past events have become unreal and seem a distant memory, although the discussion took place only a few years ago. In the course of this discussion the official representatives of Christianity declared that the real issue was not the historical Jesus, but simply the "Idea of Christ" which arose in the primitive Christian community through the impact of divers social impulses.

Now in studying the pagan Mystery cults there is always a dangerous temptation to compare them with the Christian Easter Mystery. Let me illustrate this by a faithful description of the Phrygian Easter festivals. In addition to the Phrygian festivals I could also cite other festivals for these were equally widespread. In a letter to the sons of Constantine, Firmicus ([note 1](#)) gives the following account of the Phrygian Easter festival. The statue of the God Attis was bound to the trunk of a fir tree and carried round in solemn procession at midnight. Then the sufferings of the God were re-enacted. At the same time a lamb was placed at the foot of the tree. At dawn the resurrection of the God was proclaimed. Whilst on the previous night when the God was bound to the tree and seemingly given over to death the multitude broke out in wild lamentations as was customary during the ritual; now, when the resurrection of the God was announced at sunrise the lugubrious chants were suddenly transformed

into wild outbursts of joy. The statue of the God, Firmicus tells us, was buried elsewhere. During the night when the melancholy dirges reached their climax, a light shone in the darkness and the tomb was opened. The God had risen. And the priest addressed the assembled populace in these words: "Take comfort, ye faithful, for the God is saved and ye too will be saved."

There is no denying that these religious festivals, celebrated untold centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha, show great similarity to the Easter Mystery of Christianity. Because this idea was so attractive many believed that these ideas of the suffering, death and resurrection of the God were widespread and had been, to some extent, welded into a unity under Christian influence and transferred to Jesus of Nazareth.

Now it is important to understand the real origin of these pagan, pre-Christian rites. They date far back into the past and sprang from those profound and original insights into the nature of man and his relation to the cosmos as revealed through atavistic clairvoyance. Of course at the time when the Phrygian festivals were celebrated, people did not understand their real meaning any more than the Freemasons of today understand the significance of the rites they practise. None the less all these ceremonies date back to a time when an ancient wisdom, a grandiose knowledge of the universe and man existed, a knowledge which is exceedingly difficult to understand today. Remember that not only is man dependent upon his environment in relation to his physical body, but that his spirit and soul also are an integral part of his environment. He draws on his environment for his ideas and representations, they become routine responses, second nature to him and for various reasons he cannot escape them. Therefore with the best will in the world it is difficult to understand certain knowledge which, for reasons I have already mentioned, has been lost in the course of the spiritual evolution of mankind.

The natural science of today - there is no need to repeat my admiration for its achievements, though I harbour certain reservations about it - is concerned only with the superficial aspect of things. It can make only a minimal contribution to an understanding of their true nature. It is true that science has made great advances in certain spheres - but it all depends upon what one understands by "great advances". The invention of wireless telegraphy and many other discoveries which are important contributions to our life today are certainly deserving of admiration. But, one may ask, where does that take us? If we were to pursue this question we should come face to face with what is forbidden territory today. Modern

science naturally considers the primordial wisdom, the last corrupt remnants of which survived in the Mystery cults I have mentioned, to be sheer folly. That may well be. But what is foolishness in the eyes of men may often be wisdom in the sight of God.

True insight into the nature of the universe and man discloses amongst other things - I propose today to emphasize those aspects which are important for an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha - a certain conception of the human organism which modern science regards as the height of absurdity, i.e. that the human organism is fundamentally different from the animal organism. (I have already mentioned many of these differences, but today I will confine myself to the difference which bears upon the Mystery of Golgotha.) When we make a serious study of the animal organism in the light of Spiritual Science we find that it bears within it the seeds of death. In other words, spiritual investigation, when applied to the animal organism recognizes that, by virtue of its constitution, this organism must inevitably suffer death, that it disintegrates and finally returns to the mineral kingdom. The death of an animal is not something mysterious and inexplicable. When we study its organism we realize that, for the animal, death is as natural to it (i.e. the organism) as the need for food and drink. That death is a necessity for the animal lies in the nature of its organism.

This is not the case with man, for his organism is differently constituted. Here we touch upon a sphere that must remain a total enigma to modern science. When we study the human organism in the light of Spiritual Science we find nothing in the human organism itself which suggests that death is inevitable. We must accept death in man as something he experiences and which cannot be explained, for, originally, neither man nor his physical organism were made for death. The fact that death occurs in man from within cannot be explained from the being of man itself. The inner being as such provides no explanation of death.

I realize that this view will be regarded as folly by the scientific pundits of today. Generally speaking it is extremely difficult to arrive at an understanding of these problems for they touch upon profound mysteries. And even today, if we wish to understand these problems we can only treat of them after the fashion of Saint-Martin [[original note 2](#)] in his book *Des Erreurs et de la Vérité*. In an important passage, when speaking of the evolutionary consequences that follow from a supernal event that took

place in the spiritual world before man first incarnated on the physical plane, he wrote the following words which will be readily understood by everyone who is familiar with such matters:

"However much I may desire to enlighten you, the obligations I have undertaken do not permit me to comment in any way upon this subject; and furthermore, I, for my part, would rather blush for man's transgressions than speak of them."

For Saint-Martin is here alluding to a transgression committed by man before his first incarnation on Earth. He was forbidden to speak of this openly. But today we are in a position to speak of many things that Saint-Martin could not discuss in his time - not because mankind has progressed since that time, but for other reasons. But if we were to discuss a truth such as "man is not intended to die", together with all the relevant factors, we would have to touch upon matters which may not be disclosed today. Man is not born to die and yet he dies! These words express something which is obviously an absurdity to the pundits of modern science, but which, to those who seek to penetrate to a true understanding of the world, must be reckoned amongst the most profound mysteries.

This realization that man was not born to die and yet dies, lies concealed in those ancient Mysteries, including the Attis Mysteries which I have already mentioned. Man looked to the Mysteries for an answer to this enigma that man was not born to die and yet dies. Now why were the Mysteries celebrated? They were celebrated in order that man should be reminded afresh each year of something he wished to hear, something he wished to experience and realize within his soul. He wished to be reassured that the time had not yet come when he would have to face the inexplicable problem of his death. What did the neophyte hope for from the Attis Mysteries? He had the instinctive feeling that a time would one day come when mankind would seriously have to face the reality of death which remained an enigma. But this time had not yet come. And whilst the priest celebrated the death and resurrection of the god, man felt reassured and consoled, for the time had not yet come when he would have to come to terms with the reality of death.

It was common knowledge in ancient times that the event described in the first chapter of Genesis, and which is understood symbolically today, referred to a reality. The men of ancient times knew this instinctively. It was modern materialism that first outgrew the instinctive feeling that the temptation of Lucifer referred to an actual occurrence. On this question the

materialist interpretation of Darwin, which is intellectually so perverse, is very far removed from the truth. This crude, perverted thinking believes that by a gradual and continual process over long periods of time man has developed from animal ancestry. In such a materialist hypothesis the story of the temptation can have no place. For only a "brow villainous low" could believe that an archetypal ape or guenon [original note 3] could have been tempted by Lucifer!

Instinctively men knew at the time of the Mysteries that the story of Creation concealed a "fact" that had once been common knowledge. They felt that man, as originally created, was not mortal. And because of this "fact" they felt that something had entered into his physical organism and had corrupted it and so opened the doors to mortality. Man became mortal through a moral defect, through what is called original sin. I will recur to this later. Man became mortal, not after the fashion of other forms of organic life, not as the inevitable consequence of natural law, but through a moral defect. The soul was the seat of his mortality.

The animal soul as species-soul is immortal. It incarnates in the individual animal which is mortal in virtue of its organism. The species-soul (or group-soul) relinquishes the animal organism which is subject to death without having undergone any transformation. From the outset the nature of the animal organism is such that, as individual organism, it is ordained to die. This does not apply to the human organism to the same extent. In the case of the human organism, the species-soul or group-soul which lies at the root of this organism is able to manifest in the individual man, and as independent human organism ensures him immortality. Man could only become mortal through a moral act originating in the soul. In a certain sense man had to be endowed with a soul before he could become mortal. The moment one treats these ideas as abstractions they become meaningless. We must endeavour to attain to a concrete knowledge of spiritual realities.

Now in ancient times - and also in the period shortly before the Mystery of Golgotha - men never doubted for a moment that the soul brought death to man. The soul has evolved through the ages. In the course of this evolution the soul has progressively corrupted the organism and in consequence has worked destructively upon the organism. Man looked back to ancient times and said to himself: A moral event took place in olden times and its effect upon the soul is such, that whenever the soul now incarnates, it corrupts the body. And because it corrupts the body man can no longer live between birth and death in a state of innocence. In the

course of hundreds and thousands of years the condition of the soul has grown progressively worse and the body has suffered continuous corruption! Thus it is increasingly difficult for man to find his way back to the spirit. The further evolution advances, the more the body is corrupted by the soul and the more the seeds of death are sown in the body. And a time must come when it will no longer be possible for man, once he has lived his allotted span, to find his way back to the spiritual world.

In ancient times it was this moment that was anticipated with fear and dread. Men felt that, after countless generations a generation would arise whose souls would so corrupt the body and sow the poisonous seeds of death that man could no longer reclaim his spiritual heritage. And this generation will one day appear, they said. And they wanted to be reassured whether this fatal moment was drawing near, and to this end the Attis rites and similar ceremonies were enacted. At the same time they sought to discover whether the souls of men still had so much of divine plentitude that the time had not yet come when these souls had abandoned their divine heritage and could no longer find their way back to the spirit. Great importance therefore was attached to the words of the priest when he said: "Take comfort, ye faithful; the God is saved, your salvation is assured!" With these words the priest wished to indicate that God was still active in the world; that the souls of men had not yet severed all connection with the divine. The priest sought to comfort the people saying: "The resurrection of the God is ever renewed. The God is still within you."

When we touch upon these questions we become aware of the deep, unplumbed depth of feelings and emotions which were once characteristic of a particular epoch in the evolution of man. Today man has not the slightest inkling of the inner conflicts with which these men of earlier times had to wrestle. Though they may have been totally illiterate and have known nothing of what we call culture today, yet they could not escape these feelings. And in the Mystery Schools which preserved the old traditions derived from ancient clairvoyant insight the neophytes were told that if evolution were to continue unchanged, if the effects of original sin were to be prolonged, then a time would come when the souls of men would turn from God to a world of materialism of their own creation, and would progressively corrupt the physical body and rapidly hasten the process of death. These souls would remain earthbound and be relegated to the limbo; they would be lost. But since these Schools still preserved a knowledge of the spirit, the knowledge of the trichotomy of man still survived. What I am speaking of at the moment, the seminaries, applied to the soul and not to the spirit. For the spirit is eternal and follows its own

laws. From their spiritual insight people knew that the soul would be relegated to the limbo, but the spirit would reappear in ever repeated Earth-lives. A time in the evolution of the world was approaching when the spirits of men would incarnate anew and would look back upon the lost Paradise which once had existed on Earth. Souls would be lost, never to return. Spirits would reincarnate in bodies which they would activate after the fashion of automata. And the way in which this was done would be neither felt nor experienced by the soul.

But what, on the other hand, were the feelings of those who were drawn to the Christian Easter Mystery? They felt that unless the Earth received a new impulse, then, in future incarnations, man would be born without a soul. They awaited something that Earth evolution could not achieve of itself, something that was destined to enter earthly life from without, namely the Mystery of Golgotha. They awaited the incarnation of a Being who would save the souls of men from death. There was no need to save the spirit from death, but it was imperative to save the soul. This Being who entered Earth evolution from without by incarnation in the body of Jesus of Nazareth was recognized as the Christ who had come to save the souls of men. Men were now able to unite spiritually with the Christ, so that through this union the soul loses its power to corrupt the body and all that they had lost since the Fall could gradually be recovered. That is why the Mystery of Golgotha must be regarded as the central point in human evolution. From the "Fall" until the Mystery of Golgotha man experienced a progressive decline of his spiritual forces. The forces of corruption had increasingly invaded his soul and threatened to make man an automaton of the spirit. And from the Mystery of Golgotha until the end of the Earth cycle all that was lost before the Mystery of Golgotha will gradually be retrieved once more. Thus, at the conclusion of Earth evolution, the spirits of men will incarnate in the physical body for the last time and these bodies will once again be immortal. It was in expectation of this redemption that men understood the Mystery of Easter.

Before this could be realized it was necessary to overcome the power which had caused the moral corruption of the soul; and this power was overcome by the decisive event on Golgotha. How did the early Christians who still possessed occult knowledge understand the last words of Christ on the Cross? They were living in expectation of an external event that would bring to an end this corrupting influence of the soul. The cry of Christ on the Cross "It is finished" was a sign to them that the time had now come when the corrupting power of the soul was a thing of the past. It was a miraculous event fraught with vast and unsuspected mysteries.

For tremendous questions are involved when we think about the Mystery of Golgotha. When we pursue our studies further we shall find that it is impossible to think of the Mystery of Golgotha without also thinking of the Risen Christ. The Risen Christ - that is the essential. And in one of his most profound utterances St. Paul says: "If Christ be not risen then all our faith is vain." The Risen Christ is unique to Christianity and is inseparable from Christianity. The death of Christ is also an integral part of Christianity. But how is this death portrayed? And how must it be portrayed? An innocent man was put to death, He suffered and died. Those who crucified Him clearly bear a heavy burden of guilt, for He who died was innocent. What was the significance of this guilt for mankind? It brought them salvation. For had Christ not died upon the Cross mankind could not have been saved. In the Crucifixion we are confronted by a unique event. The death of Christ on the Cross was the greatest boon bestowed upon mankind.

cf. John XI, 49-52

11:49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

11:50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

11:51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

11:52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

King James Version

And the heaviest guilt that mankind has taken upon itself is this, that Christ was crucified. Thus the heaviest guilt coincides with the greatest good fortune.

The superficial mind no doubt will pay little attention to this. But for those who probe deeper, this question is fraught with profound mystery. The most heinous crime in the history of the world proved to be the salvation of mankind. Now we must understand this enigma, or at least try to understand it, if we are to comprehend the Mystery of Golgotha. And the

key to the solution of this enigma is found in the exemplary words spoken by Christ on the Cross: "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do." The right understanding of these words provides the answer to the cardinal question: Why did the most heinous crime become the source of the salvation of mankind?

If you reflect upon this you will realize that one must take into account the trichotomy of man in order to understand the Mystery of Golgotha. For Christ died in order to redeem the souls of men. He reclaims the souls of men that would have been lost but for His advent. Morality would have vanished from the Earth and the spirit inhabiting a body that reacted mechanically would have been the victim of necessity in which morality has no place. Mankind would have been unable to have psychic experiences. The mission of Christ was to bring man back to God. It is not surprising, therefore, that three centuries before Christ, Aristotle, a most enlightened Greek, failed to understand the nature of the soul and its relation to the spirit at a time when the crisis of man's soul was at hand. There were many discrepancies in Aristotle's view of the soul since he could not have known of the coming of the Saviour, and it is not surprising therefore that his views of the soul were illogical. How is one to account for the fact that the erroneous conceptions of Aristotle concerning the relationship of soul and spirit persisted so long? The significance of Christ for the souls of men is that He demonstrates once again that man is a threefold being of body, soul and spirit and that an inner relationship exists between objective events and moral events. And we shall never fully understand this relationship unless we accept the idea of the trichotomy of man.

If we wish to arrive in some measure at an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha we must penetrate to the inmost recesses of the human soul. In the present lecture I have only been able to offer an introduction to this theme. I believe that it is our immediate concern to speak of these things at the present time. We must take advantage of this Easter festival to enquire more closely into these matters in so far as it is possible today. Perhaps it may be possible thereby to awaken in us much that may one day be a seed that will only mature in future time. For it is only gradually that we come to realize that we are living in an age when there are many things we cannot fully comprehend. This is evident from the difficulty men experience today in developing a clear and conscious understanding of events that are imminent. Unfortunately it is not possible to indicate, even briefly, how one should understand in clear consciousness the painful event

of which the people of Europe, or at least of Central Europe, have only recently been informed. [original note 4] Today we are only half aware of these things.

I only wanted to touch upon certain questions today in order to relate them in my next lecture to the Mystery of Golgotha.

Notes

Note 1. See Note 6, Lecture Eight.

Note 2. See Note 3, Lecture One.

Note 3. guenon - a female monkey.

Note 4. The outbreak of the Russian Revolution.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Firmicus. His full name was Julius Firmicus Maturnus. A Sicilian priest of the fourth century. The reference is the "De errore profanorum religionum" A.D. 347. (German translation by A. Müller, 1913.)

Lecture 3

Berlin, 10th April, 1917

In our lecture today I should like to remind you how easy it is to misunderstand the real nature of the Mystery of Golgotha because we fail to recognize how difficult it is to achieve a deeper insight into that Mystery with our present mode of cognition. We may readily believe, for example, that through mystical contemplation, by turning inwards to seek the divine within, we shall find the Christ. The majority of those who have followed the path of mysticism have not found the Christ. We shall not find the Christ if we maintain, as many Theosophists maintain, that we must first become aware of the divine within and we shall then experience the Christ. That is not so. What, at most, under these circumstances may suggest the presence of an inner light, can never, if rightly understood, be called the Christ, but might be called a Universal Divine Being. And because we are not accustomed to differentiate today, even theoretically, many mystics believe that they can find the Christ through what is usually called mysticism, through a mysticism that is relatively uncontrolled. This is a delusion. And it is important to bear this in mind, just as it is important to note that the philosophies of the late nineteenth century down to our own times have developed, as subsidiary branches of philosophy, philosophies of religion which imagine that they are in a position to speak of the Christ. In effect, they portray - and can only portray - what may be called a Universal Divine Being, but not the Christ. The philosopher Lotze, for example, who attempted to probe deeply into this question speaks of such a Universal Being, but he would never dream of calling this Divine Being the Christ. Neither the mystical path nor the path followed by such philosophers can lead to an understanding of the true nature of the Mystery of Golgotha. In order to arrive at a fuller understanding of this Mystery I propose to call attention to certain characteristics of the conceptions attaching to it. Let us regard these conceptions in the first place purely as expressions of opinion.

It pertains to the essence of the Mystery of Golgotha, if it is to answer to the historical evolution of mankind, that Christ, by His death on the Cross, has thereby established a relationship with the whole cosmic order. If we

deny the universality of Christ we are no longer in touch with Him. We may, in that event, speak of some kind of Universal Divine Being, but we cannot speak of the Christ.

There are many problems to be elucidated in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha and I propose to refer to some of them today. If we are to understand this Mystery aright we must come to terms with the problem: what did Christ Jesus mean by faith or trust? We have a far too theoretic, a far too abstract conception of faith today. Consider for a moment man's usual conception of faith [original note 1] when he speaks of the antithesis between faith and knowledge. Knowledge is that which can be demonstrated or proved; faith is that which is not susceptible of proof, and yet is held to be true. It is a question of the particular way in which we know or understand something. It is only when we speak of knowledge as faith or belief that we think of it as something which is not susceptible of final proof.

Compare this idea of faith with the conception which Christ Jesus preached. Let me refer you to this passage in the Gospels: "If ye have faith and doubt not ... but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done."

21:21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.
(Matt. XXI, 21)

How great is the contrast between this conception of faith, paradoxically yet radically expressed in the words of Christ, and the present-day conception which in reality sees in faith simply a substitute for knowledge. A little reflection will show what is the essence of Christ's conception of faith. Faith must be an active force, a force that accomplishes something. Its purpose is not simply to evoke an idea or to awaken knowledge. He who possesses faith shall be able to move mountains. If you refer to the Gospels you will find that wherever the words "faith" or "trust" appear, they

are associated with the idea of action, that one is to be granted a power through which something can be effected or accomplished, something that is productive of positive results. And this is extremely important.

I should like to draw your attention today to another important question. The Gospels often speak of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God or the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. In what sense do they speak of mysteries? It is somewhat difficult to grasp this idea. Those who have made a careful study of the Gospels from the occult standpoint are increasingly of the opinion that every sentence in the Gospels is immutable, every detail is of the greatest moment. All criticism is reduced to silence as one penetrates ever more deeply into the Gospels from the standpoint of Spiritual Science. Now before speaking of the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven I must draw your attention to something that is highly characteristic.

In my earlier lectures on the Gospels I referred to that important passage which deals with the healing, or, one might call it, the raising of the twelve-year-old daughter of Jairus. Since we can speak openly here, I am able to refer to the deeper medical knowledge of an occult nature which is disclosed to those who study this miracle of healing from the standpoint of Spiritual Science. Christ went into the ruler's house and took Jairus' daughter who was thought to be dead by the hand in order to heal her:

*9:22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, **Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.** And the woman was made whole from that hour.*

9:23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

*9:24 He said unto them, **Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.** And they laughed him to scorn.*

9:25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

(Matt. IX, 22-25)

5:22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

(Mark V, 22)

*7:41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.
(Luke VII, 41)*

Now I must remind you that we can never arrive at an understanding of such matters if we do not relate the passage in question to the earlier and later passages. People are only too ready to detach certain passages from their context and study them in isolation, whereas they are interdependent. You will recall that as Jesus was summoned to the daughter of Jairus, a woman who was diseased with an issue of blood for twelve years came behind Him and touched the hem of His garment and was healed. Christ felt that "virtue" had gone out of Him. He turned round and said: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole." We can understand these words only if we grasp in the right way the idea of faith referred to above: "Thy faith (or trust) hath made thee whole." Now this passage in the Gospels has deep implications. The woman had suffered from an issue of blood for twelve years. Jairus' daughter was twelve years old. She was sexually retarded and was unable to develop the maturity of the woman who had suffered from hemorrhage for twelve years. When Christ healed the woman He felt that "virtue" or power had issued from Him. When He entered the ruler's house He took the girl by the hand and transferred this power to her and so enabled her to reach sexual maturity. Without this power she must have wasted away. And thus she was restored to life. This shows that the real living Being of Christ was not confined to His person, but was reflected in His whole environment, that Christ was able to transfer powers from one person to another by virtue of His selfless regard for others. He was able to surrender the self in active service for others and this is reflected in the power which He felt arise in Him when the woman who had great faith touched the hem of His garment.

This mystery is related to the observation He frequently made to His disciples: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables." (Mark IV, 11) Let us assume that the mystery of which I have just spoken - I do not mean simply the theoretic description I have given of it, but the power that was necessary before this transference could be effected - had been imparted to the Scribes and Pharisees. What would have happened if they had been able to transfer powers from one person to another? They would not always have transferred them wisely. It is evident from the Gospels that Christ did not expect the Pharisees, still less the Sadducees,

to act responsibly. When transferring this force from one person to another they would have abused it, for such was their mentality, and would have caused untold harm. This mystery therefore had to remain a secret of the Initiates.

There are three significant factors to be considered in connection with the Mystery of Golgotha. I could mention many others. I will say more about this in my next lecture but for the moment I will confine myself to the essentials.

We must have a clear idea of what is meant by the expression: the Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven. This has a quite precise meaning, as I was able to show in the example I quoted. Now when John the Baptist was about to baptize Jesus in the Jordan. he said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Here is the idea I want you to grasp. What did John the Baptist do? We are told - and this is clear from the context - that he baptized with water, as he himself said because the Kingdom of Heaven was nigh. He baptized with water for the remission of sins, saying "There cometh one mightier than I ... I have indeed baptized you with water, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost".

Mark 1:7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

1:5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

What is the difference between the baptism of John and the baptism with the Holy Ghost?

We cannot understand what is meant by the baptism with water, nor what it alludes to - I have often described the manner in which the ceremony was performed - unless we summon to our aid the teachings of Spiritual Science. For many years I have been at great pains to elucidate this mystery by means of spiritual investigation.

It suddenly dawned on me that the way in which John the Baptist is presented to us in the Gospels carries most important implications. What was the significance of baptism with water? Externally, of course, John the Baptist baptized with the waters of Jordan. We know that the candidates for baptism suffered total immersion. During the immersion they experienced a kind of loosening of the etheric body, which bestowed on them a temporary clairvoyance. This is the real significance of the baptism by John and of similar baptisms. But when John spoke of baptism with water he was referring not only to this form of baptism, but more especially to the passage in the Old Testament which says: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." What was the purpose of the baptism with water in Jordan? It was intended that through the loosening of their etheric bodies and the experiences they underwent the candidates for baptism should feel themselves transposed into the condition of consciousness of the time before the "Fall". Everything that had occurred since the Fall was to be erased from their consciousness. They were to be restored to their pre-lapsarian state in order that they might experience the condition of man before the Fall. They were made aware that through the Fall man had entered upon a wrong path and that to continue on this path would be to court disaster. He had to return to his original state of innocence, to cleanse his soul of the evil which this aberration had brought.

Many people at that time felt an urge to return to the age of innocence - history is far from accurate on this question - to forgo their errant ways, to start life afresh as it had been before the Fall; to refuse participation in the changes and developments of the social order and national life which had taken place since the Fall up to the time of the Roman Empire or the time of Herod the Tetrarch when John the Baptist preached in the wilderness. Those who felt that they must break with the past withdrew from the world and became anchorites. John the Baptist is a case in point. We are told that his meat was locusts and wild honey and his raiment was of camel hair.

Matt. 3:4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

He is depicted as the typical desert father, the typical anchorite.

Compare this with a widespread movement of the time which reflected in various ways what was indicated in the Gospel of St. John. People declared that one must renounce the world and follow the life of the spirit. An echo of this desire to "withdraw from the world" is still to be found in Gnosis and in monachism. Now why did this powerful impulse of the Baptist which was a comparatively recent development become so widespread? The answer is found in the words: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

At this point we must recall what was said in the last lecture about the soul - that since the Fall it had progressively deteriorated, was less and less fitted to perform its function as intermediary between the spirit and the body. This continuous decline could persist for a certain period of Earth evolution but ultimately had to be arrested. This moment will arrive when Divine evolution takes over Earth evolution. Men such as John the Baptist had a prophetic intimation of this moment. The time is now at hand, he felt, when souls can no longer be saved, when souls must perish without some special dispensation. He realized that either the souls of men would have to withdraw from life as it had been since the Fall, the cause of their corruption - and in that event Earth evolution would have been in vain - or something else must supervene. And this realization found expression in the following words: "He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." John felt that only by withdrawing from the world could man be saved from the consequences of the Fall. Christ wished to save mankind in another way: he wished them to remain in the world and yet find salvation. He had no wish that mankind should return to the time before the Fall, but that they should experience the further stages of Earth evolution and yet participate in the Kingdom of Heaven.

A further question calls for an answer: What was Christ's real intention? His purpose breathes through every page of the Gospels and we must seek to feel and experience it with all the earnestness at our command. Despite apparent contradictions in the Gospels each contains a core of facts and truths which were announced or proclaimed by Christ Jesus; but the core of each Gospel has its own particular atmosphere. I must remind you of what I said in reference to Richard Rothe, namely, that we must change our whole approach to the reading of the Gospels. We must read them in the spirit that breathes through them, become responsive to the atmosphere that pervades them. People who read the Gospels today invest them with their own preconceived picture of a generalized human ideal. The age of "enlightenment" envisaged Christ Jesus as an enlightened man. Protestant groups or sects have created an image of Jesus which depicts Him as a typical representative of nineteenth-century Protestantism. Ernst

Haeckel even managed to depict Jesus as a thorough-going monist of his own brand. Now these are attitudes which mankind must learn to outgrow. It is important that we should really respond to the contents of the Gospels in the atmosphere and setting of their own time.

Let us take first of all the Gospel of St. Matthew and ask ourselves: what is the purpose of this Gospel? It is so fatally easy to be misled by all kinds of things which we readily accept in the Gospels, but which we interpret falsely. We find, for example, the statement that "not one jot or tittle of the law shall be changed". In spite of this statement, perhaps even because of it, the fact remains that the Gospel of St. Matthew was written to discredit traditional Judaism. It is a polemic against Judaism, a challenge to traditional Judaism, and the author declares that it was the will of Christ that it should be suppressed.

Now the Gospel of St. Mark, on the other hand, was written for the Romans. It was directed against the Roman Empire, the "kingdom of the world". It was an attack upon the legal ordinances of the Empire and its social order. The Jews realized full well what they meant, or rather what they felt, when they said: We must kill Him, otherwise our people will follow Him and then the Romans will come and seize our land and our kingdom. The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark were directed therefore against Judaism and Romanism respectively. They were broadsides directed not against the real essence of Judaism or Romanism, but against their outward forms as "kingdoms of the world", in contradistinction to the "Kingdom of Heaven". The special characteristics of these two Gospels are not taken today with the seriousness they deserve. A few years before the War, the Czar, who has now been deposed, wrote in his own hand on one of his edicts the following words: "Intellectual giants, giants of action will appear one day - of this I am firmly convinced - and bring salvation to Russia and provide for her greatest good." Had these giants of thought and action in whom the Czar had implicit confidence, materialized, you can well imagine that he would promptly have imprisoned them in the Peter and Paul Fortress, or have exiled them to Siberia. So much for the reliance we can place upon words today. With such an attitude we cannot fathom the inner meaning of the Gospels.

Let us now turn to the third Gospel, the Gospel of St. Luke. Its real meaning becomes apparent if we study the passage where Jesus went into the synagogue: "And there was delivered to him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book he found the place where it was written: The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to

preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke IV, 17-18)

Jesus then explained the deep inner meaning of these words, contrasting their spirit with the spirit which He found in the world around Him. He wished to contrast the Kingdom of Heaven with the kingdom of the world and characterized this difference in these words when He addressed the assembled Jews in the synagogue: "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. Verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of these was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." (Luke IV, 23-27)

None of the Jews was healed by Elias or Eliseus, but only the Gentiles. This was the interpretation Jesus gave to His words in order to distinguish between the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of the world. What was the result? - "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way." (Luke IV, 28-30)

Here is the essential difference between the Luke Gospel and the other Gospels. Here the Jews are not condemned as in Matthew, nor the Romans as in Mark, but this Gospel condemns the passions and emotions of mankind as reflected in those who were associated with Christ Jesus. We must therefore give heed to that powerful and significant impulse behind the words of Christ Jesus, an impulse that was not of this world, but which proceeded from the Kingdom of Heaven.

The John Gospel aims to go much further. In this Gospel it is not simply a small nation such as the Jews which is condemned, nor a great nation such as the Romans, nor even the whole of mankind with the negative characteristics it has developed since the Fall, but this Gospel is directed against those spirits behind the physical world in so far as they have turned aside from the true path. The Gospel of St. John can only be rightly

understood when we realize that, as the Gospel of St. Matthew is concerned with the Jews, the Gospel of St. Mark with the Romans and the Gospel of St. Luke with all those who had succumbed to the Fall, so the Gospel of St. John is concerned with the spirits of men and those spirits bordering on humanity who fell along with man, whilst Christ Jesus is concerned with the spiritual world itself. It is very easy for our materialistic epoch to say that whoever holds these views is a fanatic. We must be prepared to put up with this criticism. Nevertheless what I have said is the truth; and we are the more convinced of this, the more closely we look into these things.

This powerful impulse which found fourfold expression in the Gospels shows that Christ was destined to introduce into the world something that had not existed before. The world disapproves and has always disapproved of change, but a new impulse must be given from time to time. It is amply demonstrated in the Gospels that we can only understand the message of these Gospels aright if we see it in the context of the entire Cosmos, as an expression of cosmic events. This is best illustrated - I refer you to the Mark Gospel, the shortest and most pregnant of the Gospels - if we turn to this Gospel for an answer to the question: who were the first to recognize that Christ Jesus had given to the world that sublime impulse which I have described above? Who first recognized this? One might be tempted to answer: John the Baptist. But he divined it rather, and this is clearly seen in the description of the meeting between Christ Jesus and John in the fourth Gospel. Who, then, were the first to recognize Him? None other than those that were possessed with devils whom Christ had healed. They were the first to cry out, saying, "Thou art the Son of God" - or "Thou art the Holy One of God. And Christ suffered not the devils to speak because they knew Him." Spiritual beings therefore were the first to recognize Him, and we are here shown the connection between the word of Christ and the spiritual world. Out of their super-sensible knowledge the demons revealed Christ's contribution to the world long before mankind had the slightest inkling of it. They knew it because He was able to cast them out.

Let us now relate the concrete case described above (the raising of Jairus' daughter) to the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven to which Christ owed His powers of healing. If we employ the usual technique of modern historical research in order to explore the source of the special supernatural power through which Christ worked, we shall never find an answer, for times have changed much more than people imagine. Today they assume that three or four thousand years ago men were to all appearances much the same as they are now, that though they have

become far cleverer, they have changed very little on the whole. Such people then count back in time until they arrive at millions of years. As I mentioned recently in a public lecture, they count the millions of years ahead until they reach the end of time. They have calculated to a nicety the nature of individual substances millions of years hence: milk will be solid and luminous - I wonder how this milk will be obtained, but we will not go into that now - albumen will be used to decorate the walls so that it will be possible to read the newspaper in its phosphorescent light. Dewar put forward this idea a few years ago in a lecture before the Royal Institute when he discussed the end of the world as envisaged by physicists. At the time I made use of the following comparison in referring to these calculations. I said that if someone were to observe the changes that occur in the human stomach and heart over a period of two or three years, were then to multiply the figure arrived at and calculate the changes that would occur in two hundred years and what the body would look like in two hundred years' time, then this would be comparable to the calculations of the physicists. Such calculations maybe ingenious, but in two hundred years the person will long have been dead. The same applies to the Earth. Those confident calculations on the part of physicists as to what will happen millions of years hence may be mathematically correct, but physically the inhabitants of the Earth will have perished long before this time. To estimate the geological conditions of the Earth millions of years ago on the same principle is comparable to deducing from the condition of a child's stomach at the age of seven what its condition had been seventy-five years before. People simply fail to realize how confused their thinking is, for man as a physical entity did not exist in that primordial time to which geologists look back. Because strong measures are necessary to combat the many errors of our time which have the weight of authority behind them, one must not be afraid on occasions to react strongly against such methods. One retorts to such people: you calculate from the organic changes in the human organism today what it will be like two hundred years hence. But in two hundred years, of course, the human organism will have ceased to exist. One can also reply that from the results of purely occult investigations - I am aware of course that modern science will regard this as nonsense, but it is none the less true - man as he is today cannot possibly exist six thousand years hence, any more than it is possible for a man who is now twenty years old to be alive in two hundred years time. We can discover through occult investigation that in the sixth millennium women as they are constituted today will become sterile and that an entirely different reproductive process will exist by that time. I realize that this will sound the purest nonsense to those who think along

the lines of modern science; nevertheless the fact is undeniable. In our present materialistic age people have very confused ideas about history and historical evolution. Therefore we no longer understand even subtle indications transmitted by external history of differences in the constitution of the human soul which have taken place in relatively recent times.

There is a very fine passage in the writings of the Church Father Tertullian ([note 1](#)) at the turn of the second century, that touches upon this problem. He writes that he himself had seen the pulpits of the Apostles from which their successors had read aloud the epistles that were still in the Apostles' handwriting. Whilst these epistles were being read, Tertullian tells us, the assembly of the faithful seemed to hear once again the living voices of the Apostles and when they examined the epistles, the features of the Apostles seemed to rise up before them. For those who investigate these matters clairvoyantly, these are not empty words. As they sat before the pulpit the faithful felt that they detected in the timbre of the voices of the Apostles' successors the voices of the Apostles themselves and that from the handwriting of the Apostles they were able to picture the actual features of the Apostles. Thus, at the beginning of the third century, people were still able to evoke a living image of the Apostles and, metaphorically speaking, to hear their voices. And Clement I who occupied the Papal See from A.D. 92 to 101 also knew personally those pupils of the Apostles who had seen Christ Jesus. At this time, therefore, a continuous tradition was already in existence. And in this passage from Tertullian we catch an echo of something that can be investigated clairvoyantly. Those pupils of the Apostles who listened to the Apostles could detect from the tone and modulation of their voice the manner in which Christ Jesus spoke. This is something of great importance. We must bear in mind this tone of voice, this peculiar timbre characteristic of Christ's speech if we are to understand why those who heard Him spoke of the magic power that lay in His words. When He spoke, something akin to an elemental force gripped His listeners. His words possessed an elemental power that had never been known before. How is one to account for this?

I have already referred to Saint-Martin. He was one of those who still recognized the evocative or magical power of the words - (the Freemasons of the nineteenth century of course no longer had any understanding of this) - of that language which was once upon a time common to all mankind before it was split into separate languages and which was closely related to the "inner word". Christ, of course, had to express Himself externally in the language of His day; the inner word which He felt within His soul however, differed from the spoken word of ordinary speech; it was

imbued with the power which words have lost, with the power that the universal language once possessed before it was split into separate languages. Unless we are able to form some conception of this power which is independent of these separate languages and which is found in those whose words are fully inspired, we cannot understand the power that dwelt in Christ, nor the significance of what is meant when we speak of Christ as the incarnated "Word" through which He worked and by which He performed His acts of healing and cast out evil spirits. The loss of the "Word" was inevitable, for it was in accordance with human evolution after the Mystery of Golgotha. We must endeavour to recover the "Word" that has been lost. But meanwhile we have reached a stage of evolution which holds little prospect that our efforts will be rewarded.

I would like to remind you of an important fact that is evident in all the Gospels, namely, that Christ Jesus never committed anything to writing. Indeed scholars have disputed amongst themselves whether He could write at all. Those who claim that He could write can only quote the passage from the story of the woman taken in adultery: "And again he stooped down and wrote on the ground."

John 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

But apart from this one instance there is no evidence that Christ could write. The fact remains that in contrast to other founders of religion, He never recorded His teachings in writing. This is not fortuitous but is inwardly connected with the full and inexhaustible power of the word.

The fact that Christ confined His message to the spoken word and left no record in writing applies only in His case, but such limitation would be totally unacceptable to our epoch. If Christ had written down His words and translated them into the current language of the day, Ahrimanic forces would have entered into them, for all set forms are Ahrimanic. The written word has a different effect from that of the spoken word when a group of pupils is gathered together and is entirely dependent upon the power of the spirit. One must not imagine that the author of the John Gospel sat beside Christ when He was speaking and recorded His words in shorthand like our stenographers who are recording this lecture. That this did not

occur is of immense significance. We only realize the full significance of this when we learn from the Akashic Chronicle what really lies behind Christ's condemnation of the Scribes, of those who derived their knowledge from documents. He objected to the Scribes because their knowledge was derived from documents, because their souls were not directly in touch with the source from which the living word flowed. And this led, in Christ's opinion, to the debasement of the living word.

But we miss the significance of this if we think of memory at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha as that "psychic sieve" which passes for memory today. Those who heard the words of Christ cherished them faithfully in their hearts and knew them verbatim. For the power of memory was totally different at that time; so too was the constitution of the soul. It was essentially a period when, in a brief space of time, great changes had taken place. We completely overlook the fact that the history of the East was written in such a way that men saw it either in terms of the present or at best in terms of borrowings from Greek history. The course of Greek history was very similar to that of the Jews, but oriental history followed a different course, because in the East the soul was differently constituted. Hence people have no idea of the great changes that have taken place in a short space of time, that the abnormally retentive memory was rapidly lost in the age of declining atavistic clairvoyance, so that of necessity men had to record the words of Christ in writing. In consequence, the words of Christ suffered the same fate that Christ Jesus suffered at the hands of the Scribes whom He opposed. And I leave it to your imagination to picture what would happen if some disciple, even remotely resembling Christ Jesus, were to speak today with the same impulse with which Christ spoke. Would those who call themselves Christians today act in any way differently from the high priests at that time? I leave you to judge.

Bearing these assumptions in mind, let us now look more closely into the mystery of the incarnation of the Christ in Jesus. Let me remind you of what I said earlier, that we must retrace our steps along the path we have followed since the time of the Eighth Ecumenical Council and rediscover the tripartite division of man into body, soul and spirit. Unless we recognize this we cannot understand the Mystery of Golgotha.

First let us consider the physical body. We only know the body as an object in the external world. We can observe it only from without. We owe our perception of the external world to the body. And it is with the body that science - or what is commonly called science - is concerned.

Let us now turn to the soul. I tried to indicate the nature of the soul when I referred you to Aristotle. In speaking of the soul we must realize that Aristotle's ideas were not far removed from the truth, for the psychic life, that which pertains to the inner life, originates more or less with each individual. Aristotle, however, lived in an age when he could no longer fully comprehend the soul's relationship to the Cosmos. He declared that with the birth of a human being a new soul is created. He was an advocate of "creationism", but accepted that after death the soul continues to survive in some undefined way. He did not enter into further details because in his day knowledge of the soul had already become somewhat nebulous. The manner in which the soul lives after death is in fact bound up with what is called, more or less symbolically, "original sin" - or whatever we prefer to call it, the terminology is not of the slightest importance - for "original sin" has undoubtedly modified the whole life of the soul. Consequently, at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha the souls of men were in danger of such wholesale corruption that they could not find their way back to the Kingdom of Heaven. They were chained to earthly existence, to the destiny of the Earth. This psychic life therefore follows its own separate path which will be described in further detail later.

The third member of man's being is the spirit. The physical or corporeal is expressed in the line of descent from father to son. The son becomes a father and this son in his turn becomes a father and so on through the generations. In this way inherited characteristics are transmitted from one generation to another. The psychic life as such is created with the birth of the individual and persists after death. Its destiny is determined by the extent to which the soul can remain in touch with the Kingdom of Heaven. The spirit persists through repeated incarnations on Earth and everything depends upon the kind of bodies it can find in the course of its successive lives on Earth. On the one hand there is the line of descent on the physical plane, in which the spirit participates; but the line of descent is permeated with physically inherited characteristics. What potentialities the spirit finds in the course of its successive incarnations depends upon whether mankind has progressed or deteriorated. Out of the spirit one cannot create bodies to order; one can only select those which are relatively best suited to the spirit that is about to incarnate; one cannot tailor them to measure.

I tried to express this in my book *Theosophy*, in which I described the three paths leading to the spirit - the paths of body, soul and spirit. This is something that must be clearly understood. For if we follow to its conclusion the path of sense-perception alone, if we recognize only the physical or corporeal, then we arrive at the idea of a Universal God, an

idea that was known only to the philosophers and mystics whom I mentioned at the beginning of this lecture. If, however, we wish to study the soul, then we must needs follow the path that leads to that Being whom we call the Christ who is not to be found in nature, although He is related to nature. He must be found in history as an historical being. If we follow the path of self-observation, this leads to the spirit and to the repeated incarnations of the spirit.

Study of the cosmos and nature leads to a knowledge of the Universal Being to whom we owe our incarnation: *Ex Deo Nascimur*.

The study of true history, if pursued in sufficient depth, leads to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to the knowledge which is necessary if we wish to know the destiny of the soul: *In Christo Morimur*.

Inward contemplation, experience of the spirit, leads to the knowledge of the fundamental nature of the spirit in repeated lives on Earth and, when united with the spiritual element in which it dwells, leads to the intuitive perception of the Holy Ghost: *Per Spiritum Sanctum Reviviscimus*.

Not only does the trichotomy of body, soul and spirit lie at the root of an understanding of man, but a trichotomy determines the path we must follow if we really wish to arrive at an understanding of the universe. Our epoch which is so chaotic in thought does not easily grasp such ideas and for the most part is indifferent to them. As you know, there are atheists, those who deny the existence of God; there are also deniers of Jesus; and there are materialists, deniers of the spirit. To be an atheist is possible only for those who are wholly insensitive to the phenomena of external nature. For if the physical forces in us are not blunted, we are continually aware of the presence of God. Atheism is really sickness of the soul, a disease of the human personality. To deny Christ is not a sickness; we must make every effort to find Him in the unfolding of human evolution. If we do not find Him we are lost to the power that redeems the soul from death. This is a misfortune of the soul. Atheism is a sickness of the soul, of the human personality. To deny Christ is a misfortune of the human soul. Note the difference. To deny the Spirit is to be guilty of self-deception.

It is important to meditate upon these three conceptions. Sickness of the soul, misfortune of the soul, deception of the soul, i.e. self-deception - these are the three significant aberrations of the human soul.

It is necessary to be aware of all this if we are to develop an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, for we must learn to recognize the relationship of Christ to the human soul. We must carefully follow the destiny of the soul itself in the course of terrestrial evolution. We must also bear in mind the reaction upon the human spirit of the impulse that Christ transmits to the human soul.

To conclude my lecture today I can perhaps best offer you a few suggestions in order to prepare the ground for what is to follow, so that we can all meditate upon them and so arrive at a deeper understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha.

Today man approaches nature in the light of the education he has received. Nature proceeds in obedience to natural laws. We think of the birth, maturity and death of the Earth in terms of natural laws. Everything is seen from the standpoint of natural laws. In addition to the laws of nature there is the moral law. We feel - and especially the Kantians, for example - that we are subject to the categorical imperative, that we are an integral part of the moral world order. But think how anaemic has become the idea today that this moral world order has, like nature, its own objective reality. After all, even Haeckel, even Arrhenius and others, for all their materialism, were convinced that the Earth was moving towards a new glacial epoch or towards entropy. But they also believed that the little "idols" they called atoms are dissociated and cannot be destroyed - hence the conservation of matter! This accords more or less with the modern scientific outlook. But these ideas about matter ignore the following problem: if, one fine day, the Earth becomes glaciated or reaches total entropy, what becomes of the moral world order? It has no place in Earth conditions of this nature! Once the human species has died out, what becomes of the moral order? In other words, the moral ideas which man feels to be an integral part of himself, the source of his moral values and the goal of his conscience, appear to be a necessity; but if we are really honest, moral ideas are unrelated to the natural order, to that which natural science regards as fundamental realities. Moral ideas have become emasculated. They are powerful enough to determine men's actions and the dictates of conscience; they are not strong enough, however, to give the impression that what one imagines to be a moral idea today is a concrete, vital force in the world. Something more is needed to realize this. Who is it that can awaken our moral conceptions to vigorous and active life? It is the Christ! This is one aspect of the Christ Being.

Though all that lives in stone, plant, animal and the human body, all that lives in the elements of warmth and air, may perish (as science foretells), though all human bodies will taste of death at the end of time - for according to natural science all our moral values must ultimately become - one cannot say dust and ashes, for that would be going too far - yet, according to Christian belief there lives in the Christ Being a power that lays hold of our moral conceptions and creates out of them a new world: "Heaven and Earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away." This is the power that will carry over to Jupiter the moral element developed on the Earth.

Now picture the Earth as an organism, like a plant, the moral law as the seed which is formed within the organism, and the Christ force as the impulse which stimulates the seed to grow into the future Earth, into Jupiter. We then have a totally new conception of the Gospels from the standpoint of Spiritual Science.

But how can this be? How can that which belongs solely to the realm of thought according to the materialist, which is only an idea or theory towards which one feels a moral obligation - how can that be transformed into real force such as the one which burns in coal or which causes the bullet to fly through the air? How can such ideas which are so tenuous possess solid reality? To achieve this transformation a new impulse is needed and these moral ideas must be imbued with the impulse. What impulse is this? You will recall that we said earlier that faith must not be merely a substitute for knowledge: it must be an active agent that effects something. It must make our moral ideas a reality, lift them to a new plane and create a new world out of them. It is important that our articles of faith are not simply a form of unverified knowledge, a blind faith, but that our faith has the power to transform the seed "morality" into a cosmic reality. It was the mission of the Mystery of Golgotha to imbue Earth evolution with this power. This power had to be implanted in the souls of the disciples. At the same time they were reminded of the loss suffered by those who possessed only the written records. It is the power of faith which is of paramount importance. And if we do not understand what we owe to Christ when one so often hears the words "faith" or "belief", then neither do we understand what entered Earth evolution at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha.

You will now realize that the Mystery of Golgotha has cosmic significance. That which belongs to the natural order is subject to the laws of nature. And just as at a certain stage of its evolution a plant bears seed, so too at

a certain point of time the Mystery of Golgotha will bring a new impulse in preparation for the new Jupiter evolution in which the future incarnation of man can participate.

From our study of the unique nature of the Christ Being I have indicated the relation of this Being to the whole Cosmos and how, at a definite point in time, Earth evolution was imbued with a new vitalizing force, which is revealed from time to time with impressive effect, but only to those who can apprehend such manifestations intuitively. The author of the Mark Gospel, for example, was a case in point. When Christ was led away after the betrayal by Judas and the author of that Gospel had a clairvoyant vision of the scene, he saw, among the multitude that had forsaken Him, a certain young man clad only in a linen cloth. The linen cloth is torn from him, but he wrests himself free and flees from them naked (Mark 14:51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body*; and the young men laid hold on him). This was the same young man who, according to the Mark Gospel was sitting clothed in a long white garment on the right of the sepulchre and announced: Christ is risen. This is the account given in the Gospel of St. Mark as the result of Imaginative cognition. Here is portrayed the encounter between the former body of Christ-Jesus and the "seed" of a new world order as seen by Imaginative cognition.

Try to feel this in connection with what I said recently - and on this note I propose to conclude my lecture today - namely, that the human body, in virtue of its original constitution, was destined for immortality. Compare this with the fact that the animal is mortal by virtue of its organization, whilst this does not apply to man. He is mortal because of the corruption of his soul and this stain will be washed away by Christ. If you reflect upon this you will understand that the physical body must be transformed by the living force that streams into Earth evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha. When Earth evolution comes to an end the power which has been lost through the "Fall" and which brought death to the body will be restored through the power of Christ, and the body of man will be seen in its true physical form. If we recognize the trichotomy of body, soul and spirit, then the "ressurrection of the body takes on meaning also, otherwise it cannot be understood. The modern rationalist will no doubt regard this as a most reactionary idea, but he who derives his knowledge of reincarnation from the wellspring of truth is also aware of the real significance of the resurrection of the body at the end of time. And when Paul rightly said: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (Cor. I 15:14), we know from the investigations of

Spiritual Science that he bore witness to the truth. If this dictum of Paul be true, then it is equally true to say: if earthly evolution does not lead to the conservation of the corporeal form which man can perfect in the course of evolution, if the human form were to perish, if man could not rise again through the power of Christ, then the Mystery of Golgotha would have been in vain and vain also the faith that it inspired. This is the necessary complement of the words of Paul.

Notes

Note 1. St. Anselm's remark is interesting in this context: "Credo ut intelligam" (I believe in order that I may understand).

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Tertullian (A.D. 150–c. 220). Son of a Roman centurion, he was a convert to the African Church. His writings are doctrinal, apologetic and practical. In A.D. 202 he joined the Montanist sect which practised prophesying, a form of extempore preaching which was connected with ecstasy and trance. Tertullian wrote six books on ecstasy which are lost. His "Rule of Faith" was substantially the Apostles' Creed. He believed that the Twelve Apostles had founded Apostolic Churches. All teaching which agrees with these Churches must be accepted as the truth since it is received from Christ. He believed that the soul derives from God, is immortal, corporeal, is endowed with free will, thinks and wills. The body is its necessary counterpart and will rise again, but does not return to Earth. Though we are all infected with original sin, there is no total corruption. Tertullian was a voluminous writer, a bitter polemicist and inclined to fanaticism. To him we owe the famous sayings: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church", "Christ is truth, not custom", "Credo quia absurdum, certum est quia impossibile". He was the first of the three great Church Fathers of the African Church; the others were Cyprian and Augustine.

Lecture 4

Berlin, 14th April, 1917

The more we study the Mystery of Golgotha in the light of Spiritual Science, the more we realize that future generations will have to penetrate ever more deeply into this Mystery. In fact, what we have known of this Mystery hitherto and what we know of it today is but a preparation for a future understanding and especially for what will be experienced by mankind through this Mystery. A time will come when it will be possible to reveal to mankind in a few simple words what Spiritual Science, by exploring the widest fields of knowledge, is obliged to expound in a somewhat involved way, a way that some would perhaps say is "difficult to comprehend". We can safely anticipate that this possibility will be realized. But the nature of spiritual development is such that the understanding of the greatest and simplest truths must be earned by patient effort, that the most profound truths cannot be reduced to simplest terms in every epoch. And therefore we must accept it as the karma of our epoch that we have much to learn before we can grasp the full import and the full gravity of the Mystery of Golgotha.

I should like to open our lecture today by emphasizing that we must attach great importance to the idea of faith, or trust, as an active and positive force.

We have to realize that both academic and popular thinking are at pains to exclude morality from their view of world evolution. Today scientists are interested only in the physical and chemical laws which determined the emergence of the Earth out of an original nebula and their aim is to discover how the end of the world will be determined by these same laws. To a certain extent we acquire our moral ideas in conjunction with these physical conceptions and I have already pointed out that they are not powerful enough to act as a positive force. Such is the position today. And in the future our moral ideas will become increasingly impotent. The idea that a deed or an occurrence, such as the "Fall", which stands at the beginning of terrestrial existence, must be judged by moral laws is regarded by the scientific mind as sheer superstition. Our present understanding is not sufficient of itself to conceive of a moral evolution at the end of terrestrial existence whereby the physical and chemical

processes of the Earth would be raised by a moral impulse to the Jupiter condition. Conceptions about what is physical and what is moral co-exist, but cannot, so to speak, "tolerate" each other; the two spheres are strictly delimited. Whilst natural science excludes morality entirely from its ideology, morality is resigned to the fact that it is without effective life, that it has no place in the physical world. Indeed certain religious confessions seek to accentuate this cleavage between the physical and the moral, which permits them to reach a kind of compromise with natural science in that the scientist emphasizes that a clear line of demarcation must be drawn between the sphere of morality and what belongs to the sphere of chemistry, physics and geology, etc.

I propose to begin my lecture today with something that is seemingly wholly unrelated to our subject but which leads directly into it. First, let me say that not all who have devoted themselves to cosmology excluded moral judgements from their study of external nature and natural phenomena. It would never occur to the modern botanist to apply moral ideas to the laws of plant growth. He would consider it childish to apply moral standards to the plant kingdom or to enquire into plant morality. Imagine the reception that would be accorded to anyone who took such an idea seriously. But people did not always share this attitude. I should like to quote the example of Goethe whom many did not regard as a Christian, but whose "Weltanschauung" was more Christian than that of many others. If you refer to critical studies on Goethe, especially those by Catholic authors, you will find that they are of the opinion that Goethe - as a man of stature he was sometimes treated indulgently - did not take Christianity seriously. Goethe, however, was by temperament and disposition inherently Christian, more profoundly Christian than those who forever have "Lord, Lord" upon their lips. Goethe certainly did not wear Christianity on his sleeve, but his view of the world was profoundly Christian in character. And here I would like to draw your attention to an aspect of Goethe's thought which is often neglected.

In his theory of metamorphosis Goethe attempted, as we know, to gain insight into plant growth. I have often had occasion to refer to a conversation between Goethe and Schiller on this subject after they had attended a lecture by Professor Batsch in Jena. Schiller did not approve of the way in which Batsch classified plants. He said that the method of dividing and classifying was unnecessary and that a totally different approach was possible. Thereupon Goethe illustrated with a simple sketch his idea of the metamorphosis of plants, in order to show how the spiritual link common to the individual plant forms could be envisaged. Schiller

shook his head and replied: "That is not an experience; that is an idea." Goethe did not really understand this objection and said: "I am glad to hear that I have ideas without knowing it and that I can even perceive them with my own eyes." - Goethe could not understand how that which was derived from reality, like a tune or a colour, could be described as an idea. He maintained that he actually *saw* his ideas. Goethe, therefore, strove to discover the spiritual behind phenomena, to find the spiritual element underlying plant growth.

Now Goethe realized that he could not fully communicate his ideas to his contemporaries, for the time was not yet ripe to receive them. Meanwhile other naturalists, amongst them the botanists Schelver and Henschel, had been stimulated by Goethe's theory of metamorphosis. They wrote the most remarkable things about plant growth which met with Goethe's approbation. But the modern botanist regards this whole subject as dealt with by Goethe, Schelver and Henschel as midsummer madness. In cases such as this we must adapt the words of Paul and say: "What is foolishness to man may be wisdom in the sight of God." And Goethe then jotted down his impressions of Schelver's method of presentation.

I will now outline briefly what Schelver wished to establish. The existing approach to botanical studies was anathema to him. At this time the generally accepted view was that plants are divided into plants with female flowers and plants with male flowers, that the ovule is fertilized by the pollen from the stamens and so a new individual arises. Schelver firmly rejected this view since it did not accord with the nature of the plant kingdom. The fact is, he said, that every plant, by virtue of its nature, can reproduce its kind. He looked upon fertilization as a more or less secondary phenomenon, as a mistake, an aberration of nature. If nature followed the right course, Schelver believed, then each plant would reproduce its kind without fertilization; there would be no need for pollination in order to ensure the continuity of the plant species ([note 1](#)).

Goethe who had made a close study of such phenomena as the metamorphosis of the leaf into the flower, regarded it as self-evident that the whole plant would reproduce its kind through metamorphosis. He was attracted by Schelver's idea and in all seriousness he recorded his reflections on the subject in a series of aphorisms which are extremely interesting, but which modern botanists regard as pure nonsense. In his article on Schelver he wrote amongst other things:

"This new theory of pollination would doubtless be most welcome and most seemly when lecturing to young people and ladies, for, with the existing theories the teacher finds himself in considerable embarrassment. Moreover whenever innocent young minds, desirous of perfecting their knowledge, consulted botanical textbooks, they could not conceal the fact that their moral feelings were outraged. These perpetual "nuptials" which reduce monogamy, on which morals, law and religion are founded, into a vague and undefined lasciviousness are wholly intolerable to the pure in heart."

Thus Goethe, surveying the plant kingdom, finds it intolerable that there is no escape from these perpetual "nuptials". He finds it - as he so delicately puts it - more seemly not to have to mention them; it is far better (in his view) to teach the a-sexual reproduction of plants. He then elaborated further on this and wrote:

"People have often reproached scholars - and not without justification - for having shown undue interest in the slightly improper and frivolous passages of ancient authors in order to compensate to some extent for the tedium and aridity of their own writings. In the same way certain naturalists, seeing Mother Nature partly in the buff, went so far as to crack ribald jokes at her expense, as they never failed to do about old Baubo (note 2). We recall having seen arabesques which depicted most realistically, in the style of antique art, the sexual relationships within the calix."

Goethe therefore thought it highly desirable that the study of sexual behaviour in the plant kingdom should be abolished. But, of course, this was considered to be an absurd idea even in Goethe's time. And today in the age of psychoanalysis which seeks a sexual explanation for everything, it would seem more foolish still to say that it would be a good thing if we could dispense with this immoral notion of sexuality in our study of nature. Goethe expressly says: "Just as we find everywhere today ultras (note 3) - liberal as well as royalist - so Schelver was an ultra on the question of

metamorphosis. He broke through the narrow limitations of the earlier theory." Goethe does not say that he found an ultra such as Schelver in any way antipathetic; on the contrary he warmly welcomed his appearance.

We shall the better understand what lies behind all this if we enter more deeply into the soul of Goethe, I mean, into his Christian soul. Those who study nature as it is from the standpoint of modern science can of course make nothing of such ideas, for certain assumptions are necessary before these ideas can be understood. It must first be assumed that the plants, as they are at present, belie their original design. Those who make a detailed study of the plant kingdom are compelled to acknowledge that, when they reflect upon the original design of plant growth, they find that fertilization by wind-blown pollen does not accord with the original intention of nature. Fertilization should take a different form. The only course open to us therefore is to recognize that the whole flora around us shows a deterioration from its original form and that a view of nature such as that of Goethe still discovered in the form of plants as they are today an intimation of what they had been before the Fall. Indeed we cannot understand Goethe's theory of metamorphosis unless we appreciate its child-like innocence, unless we realize that Goethe wished to indicate by this theory that the present mode of reproduction in the plant kingdom is not what was originally intended; it arose only after the Earth had fallen from a higher sphere to its present level.

It follows from this - I cannot enter into precise details at the moment, but we shall have an opportunity to discuss these matters later - that the same applies to the mineral kingdom; that it too is not as originally constituted. And those who make a careful scientific study of these problems will also realize that what I have said is applicable to the animal kingdom, to the so-called cold-blooded animals, but not to the warm-blooded animals. The mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom and the kingdom of the cold-blooded animals, whose blood temperature is permanently below that of the environment in which they live, these three kingdoms are not such as they were originally intended to be. They have fallen from a higher sphere, with the result that they are of necessity subject to the sexual principle which governs them today. These three kingdoms are unable to develop their potentialities to the full; they must be given assistance in order to fulfil their development. Originally, plants possessed a natural capacity, peculiar to themselves, not only to metamorphose leaf into blossom, but also to bring forth an entirely new plant. But they now lack the vital energies to do this; they require a new

stimulus from without, because they have forsaken the realm to which they originally belonged. And the mineral kingdom and the kingdom of the cold-blooded animals too were intended to be different from what they are now; they have stopped short midway in their evolution.

Let us now turn to the other realms of nature: to the kingdom of the warm-blooded animals, to the human kingdom and to the kingdom of the ligneous plants, i.e. trees (note 4). The plants I have already mentioned which follow normal metamorphosis are those which develop green leaves and stems, the herbaceous plants. I pointed out in my previous lecture that physical man, as at present constituted, does not answer to his inherent potentialities; his physical body was originally destined for immortality. This idea has further implications. Not only has physical man who was destined for immortality forfeited his claim to immortality, but also the other living beings, the ligneous plants and the warm-blooded animals bear the seeds of death in them. They are not as originally created; not that they were created immortal, but they have deteriorated. In consequence a new situation has arisen for them. I stated that the kingdom of the herbaceous plants, and the kingdom of the cold-blooded animals are unable to fulfil their potentialities; they are in need of an external stimulus. The warm-blooded animals, the ligneous plants and man do not betray their origin in their present form. Thus the first group do not develop to the full their potentialities and need some external influence to further their development. The second group, the ligneous plants, the warm-blooded animals, and man as at present constituted, do not betray their origin. The former fail to fulfil their development; the latter do not immediately disclose their origin in their present form.

If we accept this point of view we can predict to a certain extent the direction which the study of nature must take in the future. We must make a clear distinction between what the beings were destined to become and what they are at the present moment.

The question then is: how are we to account for this deterioration? Virtually the whole of nature around us, even when investigated scientifically, is not such as it was intended to be. Who is responsible for this? The blame lies with man because he succumbed to the Luciferic temptation, to what is called in the opening chapter of Genesis, the "Fall", or original sin. To Spiritual Science this is a real and genuine drama in which man was not only involved, but which was first played out in the soul of man. At that time man was still so powerful that he involved the whole of nature in his fall. He involved in his fall the plants. Consequently

they were unable to complete their development and required a stimulus from without. It was his responsibility that, alongside the cold-blooded animals, there are also warm-blooded animals, that is, animals capable of suffering pain, as he does. Man therefore has dragged the animals down with him because he succumbed to the Luciferic temptation.

People often imagine that man's relation to the universe has always been the same as it is today, that he is powerless in the face of nature, that he has no apparent influence upon the creation of the animals and plants around him. But this has not always been the case. Before the present order of nature arose man was a powerful being who not only succumbed to the Luciferic temptation, but involved the rest of creation in his fall, with the result that the moral order was completely divorced from the natural order.

Whoever expresses the view I have expressed today will not meet with the slightest understanding from those who think along the lines of natural science. None the less it is imperative that such views should be understood in the future. Despite all the services it has rendered to mankind, despite its great achievements, modern science is but an interlude. It will be replaced by another science which will recognize once more that there is a higher vision of the world in which the natural law and the moral law are two aspects of a single whole. But this higher vision will not be reached through a vague pantheism, but from a concrete insight into reality. We must recognize, as external nature unmistakably shows, that it was originally designed for something other than is disclosed in the existing order of nature today. We must have the courage to measure external nature also by the yardstick of morality. The materialistic monism of today which prides itself on excluding moral principles does so from intellectual cowardice, because it has not the courage to probe deeply enough to a point where, as was the case with Goethe, it becomes imperative to apply moral standards, just as it is necessary to apply scientific standards to the study of external nature.

Mankind would have found it impossible to think of the world as once again imbued with morality if the Mystery of Golgotha had not supervened at the beginning of our present era. We have seen that everything pertaining to the natural order has, in a certain sense, been corrupted, has fallen from a higher sphere and must recover once again its former high estate. And our "Weltanschauung" likewise must rise above its present level. Our thinking also is an integral part of this natural order. And when Du-Bois Reymond and other scholars maintain that our thinking cannot

attain to reality, when they assert that we can never know the ultimates (*ignorabimus*) this is to some extent true. And why? Because our thinking has forsaken the realm for which it was originally predestined and must find its way back once again. Thinking has declined everywhere and those who maintain that thinking cannot attain to reality are right to some extent. This thinking, together with the rest of creation, has been corrupted and must lift itself to a higher level. The necessary impulse through which this thinking can be raised to a higher level is found in the Mystery of Golgotha, that is, in the new stimulus which the Mystery of Golgotha brought to mankind. Even our thinking is subject to some extent to original sin and must be redeemed before it can again participate in reality. And our present natural science with its necessarily a-moral outlook is simply the outcome of this deterioration of thought. If we have not the courage to admit this, we have completely lost touch with reality.

The new spiritual impulse that was brought by the Mystery of Golgotha and whose purpose was to raise up the fallen kingdom of nature becomes abundantly clear to us if we bear in mind certain concrete facts, if we ask ourselves the question: What then would have been the fate of Earth evolution after its involvement in the Fall through the action of men - I say this not as an expression of opinion but as the result of spiritual investigation, just as the findings of natural science are the result of scientific investigation - what, I repeat, would have been the fate of Earth evolution if the Mystery of Golgotha had not brought a new spiritual impulse? Just as the plant cannot fulfil its development if the ovary is removed, so the Earth could not have fulfilled its evolution if the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place.

Today we have just entered the Fifth post-Atlantean epoch. The Mystery of Golgotha took place during the first third of the Fourth epoch. Everywhere we find evidence of a progressive decline; this is patent to all. Thinking that is capable of penetrating into the essential nature of things has suffered a catastrophic decline. The Copernican theory and allied theories are valuable contributions to knowledge at a superficial level, but they do not probe deeply enough. They are the outcome of man's failure over the years to go to the heart of things, a failure that will become progressively more pronounced. Today, we can cite instances, fantastic as they may seem, of the situation that must arise if this trend of thought, which is already to some extent endemic, were to continue unimpeded. This trend of thought will have to be abandoned because the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha will gather increasing strength.

I ask you to look with me for a moment through a window into the possibilities of future evolution and not to discuss what I have said in public lest you lay yourselves open to ridicule for stating a plain truth, for today such ideas will only meet with derision. If the present outlook of academic science persists, if it should spread further afield and become increasingly pervasive - we are now living at the beginning of the Fifth postAtlantean epoch which will be followed by a Sixth and a Seventh epoch - then, unless the Mystery of Golgotha is understood at a deeper level, the situation can only grow worse. Today, if one were to speak, as I have done, of a new conception of the "Fall", outside an esoteric circle, a circle that for years has been accustomed to ideas which provide evidence that this new conception can be scientifically demonstrated, he would of course be laughed to scorn. The materialistic, non-Christian world would have precious little confidence in him, if he were known to hold such views. But in the Sixth post-Atlantean epoch things will be totally different and there will be a different attitude amongst a certain section of mankind. There will be a bitter struggle before the Christ Impulse can be realized.

People imagine that those who strive to arrive at the truth by means of Spiritual Science can be met with the weapons of scorn and ridicule that often pass for criticism. In the Sixth epoch they will be treated medically! By that time medicaments will have been discovered which will be administered compulsorily to those who believe in a recognized canon of good and evil independent of social sanctions. A time will come when people will say: "What is all this talk about good and evil? Good and evil are determined by the State. What the State declares to be good is good; what it declares to be evil is evil. When you speak of good and evil as moral values, you are obviously ill." And medicaments will be administered to such people in order to cure them. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the direction in which our epoch is moving; it is a pointer to the future. For the moment I will not disclose what will follow in the Seventh epoch. A time will come - for human nature cannot be changed - when people will be adjudged ill according to the concepts of natural science and the necessary steps will be taken to cure them. This is no flight of fancy. Even the most sober observation of the world around confirms what I have said. And those who have eyes to see and ears to hear see on every side the first steps in this direction.

Now the etheric body is not such as it was originally designed to be and this is the determining factor in all development subsequent to the "Fall". It is of paramount importance to be alive to this fact and gradually to turn it to account in our life. Amongst the various etheric formative forces which

our etheric body originally possessed - and originally it possessed all etheric formative forces in their full and vigorous vitality - is the warmth ether that is still active within it. This explains why man and the animals which he dragged down with him in his Fall both have warm blood. It was therefore possible for man to transform the warmth ether in a special way. This he could not do with the light ether. Admittedly he assimilates light ether, but he simply radiates it again so that a lower form of clairvoyance is enabled to perceive the etheric colours in the human aura. They are actually present there. But in addition, man was also designed for a particular tone; he was endowed with his own specific tone in the whole Harmony of the Spheres, and also with an original vitality, so that it would always have been possible for the etheric body, if it had retained its original vitality, to have preserved the immortality of the physical body. And man would have been spared the consequences. For had the etheric body preserved its original form man would have continued to dwell in those higher realms from which he has fallen. He would not have succumbed to the Luciferic temptation, for in those higher realms totally different conditions would have prevailed. And in former times those conditions really did exist. Great souls like Saint-Martin were to some extent still aware that such conditions had once existed and therefore they spoke of these conditions as a former reality.

Let us recall for a moment one of these conditions. Man could not have spoken at that time as he does today, for speech had not yet been differentiated into separate languages (note 5). This differentiation was due to the fact that speech became static. It was never intended originally that language should remain static. You must have a clear picture of what was originally intended for man. If ever a fraction of Goethe's world-conception is realized in the life of man - I do not mean theoretically, but in actual practice - then people will realize what are the implications of this statement. Suppose for a moment that man still had the potentialities with which he was originally endowed. He would have looked out upon a world from which he received external impressions; he would be aware not only of colours and tones, not only of external impressions, but also of spirit emanating from things on every hand - from the colour red the spirit of red, from the colour green the spirit of green, and so on. At all times he would have been aware of the spirit. This was anticipated by Goethe when he said: if the *Urpflanze*, the archetypal plant, is nothing more than an idea, then I can see my ideas with my own eyes and they are realities in the external world like colours. This is prescient of the future. I beg you to accept as a solid, concrete fact that the spirit is an active force that

streams into us. If, however, the external impressions were to stream into us with the same vital energy as the spirit, we would respond to each of these impressions in our breathing process - for our breathing always responds to the impressions we receive through our brain and our senses. For example, an impression of red invades us from without; from within, our breathing responds to this impression with tone. Tone issues from man with every impression he receives from without. There was no such thing as a static language; each object each impression was immediately answered by tone from within. There was complete correspondence between the word and the external impression. Speech in its later development is simply the external projection, the residuum of that original, living and flexible language which was once common to all. And the expression "the lost word" which is so little understood today is a reminder of this original language. The opening words of the Gospel of St. John, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God" recall living "at-one-ment" with the spirit - this primal spirit, when man not only had eyes to see the external world, but also to perceive the spirit, when, through the breathing process he responded to visual impressions with a tone. It is to this communion with the divine that the opening words of St. John's Gospel refer.

So much for the one aspect. On the other hand, in respiration (in so far as it extends to the head), as we inhale or exhale there is not only an interaction with the external world, but a pulsation is set up within our whole organism. The respiration that extends to the head responds to the impressions we receive from without. But in the lower organism our respiration responds to the metabolic process. If man still possessed the original vitality of his etheric body, then something totally different would be associated with his respiration than is associated with it today. For the metabolic process is not wholly independent of respiration; its dependence is simply concealed, it lies beneath the threshold of consciousness. But man would be conscious of it if he had preserved the original vitality of his etheric body, if in the course of his life he had not lost this vitality to some extent, for it is this loss of vitality, not only through the physical body, but from within, that is the cause of death. If man had retained his original potentialities, it would have been possible for him, via his metabolism, not only to secrete waste products, but to produce something of a material nature. So much for the one possibility. On the other hand, the exhalations of man would have contained formative forces and the formative forces of his exhalations would have laid hold of the material substance and thus he would have created in his environment the animal kingdom as it was

originally intended to be. For the animal kingdom is a secretion of man and was intended to be so, in order that man could extend his dominion over the kingdom of nature. It is in this way that we should think of the animal kingdom. All this is the conclusion drawn from the investigations I have laid down before you.

Today natural science is inclined to think that originally the animals were much more closely related to man. The truth is not that man has ascended the ladder of evolution as the crude theory of Darwin imagines but that today we can no longer grasp the real relationship of man to the animal kingdom. The vegetable kingdom does not fulfil its development on the terrestrial plane, and the animal kingdom likewise does not develop its origin on this plane. Naturalists speculate on how animals which co-exist with man have evolved. The reason for their co-existence must be sought in the sphere from which man has descended. It cannot be found where Darwin and his materialistic commentators expected to find it; it will be found in the mighty events of prehistoric times.

And bear in mind also what I mentioned recently: that spiritual investigation shows that in the sixth and seventh millennium there will be a decline in fertility. Women will become increasingly sterile. The present method of reproduction will no longer be possible; it must be transposed to a higher plane. In order that the world may not fall into a state of decadence, when opinions as to what is good and evil will be treated medically, in order that good and evil, all personal determination of what is good and evil, should not be recorded merely as a matter to be decided by State regulation or human conventions in order that this should not arise at a time when the natural order that at present prevails in the human species will of necessity have ceased to maintain the race - for just as in women fertility ceases at a certain age, so too the present method of reproduction in the human species will cease at a certain stage of Earth evolution - in order to forestall this, the Christ Impulse was bestowed upon mankind.

Thus the Christ Impulse was implanted in the whole of Earth evolution. I doubt if there is a single person who imagines that the Christ Impulse loses anything of its majesty or sublimity when it is incorporated in this way in the whole world order; when, in other words, it is restored to its cosmic rank, and when men really acknowledge that at the beginning of Earth evolution there existed, and at the end of Earth evolution there will exist, an order different from the present natural order, and a moral order that transcends the physical. The Christ Impulse was necessary in order that

the end of Earth evolution should be worthy of the beginning. It was for this purpose that the Christ Impulse entered our Earth evolution and it is in this sense that we must understand it. And those who accept the words of the Gospels, not in an external sense, but with the true faith demanded by Christ, can find in them the necessary attributes whereby an increasing understanding of the Christ Impulse can gradually be developed, an understanding that can meet the demands of external investigation and once again relate the Christ Impulse to the cosmic world order.

There are certain passages in the Bible that can only be understood with the help of Spiritual Science. It is written in the Bible: "One jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Many expositors interpret these words as implying that Christ wished to preserve the Mosaic law intact and simply added to it His own contribution. They claimed that this was the real meaning of the passage. Now the passage has no such meaning. A passage should not be torn from its context, for everything in the Gospels is closely interrelated. When we study this interrelation - at the moment I cannot enter into the details which would provide convincing proof of what I am about to say - we find the following. - On the occasion when He spoke of the "jot or tittle", Christ implied that, in olden times, when the law was first framed, man still possessed his ancient inheritance of wisdom. He had not declined to the extent he has at the present day, when the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, when he must change his mental attitude. In olden times there were still prophets, or seers who were able to discover the law through the power of the spirit within them. "You who are now living in the kingdom of this world are no longer capable of adding to the law or of changing the law. If the law is to remain just, not a jot or tittle must be changed. The time is now past when the law can be changed after the ancient fashion; it must remain as it is. (But at the same time we must endeavour to rediscover its original meaning with the new powers that the Christ Impulse has brought.) You, the Scribes, are incapable of understanding the Scriptures. You must recover the spirit in which they were originally written. You are without, in the kingdom of the world; no new laws can originate there. But to those who are within the kingdom is granted the impulse of that living Force" - which, as I said recently, had to be transmitted orally, for it was not recorded in writing by Christ. "It cannot be codified, cannot be written into the law. It is something that is totally different from the Mosaic law, something that must be grasped spiritually. You, the Scribes, must approach the world in a new light, as something more than a purely phenomenal world."

Thus the first powerful influence was given to mankind to see the world as something more than a world perceptible to the senses alone. It is only slowly and gradually that we can accommodate ourselves to this new outlook. Occasionally one feels impelled to speak from a Christian standpoint and then one becomes the butt of ridicule. So too Schelling and Hegel, although not regarded as orthodox Christians especially by the Catholics, sometimes allowed themselves to express genuine Christian sentiments. And they have been sharply criticized for it. The objection levelled against them was: "Nature is not as you describe it." To which they were so misguided as to reply: "So much the worse for Nature!" This reply, it is true, is not "scientific" as we understand the word today, but it is Christian in spirit, the spirit in which Christ Himself spoke when He said: However much the Scribes may speak of laws, they do not speak of the real Law. Not only has a jot or tittle passed from the Mosaic law, but the law itself has changed in many respects. The Scribes speak from the kingdom of this world and not from the Kingdom of Heaven. He who speaks from the Kingdom of Heaven speaks of a cosmic order of which the natural order is only a subordinate part. To this one must reply: So much the worse for nature! To those who objected to Goethe's claim - that plant propagation was not determined by sexual reproduction - on the grounds that scientific observation shows that the ovaries are fertilized by windblown pollen - he too would have replied, if he had given his honest opinion: So much the worse for the plant kingdom if it is so deeply committed to the natural order.

On the other hand, minds such as Goethe's will always insist that man's understanding must be enlarged, that man must become sensitively aware so that he will be able to think, feel and experience that up to the sixth and seventh millennium the spoken word will once again become a reality and will have the same creative power in the external world as the power of fecundation in the seeds of the plant kingdom today. The word which has become abstract today must regain the original creative power it once possessed "in the beginning". Those who, in the light of Spiritual Science are reluctant to amplify the opening words of the Gospel of St. John (1:1), "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was a God", by adding "and the Word one day will live again", have not fully grasped the Christian message. For Christ Jesus has set forth His teaching in a form that conflicts with the external world. It is to Him that we owe the impulse to regeneration. The world meanwhile has declined rapidly and the Christ Impulse must be increasingly reinforced before this decline can be arrested. To a certain extent we have gone some way

towards reversing this doctrine since the Mystery of Golgotha, but for the most part without being consciously aware of it. Man must learn once again to participate consciously in cosmic events. He must begin to realize not merely: "when I think, something takes place in my brain", but "when I think, something takes place in the Cosmos"! And he must learn to think in such a way that just as he can entrust his thinking to the Cosmos, so too he can once again unite his being with the Cosmos.

The necessary changes that will have to be effected in our external life in order that our social life may be invested with the Christ Impulse are ignored by those who are already aware of this need. There are reasons for their reticence. One can only speak of them when certain prior conditions have been met; only brief indications can be given here. You will recall that earlier in this lecture I opened a window on to the future when I pointed out that those who recognize other laws than those decreed by the State will be treated medically. Before this time arrives, however, a reaction will have set in. One section of mankind will adopt the measures referred to above, but another section will be the bearer of the future Christ Impulse. A battle will ensue between the two groups between the past and the future. And the Christ Impulse will win the day. When the etheric Christ appears in the present century the Impulse that streams from Him will be able to awaken such a response in the souls of men that governments based on ambition, vanity, prejudice or error, will gradually become an impossibility. It will be possible to discover principles of government free from these human frailties but only if they are founded on a true and concrete acceptance of the Christ Impulse. Christian impulses will not be determined by parliamentary decrees; they will enter the world in a different way.

This tendency exists already. Alongside the incorporation of the Christ Impulse into world evolution there is a longing to incorporate the Christ Impulse into social evolution. In order to achieve this goal a considerable reorientation of thinking is called for. And great strength of mind will be necessary before people can accept seriously what I have said about the Christ. When Jesus had delivered His message to the multitude they were filled with wrath and sought to cast Him from the mountain top. The course of world evolution is not so simple as one imagines. We must realize that those who have some truth to impart may already have encountered an attitude of mind such as Christ encountered in those who sought to cast Him from the mountain.

In an age whose motto is - moderation at all costs, never give offence, avoid a reputation for iconoclasm - in such an age the ground is being prepared for the entry of Christ into the social evolution of mankind and perhaps with good reason in this particular age. It is being prepared in the subconscious; little evidence of it is to be seen on the surface where the unchristian principle of opportunism prevails, that unchristian principle that dare not openly declare like Christ: "The Kingdom of Heaven is not for you, ye Scribes and Pharisees." - I ask you to pause and consider what has replaced the Scribes and Pharisees today. Gospel commentators are wont to excuse or explain away many of Christ's statements. And recently a priest, certainly not of the orthodox persuasion, who has uttered many fine statements about Christ Jesus, went so far as to say that Christ was obviously not a practical person for He advised people to live like the fowls of the air, "for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns". Such advice would not take us very far today. This preacher did not make very serious efforts to grasp the impulse which permeates the Gospels. People find it difficult to cope with precepts such as "whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Give to him that asketh of thee and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away."

Matt 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

5:40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

5:41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

5:42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.(Matt. V, 39-42.)

[The book says this passage is in Matt. II, 40-42 – e.Ed.]

When we read all that has been said in extenuation of this rather unpopular passage we have to admit that mankind today has gone half way towards excusing Christ for the strange sentiments He sometimes expressed. They are prepared to excuse much if they can only retain the Gospels - after their own fashion. But in matters such as this it is far more important to understand what is implied. And this is difficult because these

things are closely interrelated. But at least we can have an intimation of this interrelationship if we read on from the passage: "and of him that taketh away thy goods ask thou not again" (which occurs in the Gospel of St. Luke: *Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.* Luke 6:30) to the more explicit statement in the Gospel of St. Matthew (*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.* Matt. 7:12): "Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them." These words, of course, refer to what has gone before. Christ is here appealing to faith and trust.

If Christ had shared only the current superficial ideas He could never have said: "If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." He is speaking here of laws that govern social life and conduct - such are for the Scribes and High Priests - He is speaking of the Kingdom of Heaven. In this passage He wishes to emphasize that in the Kingdom of Heaven other laws prevail than those of the external world. And if you compare the passage in the Gospel of St. Luke (*And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.* Luke 6:29) with that of St. Matthew (*And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.* Matt. 5:40) - and much depends upon the correct translation - you will realize that He wished to say that a faith must be awakened in man which would dispense with the laws and statutes concerning the stealing of another's coat and cloak. Christ wished to show that it was pointless simply to teach, "Thou shalt not steal". You will recall that He said: "a jot shall in no wise pass from the law". But as they were originally understood those words no longer provide any impulse for the present epoch. We must really develop within ourselves the power, under the present circumstances, to offer our cloak to whomsoever has taken our coat. If we follow the precept that "whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them", and especially if this principle can be adopted by all, it would be impossible for anyone to steal another's cloak. No one will steal another's cloak if the victim has the strength of mind to say: whoever takes my coat, to him I will give my cloak also.

In a social order where this attitude of mind prevails there will be an end to stealing. This was the implication of Christ's words. The Kingdom of Heaven is contrasted with the kingdom of the world. We must develop the power of faith. Morality must be founded upon this inner power. Every moral act must be a miracle, not merely a fact of nature. Man must be capable of performing miracles. Since the original world order has

descended from its former high estate, the purely natural order must be replaced by a supernatural moral order which transcends the natural order. It is not sufficient merely to keep to the old commandments which had been given to the world under totally different conditions, nor is it sufficient to change them; man must adapt himself to a supernatural moral order, so that if someone steals my coat I shall be prepared to give him my cloak also, and not proceed against him. The Gospel of St. Matthew clearly states that Christ wished to debar judicial proceedings. In that event there would have been no point in adding to the passage about the coat and cloak the injunction: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" unless Christ had intended to refer to another kingdom, to a kingdom in which miracles take place. For Christ performed signs and wonders through His sovereign, supernal power of faith. No one can do what Christ has done as part of the natural order, if he cannot bring himself to see in man something more than a nature being. Now what Christ demands of us is that, in the moral sphere at least, our ideas should transcend the limitations of external reality. In external life we act on the principle: if someone takes your coat, then get it back again! But on this basis it is impossible to establish a social order that complies with the Christ Impulse. In Christ's kingdom there must be something more in our moral concepts than a mere concern with, or the satisfaction of material interests. Otherwise the following passages would be strange bedfellows. First, "whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Give to every man that asketh of thee and of him that taketh away thy goods ask not again. Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." And then contrast with these precepts the words: "If you smite someone on the right cheek, then see to it that he offers the other also, so that you can experience the satisfaction a second time. If you steal a man's coat, do not hesitate to take his cloak also. If you want anything from anyone, see that he gives it you, etc." This negates the principle: Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

From the point of view of the practical world these injunctions of Christ are meaningless, a mere sequence of empty phrases. They first take on meaning if we presuppose that those who would take an active part in the salvation of the world which shall be initiated by the Christ Impulse through which the world will be raised once again to higher realms, must start from principles which do not apply to the external world only. It will then be possible to give practical effect to moral ideas and conceptions once again.

To understand the Gospels in the light of the Mystery of Golgotha demands spiritual courage, a courage which mankind sorely needs today. And this implies that we must take seriously all that Christ said about the opposition between the kingdom of this world, the consequence of the progressive decline of mankind, and the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who in times such as the present (1917) are celebrating the Easter Festival, may already feel a growing desire to find the courage to understand once again the Mystery of Golgotha and to be united with the Impulse of Golgotha. Everywhere the Gospels speak of courage; they insistently call for courage to follow that Impulse which Christ Jesus has implanted in the evolution of the Earth.

In this lecture I have endeavoured to give you a clearer insight into the Mystery of Golgotha in order to impress upon you that aspect which shows how this Mystery must again be incorporated in the whole Cosmic order and can be understood only when we recognize that the Gospels speak with the tongues of Angels and not with the tongues of men. In the course of its development the academic theology of the nineteenth century has tried to reduce the Gospels to the level of human speech. Our immediate task is to learn to read the Gospels once more as the Word of God. In this connection Spiritual Science will contribute to a better understanding of the Gospels.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. In sexual reproduction of plants fertilization takes place by means of pollination (windblown pollen, transference of pollen by insects, etc.). Asexual reproduction is of a vegetative nature by means of bulbs, bulbules, tubers and runners. The fern shows alternate sexual and asexual reproduction. The spores fall to the ground where a new plant is formed. The plant which develops from a spore is attached to the ground by the prothallus (root-like hairs) which bears a number of male and female organs.

Note 2. Baubo tried to divert the sorrowing Demeter by cynical jests or obscene antics. Goethe applies the name elsewhere to an immodest merry-maker in the Roman carnival, in *Faust*. She appears in the Walpurgis Night scene.

Note 3. Ultra - one holding extreme views of the ultra royalist party in France, 1827. (The party of ultras split into parties of the "right" and the "left".)

Note 4. Ligneous plants are wood-forming plants, e.g. trees, shrubs, etc. Non-ligneous plants are herbaceous plants, e.g. annuals, herbs, etc.

Note 5. On this subject see: Dr. Arnold Wadler, *Der Turm von Babel. Urgemeingenschaft der Sprachen*. Rudolf Geering Verlag, Stuttgart, 1935. Translated as *One Language*: American Press for Art and Science, 1948.

Lecture 5

Berlin, 14th April, 1917

When discussing on various occasions the spiritual history of recent times I have often mentioned the name of Herman Grimm. I should like to begin this lecture by referring to one instinctive remark amongst many others which Herman Grimm made about the pressing needs of recent history, although he was unable to translate into concrete fact the intuition he instinctively felt. He was opposed to the whole modern approach to historical investigation. He rightly felt that this approach set out unconsciously to exclude the Christ Event from the account of human history, to study history which did not allow for the fact that this Event was a decisive factor in the course of human evolution. He wanted, on the other hand, to establish a method of historical investigation that made the Christ the pivot of the historical development of mankind, a method which would demonstrate how important was the impulse that had entered human evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha. As I have indicated, Herman Grimm had an intuitive perception of what might be called Goethe's "Weltanschauung", but because he was denied insight into the spiritual world, it remained an instinctive feeling, a presentiment rather, that he was unable to formulate clearly.

It may seem paradoxical to say that the primary aim of historical enquiry is to expunge the record of the Christ Event from the pages of history. None the less this is a fact and is so deeply rooted in the modern outlook that many are at great pains to prevent the real, deeper significance of the Christ Event from finding a place in the history of human progress. Because this instinctive urge is so firmly rooted in the souls of men there is almost total ignorance of the centuries before and after the Mystery of Golgotha. Not that people did not try to arrive at a full understanding of the historicity of the Mystery of Golgotha - when we take into account the many factors I have already referred to in the course of our lectures it is clear that they made serious efforts in this direction - but they sought to invest what had occurred in those early centuries with their own preconceptions, so that they failed to perceive what had really happened during that period. It seems almost as if there is a conspiracy to present the history of these centuries in such a way that people fail to perceive that the events clearly reveal the powerful impact of the Mystery of Golgotha.

When we recall how our age that claims to be free of all authority is deeply dependent upon a belief in authority, we can measure its unparalleled success in suppressing virtually all knowledge of what occurred in the evolution of mankind during those centuries. And when a personality such as Goethe appears - and in my last lecture I gave a characteristic example of his approach to nature, an approach which led him directly to a view of the world in which nature and morality are one - then the attempt is made to minimize whenever possible or to reject outright that which, if it were rightly understood in such a personality, would lead to a spiritual-scientific view of the world.

We then experience something very remarkable. I have already spoken of Goethe's dissatisfaction with Linnaean botany. He looked for a botany permeated with spirit. As a result of his investigations he was able to discover the spirit as it is revealed in the plant kingdom, that spirit which the plant kingdom cannot attain in its present form because it cannot fully develop its inherent potentialities. I referred to this in my previous lecture. Goethe therefore tried to penetrate more deeply into the potentialities of the plant kingdom - and of the mineral kingdom as well - more deeply than is possible through sense-perception, for sense-perception can only describe the plant kingdom in its present stage of development. It was most inopportune, therefore, that Haller's view of nature ([note 1](#)) should come to the fore in Goethe's day, a view which Haller neatly summed up in the following words: "No created spirit can penetrate into the heart of nature. Fortunate are those to whom she reveals her external shell alone." To which Goethe replied: "I have heard this refrain now for sixty years and am heartily sick of it. Nature has neither kernel nor shell, she is both at once - a unity. First test yourself and find out whether you yourself are kernel or shell. [[original note 1](#)]"

Goethe therefore was strongly opposed to Haller's view because behind his vast spiritual background he had an instinctive knowledge which the nineteenth century has attempted to destroy. The scientist of the nineteenth century was only too familiar with Schopenhauer's dictum: "The world is my idea" or "without the eye there can be no colour, no light". To this Goethe replied quite logically: "It is true that light cannot be perceived without the eye, that without the eye the world would be dark and silent. But, on the other hand, without light there would be no eye; the eye owes its existence to light, it is formed by the light for the light. Out of indeterminate organs light has called forth an organ akin to itself - the eye." If we pursue the matter further something quite extraordinary emerges.

As I indicated in my last lecture, the plant kingdom was really designed to reproduce spontaneously its own kind by metamorphosis. Fertilization was originally intended to serve a completely different purpose. Goethe had an inkling of this and was therefore delighted with Schelver's theory of asexual plant reproduction and had the courage to introduce moral values into his study of plants. He believed that the plant kingdom today exists in a different sphere from the one in which it could have evolved a-sexually by metamorphosis. This decline is due to that momentous event - the Fall of man through the Luciferic temptation. But the forces that would operate in plants if they had been able to fulfil their metamorphosis, that is, if the new individual had been able to develop out of the plant without sexual reproduction - these forces have now become spiritual and are operative spiritually in our environment. These forces are responsible for the sense organs which man possesses today. The words of Lucifer: "Your eyes shall be opened" signified that man would be transported to another sphere where of necessity plants could not develop their full potentiality, but where man's eyes were opened. The action of light was such that, in the Goethean sense, it was able to open men's eyes to the physical world. But this perception of the phenomenal world implied, on the other hand, a loss of spiritual vision. Men could direct their attention to the external world of the senses, but the spirit dwelling in that world could not enter into them; their eyes were closed to the manifestation of the spirit. And thus arose that strange idea which flourished especially in the nineteenth century, namely, that our perception is limited to the sensible world, that we cannot see behind this world. "No created spirit can penetrate into the heart of nature; fortunate are those to whom she reveals her external shell alone." Man, it was believed, could not penetrate to the inmost core of nature. Only a heightened, purified consciousness could achieve this, and Goethe was aware of it. The strange or rather baleful doctrine arose that man perceives only the evidence of the senses. This doctrine, which is simply destructive in the field of natural science but is useful through its very destructiveness, would, in the field of art, if the artist were to accept an analagous teaching and did not struggle and fight against it, destroy his creative imagination. For this view is identical with the one which declares: Goethe's *Faust* survives only in books. We read the printed words but *Faust* is more than the printed words. No one can penetrate into their inner meaning; fortunate are those who are content with their superficial meaning. Now there are certain philologists who are satisfied with the superficial meaning of *Faust*. The printed words must, of course, be there, but in order to understand *Faust* one must grasp the meaning behind them, one must not adhere to the superficial meaning. The words must be

there but the average reader does not attempt to interpret them. People do not realize that that which has become second nature to us in our materialistic age contradicts the most obvious facts.

We can arrive at a different point of view only if we are to some extent in tune with Goethe's idea. I will quote his words once again: "I have heard this refrain now for sixty years and am heartily sick of it. Nature has neither kernel nor shell; she is both at once - a unity. First test yourself and find out whether you yourself are kernel or shell."

One of the mysteries of human evolution is that if we reject the Goethean outlook in favour of Haller's, then it is possible that in our survey of history before and after the Mystery of Golgotha we shall miss its true significance. This may sound paradoxical at first, but it is nonetheless true. If we consider the course of history from the antiGoethean point of view, then we see the pre-Christian era in such a way that we recognize that some undefined historical event took place at the beginning of our era, but in that event, the powerful impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha must be realized within ourselves "where no created spirit shall enter". People fail to perceive that whilst history is moving towards the Mystery of Golgotha, something then intervenes which indicates a decisive turning-point, the most decisive turning-point in human evolution. And they also fail to perceive that the repercussions of this decisive moment are felt in post-Christian history. Instinctively they have felt it necessary to exorcise Goethe's "Weltanschauung", to prevent it from invading modern thought.

In this instinctive endeavour people often betray themselves unwittingly. In saying this I have no wish to impute blame to anyone for I know the objection will be raised that those who politely dismiss the Goethean "Weltanschauung" from the contemporary view of the world are motivated by the best of intentions. We need only recall the words of Antony in *Julius Caesar*: "so are they all, all honourable men". I admit this of course, without hesitation; but what matters is not a man's intentions but what is their effect, what influence they have upon human evolution. Sometimes in their laudable intention to dismiss politely the Christ Event from history by refusing to accept the Goethean way of looking at things, people unwittingly give themselves away. For, if adopted today, the Goethean conception of the world must lead directly to Spiritual Science. I recently came across a pamphlet which has had great influence at the present time. It offers reflections upon history, in particular the history relating to Christ Jesus. The author felt that any possibility of evaluating the Mystery of Golgotha as the decisive turning-point in the history of mankind should be

carefully excluded from the study of history. This is only possible if we assume that we cannot plumb the hidden depths of history but must for ever remain on the surface, that we cannot see into the mysterious workings of history. I will read to you the actual words of the author for they are most interesting:

"I must call attention in particular to the fragmentary character of all our historical knowledge, even the most complete. The wealth of information, the facts of past history are in content and extent far beyond the range of our knowledge, even if we were to pursue our investigations for thousands of years. Of the vast canvas of history only a fraction is accessible to the historian, only what is transmitted through source material and records. Everything else that was not transmitted or could not be transmitted because it belongs to the inner life of the spirit, to the hidden sphere of the psychic life, to the inner domain of the personal life, cannot be 'known' by the historian; it can only be surmised. And this 'surmise', however careful and conscientious our investigation, will at all times be marred by defects and subjective factors. When Goethe says: 'No creative spirit can penetrate into the heart of nature', we must add to this dictum, 'And nobody can penetrate into the inner recesses of history.' "

I have no intention to pass moral judgements. I wish to state quite objectively: thus is Goethe falsified and after so short a space of time! His ideas are distorted; their meaning is reversed and the public is presented with a false picture. And of course the public fails to detect the deception. What I have described here is taken from the book of A. W. Hunziger entitled *Christianity in the Ideological Struggle of Today*. The whole spirit that runs through this book is identical with the spirit that prevails in the existing anti-Goethe "Weltanschauung". Here is a case in point which betrays the sense for "truth" in those who have a large public following today. I told you that this author recently gave a course of lectures which prove conclusively that his thinking is uncorrelated, incoherent, totally corrupted, and that he never makes the slightest attempt to probe beneath the surface. I promised to procure a copy here (since I had been obliged to leave the book behind in Dornach) in order to read to you a few samples, which would confirm the discontinuity, the corruption of his thinking, even

as the passage I have quoted is evidence of his corrupt interpretation of Goethe. Unfortunately I could not procure a copy; the book is so much in demand that it is temporarily out of print.

Such then is the state of affairs today when we are concerned to know the truth. Therefore it is both necessary and justified solemnly to call attention to what is necessary, and to remind you that behind the words, "change your attitude of mind", lies something extraordinarily profound, something that carries historical implications if we are prepared to look for them. The words of the Baptist are not only related to what we can learn of human evolution from the standpoint of Spiritual Science, but also to what can be observed historically if we endeavour to make the Goethean "Weltanschauung" a living reality and do not trim it to meet the desires of a philistine public. It then becomes a powerful impulse towards a new understanding of Christianity and leads directly to Spiritual Science.

I can best make clear to you the real issue in human evolution if I remind you of some of the things I have often discussed with you in detail. I have discussed the existence of the Mysteries in pre-Christian times and I attempted to show the purpose of these Mysteries in the book *Christianity As Mystical Fact* in which I quoted what Plato said about the Mysteries. Today, of course, we can look upon the following utterances of Plato with a condescending smile, the sceptical smile of the philistine: "Those who are initiated into the Mysteries participate in eternal life; the others are doomed." In the book *Christianity As Mystical Fact* I purposely drew attention to these words of Plato, for they bear solemn witness to what Plato had to say about the Mysteries.

The great secret of the Mysteries consisted in this: through a special training the neophyte in pre-Christian times was granted insight into what the mineral and animal kingdoms would have become if they had been able to develop their potentialities without interruption. Thus he would have attained to a knowledge of man and would have been able to say: Had the mineral kingdom and animal kingdoms been able to develop their potentialities to the full, then it would have been possible for man to reveal his true nature in the sphere in which he would then have dwelt. When the neophyte had been initiated into the secrets of nature and had been permitted to see man as he was originally designed to be, he underwent a complete transformation. He then realized that the kingdom of the warm-blooded animals, the ligneous plants and the human kingdom do not in their present form reveal their true origin; they remain unexplained,

because they do not bear within them any direct evidence of their origin. Thus whilst plants and minerals do not develop their potentialities to the full, men and animals do not disclose their origin.

In pre-Christian times - and the real purpose of the Mysteries testifies to this - it was necessary that certain men should be initiated. In earliest times atavistic clairvoyance was common to all; it was only later, when this atavistic clairvoyance was lost, that it became necessary to initiate certain individuals into the secrets of the external nature of the mineral and plant kingdoms in order to know man as he really is. It is equally necessary today to call attention once again to man's origin, to learn to see him from a new angle, so that he reveals once again his origin and is once again integrated into the whole Cosmos. I attempted to show this, albeit imperfectly, in my book *Occult Science: An Outline*, in so far as it is possible today. Just as the Mysteries played their part in the pre-Christian era, so Spiritual Science plays its part in our present epoch, the period following the Mystery of Golgotha. It is only when we realize that the Mystery of Golgotha is a decisive turning-point, the frontier between two historical epochs, that we can gradually arrive at a true understanding of this Mystery. And this will become clear to us if we do not allow ourselves to be blinded by anti-Goethean prejudice in our approach to the early years of the first century, if we examine this period with the spiritual insight that Herman Grimm called for, but did not possess himself.

The Mystery teachers, the hierophants of ancient times, knew full well why they insisted upon a special training for those seeking Initiation, and up to a certain point in time this training was mandatory for those who were to be initiated into the Mysteries. And in ancient Greece especially, Initiation was refused to those who had not undergone rigorous training. The neophyte learned to make the right use in his daily life of the secrets imparted to him and the Greek Mystery Schools especially set great store on this. Just as Christ Jesus refused to disclose the Mysteries of the Kingdom to the Scribes and Pharisees and revealed them only to those whom He had chosen as His disciples, so too the Mystery Schools firmly insisted that their teachings should not be divulged to those who were unworthy of them.

At a time when the Mystery of Golgotha was drawing near it was no longer possible to keep secret the Mystery teachings as in former times. The hierophants were in no way responsible for this. The time for hidden teachings was past. It was Imperial Rome that, without warrant, unveiled the secrets of the Mysteries. The time was approaching when the initiate-

priests could no longer resist the commands of the Caesars. And the violation of the spiritual life by the Roman emperors is reflected in the events of the time. A man such as John the Baptist had clear foreknowledge of this; for those who have the will to see, coming events cast their shadow before. Only those who refuse to open their eyes remain blind to future events. This foreknowledge is reflected in words which, though often ambiguous, are none the less true in every respect. The words of John the Baptist: "Change your attitude of mind for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" might be rendered as follows: "Behold, the accumulated wisdom of the ancient Mysteries which brought salvation to mankind is no more, it has been appropriated by Imperial Rome which has also taken Judaism under its wing. Change, therefore, your attitude of mind, do not look for salvation in that which emanates from Imperial Rome, i.e. in the kingdom of the world, but seek it rather in the things that are not of this world. Receive baptism whereby your etheric body is loosened, so that you may see that which cometh after me and which will bring new Mysteries, for the old Mysteries have been appropriated by force."

In due course the Roman emperors, by Imperial edict, demanded to be initiated into the Mysteries and this became the accepted practice. Augustus was the first to be initiated, but he did not abuse the privilege of Initiation. It was against this practice in particular that John the Baptist protested. He sought to segregate those who wished to be baptized so that they should not look for the future well-being of mankind only in that which emanated from the Roman Empire.

The Emperors who were fully initiated into the secrets of the Mysteries were Caligula, and later, Nero. The fact that Initiates such as Caligula and Nero could acquire knowledge of the Mysteries by force is one of the enigmas of history. Imagine the state of mind of those who realized that this was impending and yet sensed what it signified. Try to enter into the thoughts and feelings of men such as John the Baptist. It would have been natural for them to say: that which must come and will come is the Kingdom of Heaven; it is here that the sacred Mysteries must henceforth be sought, and not in the kingdom of men! History often speaks through its symbols. The Greek philosopher Diogenes went round the market place in Athens carrying a lantern in his hand in search of the "man" who was lost, the "man" who had lost his spiritual vision. Why had this vision been lost? Not because this "man" was unknown, nor because the time was fast approaching when men no longer sought for that which the Mysteries could communicate about the secrets of evolution. Fundamentally, Nero

and Caligula were aware of this, but for this very reason it was kept secret. And like John the Baptist, Diogenes felt, in his own way, that the time was approaching when, because the Mystery teachings were known to have been betrayed, "man" would be plunged in darkness and would have to be sought for with a lantern.

Caligula had been instructed how to live in accordance with the teachings of the ancient Mysteries, how to live in accordance with the spiritual principles embodied in those Mysteries. He knew therefore how to command his consciousness between sleeping and waking so that he could communicate with those spiritual Beings known to the ancient Mysteries as the Moon Gods. From the Mysteries he had learned the art of holding converse with the Moon Spirits during sleep. It pertained to the hidden teaching of the ancient Mysteries to know what lay behind ordinary waking consciousness and to discover how this waking consciousness is modified so that a man learns the secrets of consciousness during sleep. Through the fact that he is aware that his individuality inhabits the spiritual world between sleeping and waking, he realizes that his individuality is not only incarnated here on Earth as a being of nature related to other beings of nature, but that it is related to the spiritual world, to the spiritual Hierarchies. When a man knows the secret of the Moon Gods his relationship to the Sun Gods naturally changes also. Owing to the blunting of his waking consciousness by Lucifer he does not perceive the Sun Gods in the surrounding world, but he can perceive them during sleep with his awakened or clairvoyant consciousness. A man such as Caligula knows from his own experience that from the time he goes to sleep until he awakens the human individuality inhabits the spiritual world, and he is also aware that this individuality in its waking consciousness is not only present in the trappings of external nature, that it participates not only in the physical sunlight, but that it dwells among the Spirits associated with the Sun.

But Caligula had not undergone the necessary training to perceive the Sun Spirits. He was able during sleep to commune with the Moon Gods and this is why in his waking consciousness he addressed Jupiter (whom the ancient Greeks looked upon as Zeus in another sphere) as "brother Jupiter". "Brother Jupiter" was the customary form of address employed by Caligula, for he clearly felt himself to be a citizen of the spiritual world where Jupiter dwelt. He therefore bore himself in such a way that he betrayed by his demeanour that he belonged to the spiritual world. Sometimes he invited homage as Bacchus crowned with oak leaves and with the thyrsus in his hand; at other times he appeared as Hercules with

club and lion skin. Or he would appear as Apollo crowned with a nimbus and the (Apollo) bow in his hand, surrounded by a choir singing his praises. He also appeared as Mercury with winged head and caduceus, and as Jupiter. A tragic poet who was considered to be an authority in these matters and was invited to decide who was the greater, Caligula or Jupiter (and for this purpose Caligula had a statue of the god placed beside him) was scourged because he refused to concede that Caligula was the greater.

What do we learn from this judgement of Caligula? It is instructive to associate with it the words uttered by Lucifer at the temptation in the Garden of Eden: "In the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods" - concluding with the words: "and ye shall know good and evil". The power to distinguish between good and evil was implanted in mankind by a Spirit who could participate in evolution only up to a certain time. This time was now past. It came to an end when John the Baptist first appeared, crying: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He did not add, however, the words "and the kingdom of Lucifer is at an end". John the Baptist, of course, spoke only of the Kingdom of Heaven. Caligula's judgement was clear evidence that the power to distinguish between good and evil no longer existed. When a judicial error had been made on one occasion - an innocent man had been condemned to death because he had been mistaken for the guilty party - Caligula said: "It is of no consequence, because both are equally guilty!" And when Petronius lay under sentence of death Caligula said: "Those who condemned him might just as well be condemned themselves for they are equally guilty." The power to distinguish between good and evil therefore had already ceased to exist at the time of which I am now speaking. We can ascertain the moment in time when this power to distinguish was lost if we are really prepared to wait upon the events of history.

Nero was a similar type of Initiate to Caligula. Fundamentally he was a psycho-analyst - only not so narrow-minded as many of our contemporary psycho-analysts - but on the grand scale, a man of heroic stature. He was the first psycho-analyst because he supported the doctrine that everything in man is determined by the libido - a doctrine that has been revived again in our day by psycho-analysts. Professor Freud, however, is no Nero; he lacks his stature.

But what John the Baptist knew was also known to Nero. For Nero also knew (and in this respect he differs from Caligula) through his initiation into the Mysteries that man was faced by a dilemma, that the truths, the real impulses of the ancient Mysteries had to a certain extent been lost;

they had lost their effectiveness and could be maintained only by external constraint. It was not John the Baptist alone who said that the old world order had come to an end - but it was he who added the words: "Change your attitude of mind, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" Nero also knew that the old order had come to an end, that a decisive turning-point in evolution had been reached. But in addition he was endowed with a diabolic consciousness, he harboured all the demonic impulses of an unworthy initiate. And therefore, like John the Baptist and Christ Jesus, he foresaw the end of the world. If the prophecies of John the Baptist and Christ Jesus concerning the end of the world are rightly understood, there will be no need to interpret them literally in the sense that the world will end at a definite moment in time. We shall realize that the end of the world is already at hand as the Bible prophesied. But you already suspect - and I will say more of this in my next lecture - that the Parousia, the Second Advent, is a reality. Nero knew that a new order was imminent, but it was not to his liking. Hence his characteristic remark that nothing would please him more than to hasten the destruction of the world. I should be delighted, he said, to see the world go up in flames! This was his particular obsession. It was under the impact of this obsession that he ordered Rome to be set on fire. Though historians may doubt his responsibility for the destruction of Rome, it is none the less an established fact. In his delusion he believed that the conflagration would spread far and wide and ultimately engulf the whole world.

I have given a few indications which are intended to show that the world was then nearing its end and would have to begin anew. But in external reality things are interrelated; the old order often persists after the new impulse has already begun to operate. And although since the Mystery of Golgotha the Kingdom of Heaven dwells amongst us, the Roman empire has continued to exist at the same time in a state of continuous decline. And this has led the savants of today, from a wide variety of motives, to emphasize that it is the spirit of the Roman empire, the spirit of the imperialism of the Caesars that persists amongst us today and permeates the early manifestations of Christianity! If we were to pursue the matter further, some strange facts would come to light. In the first place we should discover that the concepts of justice which arose later can be traced back to Roman law, that Roman law which from a Christian point of view is anti-Christian has impregnated the whole of modern life. And we should have to touch upon many other fields of knowledge if we wished to discuss

the survival of Roman imperialism down to our own times, and especially if we wished to discuss all that is concerned with the progressive decline of the Roman Empire.

There is something instinctive in the way Roman history is taught in our schools and in the way in which historians who write that "fable convenue" called history today, and particularly the specialists, convey to mankind a knowledge of the Roman empire which excludes the spirit. Consequently they were undeniably successful in one respect - mankind as a whole never realized the full significance of the historic moment when the Cross was raised on Golgotha. They sought, more or less instinctively, to conceal the real meaning of that event. There is little evidence of the courage which is necessary in order to penetrate to the inner meaning of history. Indeed we find that there are authors with a large public following who are prepared to falsify Goethe, in order to give the impression that even his "Weltanschauung" supported the idea that history was merely an external shell. Influences of this nature affect large areas of our psychic life. Consequently not only are we unable to arrive at a right understanding of a particular issue, but our whole life is coloured by such influences and tends to see things in these terms. Therefore men like Goethe remain voices crying in the wilderness. Furthermore they are vilified in that people attribute to them an attitude to knowledge that is diametrically opposed to the one intended.

But we can also see what are the consequences of such influences. We learn much from Karma, even when we try to give knowledge a form that we can present to our fellow men. Yesterday I came across an observation of one of our contemporaries which is closely connected with that living impulse which I described in our discussions of the Mystery of Golgotha. This contemporary has undergone many changes in the course of his development. Finally he was converted to Roman Catholicism and was active in propagating the Catholic faith. And so we have the remarkable phenomenon of a freethinker who publicly bears witness to Christ, and what is more, from the Catholic standpoint. His views on Christ were coloured by his own preconceptions. And the following testimony of the man is characteristic, it is a typical document of our time. Let me read to you this profession of faith of a modern witness to Christ:

"It is a waste of time to look for the after-life. Perhaps it does not even exist. No matter how we approach this problem we are never vouchsafed an answer. Let us leave all occultism to

adepts and charlatans. Mysticism of every kind is wholly irrational. Let us submit to the authority of the Church because, supported by the authority and practical experience of centuries, it prescribes the code of ethics" (the Church if you please!) "in which nations and children must be instructed. And finally we must submit to the authority of the (Roman) Church because, far from exposing us to the dangers of mysticism, it definitely protects us against them, silences the voices of the mystic groves" (this is his term for the inspiration that could be received from the spiritual world), "expounds the Gospels for us and tailors the liberal anarchism of the Saviour to the needs of modern society."

(Barrès).

Here is the confession of a man who was converted from modern materialism to Christianity. He turned to Christianity because it satisfied his ideal and he was able to accept conversion because those sublime impulses which Christ bequeathed to the world had been adapted to, or sacrificed to the needs of modern society. But the sentiments expressed by this Christian witness are more widely shared than people imagine. People feel a pressing need to present the Christ to the world in a form that is acceptable to modern man. And instinctively they seek to conceal from mankind the truth that Jesus' death was inevitable because Christianity and the Roman empire were incompatible; consequently their co-existence could only lead to the death of Christ. Therefore if we really wish to dwell in a world of light beyond earthly shadows we must ascertain to what extent our modern life is related to a true understanding of Christianity and we must gradually summon up that righteous anger which Christ Himself felt when He had to reply to the frequent objurgations of the Scribes and Pharisees.

I have attempted in this lecture to give you a picture of the happenings in the centuries when Christianity was first established and have drawn your attention to the need to study history in depth, especially that moment of history when the Mystery of Golgotha took place. For this is possible even if we keep within the confines of history alone. But we must develop a sense which will enable us to evaluate the single events of history, a sense

for what is important and expressive of the epoch in question and what is unimportant, a sense for those aspects of the various spiritual streams of the past which still persist and where they persist.

Notes

Note 1. These verses can be found in Goethes *Gott und Welt* - in the poem *Allerdings*.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Albrecht Haller (1708–77), born in Bern, was physiologist, botanist, historian and poet. His poem "Die Alpen" describes in realistic detail the Alpine landscape, rural scenes and the unsophisticated life of the Swiss peasant. It is a faithful record of sense-impressions. Goethe protested in "Allerdings" (quoted here from his collection of poems "Gott and Welt") against the naturalism of Haller which echoed the rationalist philosophy of the Aufklärung, the view that ultimates are inaccessible to human reason, the Kantian view that we can never know das Ding an sich, "the thing in itself".

Lecture 6

Berlin, 17th April, 1917

We shall the better understand the real nature of the events of today and especially of the immediate future if, from a spiritual angle, we see them as the continuation of the events which took place during the early years of Christianity. This may seem paradoxical today. It is difficult to bring home to the majority of people how certain forces which at that time had been implanted in, and had made a deep impact upon the evolution of the Earth and Man, are still operative today, because, in the present climate of contemporary thought they fail to perceive the deeper impulses, the deep underlying forces that are at work in contemporary events. They prefer to approach everything from a purely superficial standpoint. These deeper spiritual forces are not accessible to mankind today because people are not prepared to investigate them. Anyone who wishes to penetrate a little beneath the surface events of our time will find, in many a published document and in the vicissitudes of fortune that befall those who are unaware of the motives that determine their actions, impulses that are often a continuation, a resurgence of certain impulses that were manifested especially in the early centuries of the Christian era. It is not even possible to characterize the outstanding examples of the resurgence of ancient impulses in our present age because people cannot endure their characterization. But those who study the first Christian centuries in Europe from a certain standpoint will be able to detect the forces that are emerging once again and are actively at work. I have therefore attempted to draw your attention to certain phenomena connected with the expansion of Christianity in the first centuries A.D., because, through the appropriate use of the ideas derived from them, much that is taking place today will immediately become clear to you.

I propose to add further information based upon our recent investigations which we can discuss in detail later. Let us first look at this new material so that our later enquiry may bear fruit.

I have often spoken to you of the remarkable fact that the early Roman emperors acquired Initiation by constraint and this explains many of their actions. Consequently they gained knowledge of certain facts connected

with the great impulses of cosmic events, but they exploited this knowledge derived from the Mysteries to their own advantage.

It is most important to realize that the intervention of the Christ Impulse into the historical life of mankind was not merely an event on the physical plane which we can apprehend through a study of the historical facts, but was a genuinely spiritual event. I have already pointed out that the Gospel report that Christ was known to the devils has deeper implications than is usually recognized. We are told that Christ performed acts of healing which are described in the Gospels as the casting out of evil spirits. And we are constantly reminded that the devils knew who Christ was. On the other hand Christ Himself rebuked the devils and "suffered them not to speak for they knew He was the Christ." (Mark I, 34: And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.; Luke IV, 41: And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.). The appearance of Christ therefore was not only a matter for the judgement of men. It is possible that at first people did not have the slightest inkling of what the coming of Christ presaged. But the devils - beings belonging to a super-sensible world - recognized Him. The super-sensible world therefore knew of His advent. The more informed leaders of the early Christians were firmly convinced that the coming of Christianity was not merely an event on the terrestrial plane but something that was related to the spiritual world, something which evoked a radical change in the spiritual world. Without a shadow of doubt the leading spirits of early Christianity were firmly persuaded of this.

Now it is a remarkable phenomenon that the Roman emperors, because of their forced initiation which gave insight into the spiritual world, had a presentiment of the far-reaching importance of the Christ Impulse. There were some emperors. however, who despite their irregular initiation, understood little of these secrets; but there were others who understood so much that they were able to divine something of the power and effectiveness of the Christ Mystery. And it was these more talented, the more perspicacious emperors who began to pursue a definite policy towards Christianity which was then gaining ground. Indeed the first emperor to adopt this policy was Tiberius who succeeded Augustus, though the objection might be raised that Christianity was not as yet widely diffused. This objection, however, is not valid for, when he learned of Christ's birth in Palestine, Tiberius - who had received a partial initiation into the ancient Mysteries - realized its significance. Let us consider for a

moment that policy towards Christianity which began under Tiberius and was pursued by all the initiated emperors. Tiberius announced his intention to admit Christ to the Roman pantheon.

The Roman empire pursued a deliberate policy towards the worship of the gods. In essence it was as follows: when the Romans conquered a people they received the gods of the newly conquered people into their Olympus. They declared that these gods were also deserving of veneration and they were added to the Roman pantheon. The object of this policy therefore was to appropriate not only the material or temporal goods, but also the spiritual forces of the conquered peoples. The initiated Caesars saw in the gods something more than the mere external images; they had a deeper understanding than the people. They knew that the visible image of the gods concealed real spiritual powers pertaining to the different Hierarchies. Their policy was perfectly consistent and comprehensible, for the authoritarian principle of Rome was consciously reinforced by the power which was believed to derive from the assimilation of other gods. And, as a rule, the worship of other gods was accepted not only in an outward and exoteric way, but the Mystery-teachings of other peoples were also taken over by the Roman Mystery-centres and merged with the Mystery-cult of the ancient Roman empire. And since, at that time, it was generally held that it was neither right nor possible to govern without the support of the spiritual powers symbolized by the gods, this practice was taken for granted.

The aim of Tiberius therefore was to integrate the power of Christ, as he conceived it, with the impulses proceeding from the other deities recognized by him and his peoples. The Roman Senate thwarted his intention and nothing came of it. None the less the initiated emperors, Hadrian among them, made repeated efforts to achieve this goal, but constantly met with opposition from the dignitaries who could make their influence felt. And when we examine the objections raised against this policy of the initiated emperors we can form a good idea of what happened at this decisive turning-point in human evolution.

We witness here a remarkable coincidence. On countless occasions Roman writers, influential personalities and large sections of the Roman populace accused the Christians of profaning what others held to be sacred, and vice versa. In other words, the Romans repeatedly emphasized that the Christians were radically different in thought and feeling from the Romans and other peoples - for the other peoples together with their gods had been assimilated by the Romans. Thus everyone looked upon the

Christians as people with a different make-up, people with different feelings and responses. Now this view could be dismissed as a calumny; suchlike accusations are always ready to hand, of course, when one takes a superficial view of history. But we cannot regard this view as a calumny when we realize that many of the opinions of earlier times and many of the contemporary opinions concerning the Mystery of Golgotha have passed over verbatim into Christian teaching. To put it more clearly, the Christians expressed their sentiments in words that could be found amongst many of their contemporaries. One of these was Philo of Alexandria ([note 1](#)), a contemporary of Christ, who probably had first-hand knowledge of what was later found in the Christian writings. Philo makes the following remarkable statement: "According to traditional teachings I must hate that which others love" (he is referring to the Romans) "and love that which others hate." If you bear this statement in mind and turn to the Gospel of St. Matthew, you will find countless passages which echo this statement of Philo. And so we can say that Christianity has developed, as it were, out of a spiritual aura which required people to say, "we love what others hate". This means - and this saying was quoted in the early Christian communities and served as one of the fundamental principles of Christian teachings - that Christians themselves openly acknowledged what others reproached them with. It was not therefore a calumny; it accorded with the Roman view: "the Christians love what we hate and hate what we love". And the Christians, for their part, said exactly the same of the Romans.

It is clear therefore that something wholly different from anything that had been known before now entered human evolution - otherwise it would not have had so great an impact. Of course, if we wish to understand this whole situation we must realize that the new impulse had come from the spiritual worlds. Many who were contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, such as Philo, caught fleeting glimpses of it which they described each after his own fashion. And so many of the passages from the Gospels which are interpreted expediently today, as in the case of Barres, whom I mentioned at the conclusion of my last lecture, will be seen in their true light when we cease to interpret them to suit our convenience, but when our interpretation is determined by the whole spirit of the age. There are strange interpretations in Barres; indeed Biblical exegesis assumes very strange forms nowadays. Much that Philo says agrees closely with the Gospels and I would like to quote a passage which shows that because he was not inspired to the same extent as were the Evangelists later, his style was rather different from theirs. As a talented writer in the popular sense he made less heavy demands upon the reader than the Evangelists. In one

notable passage Philo gave expression to something that was occupying the hearts and minds of the men of his time. He says: "Do not concern yourselves with the genealogical records or the documents of despots, take no thought for the things of the body; do not attribute to the citizen civic rights or civil liberties, which you deny to those of humble origin or who have been purchased as slaves in the market, but give heed only to the ancestry of the soul!" If the Gospels are read with understanding one cannot fail to recognize that something of this attitude of mind, albeit raised to a higher level, pervades the Gospels and why therefore an opportunist like Barres can write the passage I quoted to you in my last lecture. We should do well to bear his words in mind and I propose therefore to read them to you once again.

"It is a waste of time to look for the after-life. Perhaps it does not even exist. No matter how we approach the question we are never vouchsafed an answer. Let us leave all occultism to adepts and charlatans. Mysticism of every kind is totally irrational. Let us submit to the authority of the Church because, with the traditional teaching and practical experience of centuries she prescribes the code of ethics in which nations and children must be instructed. And finally we must submit because, far from exposing us to the dangers of mysticism, she actively protects us against them, silences the voices of the mystery teachings, expounds the Gospels and tailors the liberal anarchy of the Saviour to the needs of modern society."

In the passage which I quoted from Philo we can see, since it is echoed again and again in the New Testament, what lies behind this whole movement. Philo's reference to the ancestry of the soul carries profound implications; he implies something that is opposed to the leading ideas of the Roman empire. For the Roman empire recognized only physical inheritance in its various forms, and the whole social order was founded on this principle. And suddenly the cry was raised: "Take no thought for the ancestry of the body but give heed only to the ancestry of the soul!" One could hardly imagine a more radical breach with the fundamental principles of the Roman empire, a greater contrast. And this contrast was raised to a higher level by the advent of Christ Jesus - indeed the world had been waiting for this moment - and was vigorously opposed to the existing world order of that time.

The Roman emperors would have been only too pleased to receive Christ into their pantheon as a new god amongst the other gods though He struck at the very roots of their society, for the Christ God who embodies a far deeper reality would thereby have become one of their own gods. But the initiated emperors soon realized that the advent of the Christ would be fraught with difficulties for them. When initiation of the emperors, as was the case in Rome after Augustus had been made obligatory by imperial decree, the forces of initiation exercised a powerful influence in the external world. They influenced the policies of the emperors and were operative in the measures and impulses which shaped society. The aims and intentions of the initiated emperors were more clearly defined, more uncompromising than those of the ordinary initiate. Suppose, for example, that one of the emperors who had received initiation had said: "Now John the Baptist baptized with water. Through this baptism by water the etheric body was loosened" (the initiated emperors were of course aware of this) "and the candidates for baptism thereby gained insight into the inner structure of the spiritual world." They were aware that a decisive turning-point in the history of the world had now been reached. This was known to those whose etheric bodies had been loosened through total immersion. Let us now suppose that one of these emperors had said: "I accept the challenge" - such things were not unknown in the Mysteries "I am prepared to do battle against that which has entered the world at this decisive moment in history!" - One must realize how autocratic, self-willed, these emperors were. But they never dreamt for a moment that they might be powerless against the will of the gods; they were determined - and it was for this purpose they had themselves initiated - to try issue with the spiritual world-impulses and to stem the tide of world-evolution. Such things had already happened before; and they are happening before our eyes today, only people are unaware of it.

Here is a historical incident that confirms the hypothesis I have suggested above. In the age of Constantine, Licinius ruled over the Eastern part of the empire. He took it upon himself to challenge the gods. He decided to celebrate a cult act, for these ritual performances symbolized the struggle against the spiritual powers. The ceremony was intended to demonstrate publicly that he had undertaken to challenge the gods. In other words, he wished to ridicule baptism in the eyes of his fellow men (for it was baptism that had made known to the world that the turning-point in world-history had come), and so challenge Christianity and blunt the force of the Christian impulse. To this end a festival was organized at Heliopolis. It was arranged that an actor, Gelasius, should be dressed in the white robes of a

priest and be immersed in water. It was to be presented as a spectacle, as a burlesque of Christian baptism. Gelasius, clothed in white, was immersed in the water and was taken out again. He was then exposed to the assembled populace as an object of ridicule. And what happened? Gelasius turned to the people and said: "I have now become a Christian and I will remain a Christian with all the strength at my command." Licinius had received his answer from the spiritual world. Baptism was no longer an object of ridicule; the effects of baptism were demonstrated for all the world to see. He (Licinius) recognized that the critical moment in world history had arrived. This initiated Emperor had taken it upon himself to challenge the gods and had received his answer.

It is hardly possible for us today to form an idea of the significance of this answer. It was seen by all, even by the heathen, as a complete vindication of baptism, a valid answer, an answer that had to be reckoned with. And those who at that time were initiated into the secrets of world events received a momentary illumination from another source and were granted insight into the meaning and import of Christianity. Widely different customs which had an occult meaning had survived from ancient times. Under the Antonines, for example, the Sibyls delivered their oracles. People consulted them and took their instructions from them. One important oracle of the time of the Antonines predicted that Rome was doomed to destruction, that ancient Rome would not survive! Now oracular utterances, though often ambiguous and open to various interpretations, can be correctly interpreted. This particular oracle gave out this strange prophecy: "Rome will perish and the place where the city once stood will become the haunt of foxes and wolves." This was a sign that had to be reckoned with. People naturally looked for a deeper meaning but they felt that the turning-point of world history had arrived. The might of Rome would be extinguished. Foxes and wolves would lord it amongst the ruins and take over in her place. Oracles of course often speak ambiguously, but occasionally, even in those times, the aura of initiation was transmitted through an ordinary, uninitiated sage, so that he frequently uttered remarkable prophecies which could only be construed as referring to the turning-point of world evolution.

In my last lecture I spoke of Nero and told you what this initiate emperor really thought. He wished to set the whole world on fire so that he might witness its destruction in person. If Rome as the centre of the world power was to be destroyed, at least he wished to determine for himself the manner of its destruction. Seneca once warned him in a remarkable statement which can be understood only if we are aware that the Roman

emperors who were in possession of the principle of initiation believed themselves to be endowed with divine authority which the Christians refused to honour. Seneca, who knew no other way of bringing his message home to the tyrant, said to Nero: "You have absolute power, you have unlimited authority, you can even order the death of those whom you think may contribute in some way to the world order that will follow the downfall of Rome. But there is one thing a despot cannot do, he cannot compass the death of his successor." These words had profound implications. Seneca was referring of course not to the potential successor if the occasion should arise, but to the actual successor. Seneca wished to indicate that death set a limit to the Emperor's power. The belief that Rome was doomed had an important influence, especially upon imperial circles.

The Christians reacted differently from the Romans to this tradition. We are here faced with a paradoxical situation. The Christians, for their part, championed the idea that Rome would not perish, that her dominion would endure to the end, which always implied the end of an era. It was the Christians, therefore, who upheld the view that the dominion of Rome would endure, that it would outlive the time of the foxes and wolves. Not that the Christians would have denied - if I may risk an oracular statement - that Rome would become the habitat of wolves and foxes. They agreed that it was possible, but they maintained, on the other hand, that her power would endure.

We must bear in mind these different attitudes or opinions. Many of them in fact have proved to be correct. For example, the mother of Alexander Severus who was a pupil of Origen - although suspected of heresy, he was none the less regarded as a kind of Church Father - had managed to set up a kind of pantheon for her private use. In her private sanctuary she revered equally Abraham, Christ, Orpheus and Apollonius of Tyana and she considered the worship of these four deities was indispensable for her salvation. As a devoted pupil of Origen she found that this practice was in no way contrary to his teaching.

When we consider these different shades of opinion which I have tried to outline briefly, we find that they reflect the atmosphere of the first three centuries of our era. And during this period we find repeated attempts by initiated emperors to come to terms with Christianity and to incorporate Christianity into their religious system. Despite the recorded persecutions of the Christians this was the Imperial policy up to the fourth century.

Now in the fourth century a remarkable personality appeared on the scene in the shape of the Emperor Constantine (note 2), a contemporary of Licinius. He was an outstanding personality both politically and spiritually. I have indicated on other occasions how spiritual forces were at work in the personality of Constantine and to some extent guided him in the difficult administration of the Western empire. Today I should like to consider him from another standpoint.

His spiritual make-up was such that he was unable to find a right relationship to the principles of ancient initiation. In contrast to his predecessors and contemporaries he shrank from coercing the hierophants into granting him initiation into the ancient Mysteries. The Sibylline oracles and the prophecies of Rome's impending downfall weighed heavily upon his soul. He was also aware of the Christian teaching that Rome would endure to the end of time. He was well informed on these matters. But he shrank from initiation into the Mysteries; he shrank from carrying the war against the Christians into the realm of the Mysteries. This has significant implications.

What history tells of Constantine is extremely interesting and shows how he tried to find a modus vivendi with Christianity by other means, how he set himself up as the protector of Christianity and introduced Christianity, as he understood it, into the Roman empire. But he could not incorporate his form of Christianity into the old principle of initiation. He was faced with an insurmountable difficulty because the Christians themselves and their leaders were vigorously opposed to this. They felt, and many even realized, that the mission of Christianity was to unveil the ancient Mystery teachings which until then had been kept secret in the Mystery temples. It was their desire that the truths hidden in the Mysteries should be proclaimed to the whole world and should not be restricted to the temples. Fundamentally, the aim of these initiated emperors was to deny Christianity to the people and to restore it again to the Mystery temples. In that event, they believed, people would be initiated into Christianity in the same way as they had been initiated into the secrets of the ancient pagan Mysteries. It was difficult for Constantine to achieve his goal in face of the objectives pursued by the Christians. The Christians saw in the turning-point of world history an event of a spiritual, non-temporal order. And their claim that the Roman empire would endure must be understood as an expression of a wholly spiritual impulse. And this is clearly reflected in the secret teachings of the early Christians. In maintaining that the Roman empire would endure they sought to anticipate what actually came to pass. I pointed out recently that the deeper impulse of the Roman empire has not ceased, that

it still lives on, not only in jurisprudence, but in other domains also, which, to those who do not probe more deeply, appear to be a new innovation. But in fact we are simply witnessing a prolongation, an extension of the driving forces behind Imperial Rome. Although the old Roman empire is no more, its spirit still lives on and bites deeply into our civilization.

Certain people maintain that we are haunted today and will always be haunted by the ghost of the old Roman empire. And this is accepted as a truism by the educated, even today, and is unlikely to change. The Christians wished to draw attention to this. But at the same time they contended that Christianity will always contain an element that is antagonistic to the Roman empire, for the spiritual impulse in Christianity will always be at odds with the materialism of Rome. And this contention of the Christians was prophetic.

You will now understand more clearly why the Senators and the Roman Emperors were alarmed, for they naturally associated the decline that was prophesied with the external empire which they saw slowly crumble under the impact of Christianity. And the emperor Constantine shared this view. Although not himself initiated, he was aware that a primordial wisdom had once existed in ancient times when man possessed atavistic clairvoyance. This wisdom had been transmitted to later ages, had been preserved by the priesthood, but had gradually become corrupted. In Rome too, Constantine said to himself: our social order embodies something that is associated with the institutions of this primordial wisdom, but we have simply buried it beneath the social order of a materialistic and secular empire. This was expressed in a pregnant symbol that is an "Imagination", and not only an "Imagination", but also an historical cult act, for these "Imaginations" often took the form of cult acts. People knew that in earlier times wisdom was not an arbitrary invention of man but was a revelation from the spiritual worlds. They knew that in primordial times priests had preserved this wisdom, not in Rome, of course, but across the sea in Ilium, in Troy where they originally dwelt. And this is expressed in the legend of the palladium, the so-called image of Pallas Athene which fell from Heaven in Troy, was preserved in a sanctuary, was then transferred to Rome and buried under a porphyry pillar. In all that was connected with this symbolical cult act people felt that they were able to trace back their civilization to the ancient wisdom which they had received from the spiritual world, but that they could not reach the heights which this wisdom had known in ancient Troy.

Such were the feelings Constantine harboured; and he also felt that even if he were to be initiated into the later Mysteries, they would be of little help to him; they would not lead him to the palladium, to the ancient primordial wisdom. He therefore decided to challenge the cosmic powers after his own fashion in order to save the Roman empire from destruction. He realized that this must be achieved in accordance with certain cosmic impulses and that it would have to take place in accordance with certain cult acts which were publicly enacted for all the world to see. He decided therefore to transfer the capital from Rome to the site of ancient Troy, to have the palladium dug up and taken back to Troy. The plan miscarried. Instead of establishing a new Rome on the site of Troy, he decided to found a new city, Constantinople, transfer the power to her and thus save declining Rome for future ages. By these means Constantine hoped to stem the tide of world evolution. He was prepared for Rome to become the habitat of foxes and wolves as the Sibylline oracle had foretold, but at the same time he wished to transfer the hidden impulses of Rome to a new site and so restore them to their original source. Constantine therefore embarked upon the ambitious plan to found Constantinople, and the work was completed in A.D. 326. He intended that the foundation of the city should coincide with this turning-point in world history. He therefore chose to lay the foundation stone at the moment when the Sun stood in the sign of the Archer and the Crab ruled the hour. He followed closely the indications of the cosmic signs. He wished to make Constantinople famous and to transfer to her the enduring impulse of eternal Rome. He therefore had the porphyry pillar (which was later destroyed by storms) transported to Constantinople. He ordered the palladium to be dug up and to be placed beneath the pillar. He also treasured among his possessions some relics of the Cross and a few nails that had originally secured the Cross. The relics of the Cross were made into a kind of frame to hold a much prized statue of Apollo and the nails into a nimbus with which he was crowned. This statue was set up on the porphyry pillar and an inscription was engraved on it which read somewhat as follows: That which sheds its beneficent influence here shall, like the Sun, endure for all time and proclaim the fame of its founder Constantine to all eternity! These things must of course be taken more or less imaginatively, but with this qualification, that they refer at all times to actual historical events.

This whole story has passed over into legend and, transmuted, lives on in the following legend: the palladium which is a symbol for a particular centre of primordial wisdom had been deposited originally in the secret Mystery Centres of the priest-initiates of Troy. It came to light for the first

time when it was transported by circuitous routes from Troy to Rome. It saw the light of day a second time when it was transferred from Rome to Constantinople on the orders of Constantine. And those who believe the legend say that it will see the light of day a third time when it is transported from Constantinople to a Slavonic city. This legend is still vitally alive and survives in many things and under manifold forms. Today many things which appear in their purely physical aspects conceal a deeper layer of meaning.

Constantine therefore actively strove to prevent the downfall of the Roman empire in spite of his firm belief in the prophecy of the Sibylline oracle. He wanted to save Rome from herself.

In what I have told you I want you to recognize that in the historical personality of Constantine psychic impulses were at work which had significant and far-reaching effects. And bear in mind also what the earlier Christians and their leaders maintained: "The Roman empire will endure and the Christ Impulse we have received will also be realized and will ever be present amongst us." Here we see two parallel phenomena of importance which have a significant bearing upon the different currents which have influenced the cultural development of the West. In particular you will be able to form an idea of the attitude towards the Roman empire in the early Christian centuries and in the age of Constantine, and of the sharply conflicting opinions on the way in which the future was envisaged. And you will perhaps find criteria which will enable you to see many of the later events in their true light. And we can only see many of these later events in proper perspective if we answer the following question: How far does the later development of Christianity up to now accord with its original intention and what must be done to bring it into closer rapport with that intention?

It remains for me to speak of a still more important moment in evolution in connection with the expansion of Christianity, the moment when an initiated Emperor called Julian the Apostate came face to face with this emergent Christianity. From the results of our historical enquiry we shall then be in a position to discuss in this context the further question: How can we prepare our souls to draw near to the Christ whose presence will be experienced in the etheric world in the present century? What steps must we take, especially in our present age, to draw near to Him?

In my next lecture I should like to discuss the trend of events under Julian the Apostate and to indicate the relation of our present age to the Etheric Christ in so far as it is permissible to touch upon this question today.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Philo of Alexandria or Philo Judaeus (circa 30 B.C.–A.D. 40) was an important representative of Hellenistic Judaism. He believed that the Pentateuch had divine authority. In his "Allegories of the Sacred Law", a commentary on Genesis, he regarded the characters in Genesis as allegories of states of soul. He is considered to be the first religious philosopher (cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Philo*. (2 vols.) 1947).

Note 2. Constantine was firmly convinced of his divine mission to rule over the world and to establish the orthodox teaching of the Church. He prided himself on having settled the Donatist conflict and the Arian heresy. On his initiative the Council of Nicaea was compelled to introduce the doctrine of the "filioque" which split the Church for a century and a half.

Lecture 7

Berlin, 19th April, 1917

One of the outstanding figures in world history is Julian the Apostate (a successor of Constantine) who fell by the hand of an assassin in the campaign against the Persians in the year A.D. 363 (note 1). Julian occupies a special place in the history of the West. His life and career show how the course of world history is determined by the clash of contending forces. I pointed out in my previous lecture that in Constantine we have a personality who had to abandon the former coercive measures practised by the majority of the earlier emperors when they sought initiation into the Mysteries. To compensate for this he therefore did everything in his power to advance the cause of exoteric Christianity in the Empire.

Now from earliest childhood Julian was held in low esteem by the Imperial family and their adherents. In the age with which we are dealing it was the custom to anticipate the future of an individual such as Julian by resorting to prenatal prophecies. The Imperial family had been obliged to conclude from the predictions of the Sibylline oracles that Julian would actively oppose the policy pursued by the Emperor Constantine. From the first, therefore, they tried to prevent Julian from being raised to the purple. It was decided that he should be murdered while still a child and preparations were made to have him butchered along with his brother. There was a strange aura attaching to Julian which inspired terror in those around him and countless stories relating to his personality testify to the fact that there was something uncanny about him. On one occasion during his campaign in Gaul a somnambulist cried out as the army passed by: "There is the man who will restore the old Gods and their images."

The appearance of Julian at this moment in history must be seen as something predestined, something deeply significant. As often happens in such cases his life was spared lest his murder should bring greater disaster in its train. People persuaded themselves that whatever steps he might take against the policies of Constantine could be quickly nullified. And precautionary measures were taken to neutralize the dangerous tendencies of Julian's make-up and his leanings towards Paganism. In the first place it was decided to give him a sound Christian education which accorded with the ideas of Constantine. It was wasted effort and met with no response.

Anything which had survived from the ancient Hellenic traditions fascinated him. Where powerful forces are at work in such a personality they ultimately prevail. And so, because his mentors sought to protect him from dangerous associations he was driven into the arms of Hellenic tutors and was introduced to Hellenic culture and civilization. When he grew older Julian learned how the neo-Platonic philosophers were imbued with the spirit of Hellenism and in consequence he was finally initiated into the Mysteries of Eleusis. Thus at a time when the Roman Emperors had already dispensed with the principle of initiation, an initiate in the person of Julian once again sat on the throne of the Caesars.

Everything that Julian undertook must be judged in the light of his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries (and history has been at great pains to misrepresent his actions in every possible way). In order to form a true estimate of such a personality as Julian we must give due weight to the effects of this initiation. What spiritual benefit had Julian derived from his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries? Through direct spiritual perception he learned the secrets of cosmic and world evolution, the spiritual origin of the world and how spiritual forces operate in the planetary and solar systems. He learned to understand certain things which were quite incomprehensible to his contemporaries (with the exception of a few Greek initiates), namely, the relation of solar influences and the Being of the Sun to the old Hermes-Logos. He understood the meaning of the Pythagorean maxim: "Thou shalt not speak against the Sun!" This does not refer, of course, to the physical sun but to the Spirit which is concealed behind the Sun. He knew that the ancient sacred traditions ascribed the origin of the world to the spiritual Being of the Sun and above all that man must recover his relation to the spiritual Sun if he is to penetrate to the source of his existence.

Julian therefore was aware of the ancient Sun-Mystery. He realized that the physical sun is but the external form of a spiritual Sun which can be awakened in the soul of man through initiation, and when awakened can reveal to him the intimate connection between the universe and the historical life of man on Earth. It was clear to Julian that the world can never be ordered on a basis of rationalism, that only those who are able to be in touch with the Sun Logos are in any way fitted to have a voice in the ordering of the world. He had to recognize that the movements of the celestial bodies and the great historical movements of mankind are governed by a common law.

Even a Church Father such as St. Chrysostom was aware of the existence of an ancient Sun-Mystery, since he went so far as to declare that men are so dazzled by the physical sun that they cannot penetrate to the spiritual Sun. The soul of St. Chrysostom was still illumined by a ray of wisdom from olden times, but in those around him hardly a trace of it remained. It is clear that scarcely a vestige of understanding remained for that method of awakening the soul to the secrets of the universe which had been communicated through the ancient Mysteries and which were certainly communicated to Julian who was one of the last to be instructed in that method. He was therefore surrounded entirely by adherents of Constantine, by those who echoed the thoughts of Constantine. It is true that in the West, up to the end of the ninth century we find outstanding personalities even amongst the Popes, who were still inspired by the ancient Mystery wisdom; but the real opposition came from Rome which set out to nullify the efforts of these individuals and to pursue in its place a definite policy of its own towards the traditions of the ancient Mysteries. I shall say a few words about this later. In effect, Julian only came in contact with a very exoteric form of Christianity.

Through complicated psychological processes which are difficult to describe in detail he lighted upon the idea of utilizing the last surviving remnants of initiation in order to ensure continuity in evolution. In reality he was not an opponent of Christianity; he simply favoured the continuity of Hellenism. He was more interested in promoting Hellenism than in opposing Christianity. With passionate enthusiasm he strove to arrest the decline of Hellenism and to transmit its traditions to posterity. He was opposed to any sudden break in continuity, any radical change. As an initiate of Eleusis he knew that the policies he proposed to embark upon could not be realized unless one was in close touch with the spiritual forces operating in the sensible world, and that if we seek to introduce new impulses into world evolution by appealing to physical and psychic forces alone, then we are "speaking against the Sun" in the Pythagorean sense. Julian had no such intention; indeed his purpose was quite the reverse. In effect he accepted one of the greatest challenges that it is possible to imagine.

Now we must not forget that in Rome at that time and throughout the whole of Southern Europe there was active opposition to this challenge. Remember that up to the time of Constantine, in large sections of the population the last remnants of ancient cults had been preserved. Today the question of miracles is a real thorn in the side of Biblical exegesis, because people refuse to read the Gospels from the standpoint of the age

to which they, the Gospels, belong. The question of miracles raised no problems for the contemporaries of the Evangelists, for they were aware of the existence of rites and ceremonies from which men derived spiritual forces which they were able to control.

Whilst, on the one hand, Christianity was introduced as a political measure which culminated in Constantine's edict of toleration, so attempts were made on the other hand, to suppress the ancient pagan rites. Endless laws were promulgated by Rome which forbade the celebration of rites which derived their power from the spiritual world. These laws, it is true, declared that the old superstitions must cease, that no one may practise ritual magic in order to injure others and no one may communicate with the dead, and so on, but these were only pretexts. The real purpose of these laws was to eradicate root and branch any traces of pagan cults which had survived from ancient times. Wherever possible, history has endeavoured to hush up or to conceal the real facts of the situation. But our earliest historical records were the work of priests and monks in the monasteries (a fact which modern science, which claims to be "objective and to accept nothing on authority", studiously ignores). The avowed object of the monasteries (i.e. priests and monks) was to suppress all knowledge of the true character of antiquity and to prevent the essential teachings of the pagan Mysteries from being transmitted to posterity.

And so Julian saw the vanishing world of antiquity in a totally different light from the forerunners of Constantine. Through his initiation he knew that the human soul was related to the spiritual world. He could only hope to succeed in the task he had undertaken - to use the forces of the old principle of initiation in order to further the continuity of human evolution - by resisting the current attitude to man's evolution. Because of his initiation Julian was in reality a man with a profound and sincere love of truth, a sense for truth that was totally foreign to Constantine. Indeed Julian's profound respect for truth has not its like in the history of the West. With his deep instinct for truth that had been fortified by his initiation he turned his attention to teachings of the universities and schools of his day. He found that the Christian dogma had been introduced into the schools in the form that had existed since the time of Constantine. Armed with this dogma the teachers gave their personal interpretations of the Hellenistic writers whose works were centred round the figures of Zeus, Apollo, Pallas Athene, Aphrodite, Hermes-Mercury and so on. And Julian said to himself: "These teachers are the most outrageous sophists. How can they presume to expound ancient writings whose authors were convinced that the old gods were still living forces in the world? On what

grounds do these teachers presume to interpret these writings when, by the very nature of their dogmas, they must deny the existence of these gods?" Julian's instinct for truth was outraged. He therefore forbade those who, by virtue of their Christian dogma were unable to believe in the old gods, to expound the ancient writings in the schools. If today we had the same honesty of purpose as Julian you can well imagine how much would be excluded from the curricula of our schools!

Julian wished to meet the challenge of the current trends which none the less were a necessity from another point of view. In the first place he had to come to terms with the Gospels, which had arisen in a totally different way from the knowledge imparted to him in the Eleusinian Mysteries. He could not reconcile himself to the way in which the Gospels had arisen. He said to himself: If that which is manifested in the Christ is a genuine inspiration that stems from the Mysteries then it must be possible to find it in the Mysteries, for it must have been incorporated in the Mystery-teachings. He wanted to ascertain if it were possible to continue the ancient Mystery-teachings. In the first place he was only familiar with the Christianity of his time in its exoteric aspect. He decided to make an experiment - not the kind of experiment that relies purely on human expedients (that would have seemed childish to him) - but to undertake an experiment that had a spiritual significance. He reasoned as follows: It has been prophesied that the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed, not a single stone would remain standing. This has indeed come to pass. But if this prophecy could be discredited, if its fulfilment could be prevented then the mission of Christianity could not be accomplished. At the cost of great capital outlay Julian decided therefore to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. A large number of workmen was assembled to begin the reconstruction. Now the whole affair must be regarded from a spiritual standpoint; it was not men alone, but gods, whom Julian set out to challenge. And it is an undoubted fact that can be demonstrated historically - in so far as historical facts can be demonstrated, even externally, although internal evidence leaves no doubt of their truth - that each of the workmen engaged on the work of reconstruction had a vision; he saw tongues of flame licking over the place where he was working and was obliged to withdraw. The undertaking was abandoned; but we recognize the high purpose that inspired Julian to undertake this venture.

Julian's experiment miscarried. After he had failed to discredit the prophecy of the destruction of the temple, he decided to approach the problem from another angle. His new plan was no less boldly conceived. The time had not yet come when the evolution of Europe had been

influenced by that spiritual current which owed its origin to the fact that one of the greatest Church Fathers, Augustine ([note 2](#)), could not rise to a certain idea because at that time he lacked the necessary spiritual development. You know perhaps from your study of history - and I have referred to this on frequent occasions when discussing the Faust legend - that Augustine had originally been a Manichaeism. Manichaeism originated in Persia and claimed to understand Christ Jesus better than Rome and Constantinople. This doctrine (unfortunately it is not yet permissible today to unveil the ultimate secrets of this doctrine, even in our present circle) filtered through into Europe in later times in various guises and still survived, though in a corrupt form, in its ramifications in the sixteenth century when the Faust legend was first recorded. By a happy intuition the revival of the Faust legend by Goethe preserved something of the spirit of Manichaeism. Julian thought on the grand scale; his thought embraced all mankind. In the presence of a man such as Julian we realize only too clearly how limited are the thoughts of ordinary mortals. The doctrine of the "Son of Man" will of necessity assume different forms according to our capacity to form conceptions of the real nature of man himself. Our conceptions of the "Son of Man" must therefore depend upon our conceptions of man; the one involves the other. In this respect men differ widely. At the present time people have only the most superficial understanding of such matters.

In Sanscrit the word for man is Manushya. This word expresses the basic feeling which a large number of people associate with the idea of *humanity*. When we use this vocable to describe man we are referring to the spiritual aspect of man, we are appraising man primarily as a spiritual being. If we wish to express the idea that man is spirit and his physical aspect is only the manifestation of spirit, then we use the word "Manushya".

From our earlier discussions you know that we can study man from another angle. We can consider him mainly from his psychic aspect. We shall then give more attention to man as soul than to man as spirit; his physical aspect and everything that is related to his external aspect will be of secondary importance. We shall then be able to characterize man from the information derived from his inner life which is reflected in the eye or in the fact that he holds his head erect. If you look into the derivation of the Greek word anthropos you will find that it gives a rough indication of this aspect. Those who characterize man with the word Manushya or some similar vocable see him primarily as spirit, as that which descends from the

spiritual world. Those who characterize man with a word resembling the Greek word anthropos (and this applies especially to the Greeks themselves) are expressing his soul nature.

Now there is a third possibility; we can concentrate on the external, the corporeal or somatic aspect, which is the product of physical inheritance. We shall then characterize man with the word homo that signifies (approximately) the procreator or the procreated.

Here are three conceptions of man. Julian who was aware of this trichotomy felt the need to look for a spiritual interpretation of the "Son of Man". The thought occurred to him: "I have already been initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries. Perhaps it is possible to have myself initiated into the Persian Mysteries and into the Mysteries which are in accordance with the doctrine of the Manichaeans. By this means perhaps I may be able to achieve my aim - the continuity of the pagan Mysteries." This was a momentous thought. Just as Alexander's campaign had deeper motives than the mere conquest of Asia, so Julian's expedition had other motives than the conquest of Persia. He wished to find out whether he could further his objective with the help of the Persian Mysteries.

In order to understand the problem that faced Julian we must ask: What was it that Augustine could not understand in Manichaeism? I have already said that the time had not yet come to reveal the ultimate secrets of Manichaeism but it is possible to give a few indications. In his youth, Augustine was deeply attached to these teachings and they made a profound impression on him. He later exchanged the teachings of Manichaeism for Roman Catholicism. What did he not understand in Manichaeism? Why did he reject it, what was beyond his comprehension in Manichaeism?

The Manichaeans did not cultivate abstract ideas which divorced the world of thought from the world of reality. The Manichaeans and the initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries were alike incapable of abstract thinking. In earlier lectures I attempted to show the difference between logical concepts and concepts in conformity with reality. The basic principle of Manichaeism was to cultivate only those ideas which are consistent with reality. Not that unreal ideas do not play a part in life; unfortunately they play a large part in life, especially at the present day, and the part they play is disastrous. And so, amongst other things, it was consistent with Manichaeism to form representations that were not purely abstract, but which were sufficiently powerful to intervene in the external world and to

play an active part in that world. The conception of Christ Jesus that was commonly held by people at that time would have been quite impossible for the Manichaeans. And what was this conception? They had a somewhat nebulous idea of the Christ who had incarnated in Jesus through whom a change had been brought about in Earth evolution. Ideas about Christ have become incredibly vague, especially in the nineteenth century.

If we are really honest and sincere we cannot say that the notions afforded by Christian dogma about Christ and His mission will take us very far. If Christian ideas are not powerful enough to envisage an Earth which is not the graveyard of humanity, but the seed-bed of a transformed humanity, if we cannot envisage Earth evolution differently from the natural scientists of today who predict that life on the Earth will one day become extinct, then all our conceptions of Christ are vain. For even if we believe that Christ has brought new life to the Earth, it is difficult for us to imagine that matter can be so spiritualized that we can envisage it as capable of being transmuted from its present earthly condition to its future condition. We have need of far more powerful ideas in order to be able to conceive of the Earth's metamorphosis to the Jupiter condition.

I said recently in a public lecture that natural science thinks - or rather calculates - that if the forces of nature as they exist today were to persist for millions of years, then a condition would arise according to Dewar (I mentioned in Lecture Three his lecture before the Royal Institute) when, if the walls of a room were painted with albumen, it would be possible to read the newspaper in its phosphorescent light. And I spoke of the scientist who declared that in the distant future milk would be solid and emit a blue light and so on. These ideas are the inevitable consequence of nebulous thinking that is unable to come to terms with reality. Such calculations are equivalent to deducing from the modifications in the human stomach over a period of four or five years what its condition would be after two hundred and fifty years. I am able to arrive at this conclusion by extending my calculations over a large number of years. The scientist calculates what will be the condition of the Earth a million years hence; on the same principle I can calculate the condition of the human stomach after two hundred and fifty years - only by that time the man will be dead! Just as the geologists calculate the condition of the Earth millions of years ago, so too on the same principle one could calculate, by showing the modifications in a child's stomach over a period of a week or a fortnight, the condition of the same stomach two hundred and fifty years ago - but of course the child

would not have been alive at that time. Concepts cannot provide a total picture of reality. Scientific concepts are valid for the period of time between 6000–7000 B.C. and A.D. 6000–7000, but not beyond that time.

We must think of the evolution of man in terms of a totally different time scale. And the Christ Being must occupy a central place in this future evolution. I said therefore on a previous occasion that we must distinguish between what the Middle Ages called "mystical marriage" and what Christian Rosenkreutz called "chymical marriage". Mystical marriage is simply an inner experience. As many theosophists used to say (and perhaps still say): if one looks within, if one withdraws into oneself one becomes united with the divine Being! This was depicted in such roseate hues that, after an hour's lecture, the members emerged with the firm conviction that if they took firm control of their inner life, if they practised self-discipline, they would experience the first intimations of the divine within. The chymical marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz imagines forces to be active in man which embrace the whole man, which so transform his being that when he is purified from the dross of the physical body he is translated to the Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan conditions.

The aim of Manichaeism was the conquest of evil and of matter by thought. Julian was brought face to face with the deeper implications of the problem of evil and the relation of Christ Jesus to this problem. He hoped to find an answer through initiation into the Persian Mysteries and to return to Europe with the solution. But unfortunately he fell by an assassin's hand during the Persian campaign. It can be proved historically that this was the work of an adherent of Constantine. Thus we see that in the course of history the attempt to establish the "principle of continuity" was fraught with tragedy and that in the case of Julian it led into a blind alley.

In the following years the Augustinian principle triumphed - ideas that in any way echoed Manichaeism were forbidden, i.e. the inclusion of material ideas in spiritual thinking. The West therefore was driven to an abstract mode of thinking and in the course of time this mode of thinking permeated the whole of Western Europe. Only a few of the foremost minds rebelled against this tendency and one of the most celebrated of these was Goethe. His whole cast of mind was opposed to abstract theorizing. And one of those who succumbed to it most was Kant. Take, for example, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* - I know that what I am about to say is heretical - and let us look at the main propositions. If you reverse each of these propositions you will arrive at the truth. And the same applies

particularly to his theory of space and time. You can equally well reverse every proposition and you will then arrive at conclusions that are valid for the spiritual world. You can gather from this why some people have a professional interest in misrepresenting Goethe (the great opponent of Kant) as I showed in the case of Haller, who wrote: "no created spirit can penetrate into the inner recesses of nature" - a complete distortion of Goethe's conception of nature.

If we bear this point of view in mind, we can appreciate at its true worth Julian's essay which was directed against Pauline Christianity (note 2). It is a remarkable document, not so much for its contents, but for its similarity to certain writings of the nineteenth century. This may seem paradoxical, but the facts are as follows: Julian's polemic against Christianity musters every kind of argument against Christianity, against the historical Jesus and certain Christian dogmas, with passionate sincerity. And when we compare these arguments with the objections raised by the liberal theology of the nineteenth century (note 3) and the later theology of the adherents of Drews against the historicity of Christ, when we consider the whole field of literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which reveals most careful, painstaking and thorough philological investigation, there are endless repetitions, so that one has to consult whole libraries - we find that we can piece together certain guiding principles. The leading critics began to undertake a comparative study of the Gospels and found many discrepancies in the texts. But all these critical methods were already anticipated by Julian. The nineteenth-century criticism offered nothing new that was not already known to Julian. Julian spoke out of a natural creative gift whilst the nineteenth-century criticism displayed enormous industry, great erudition and downright theological sophistry.

Julian therefore was engaged in a titanic struggle. He finally attempted, by reviving Manichaeism, to bring about continuity in the evolution of the pagan Mysteries. Bear in mind how the most enlightened minds such as Goethe felt an instinctive urge to recapture the spirit of ancient Greece! Imagine what would have happened if Julian's policy had been crowned with success! That he was doomed to fail was a necessity of the time. And we shall not understand the reason for his failure if we belittle his great achievements, if we fail to see him as a titanic figure, fighting for a realistic understanding of the relations between man and the universe. And it is of paramount importance today to recall these great moments in the historical evolution of the West. For we are living in an age from which we shall not emerge with a healthy outlook unless we make a fresh assessment of the aims of Julian the Apostate. It was not possible in his time - herein lies his

great tragedy - to reconcile the old principle of initiation with the real essence of Christianity. Today this has become possible and we must not fail to translate the possibility into reality if the world and mankind are not to suffer evolutionary decline. People must realize the need for regeneration in all spheres of life and above all the crying need to restore communication with the spiritual world.

First of all we must understand the factors that militate against this necessary regeneration. Today we are afraid of definite, clear-cut ideas which could lead to such an understanding. There is no lack of physical courage today - but we are certainly lacking in intellectual courage! Mankind today is unwilling to face realities and this is the greatest need of our time. For if our age is not to end in futility it must learn to understand the principle of the creative spirit and what it means when it is said that the spirit, when creative, is as powerful a force as the instincts, save that our instincts work in the dark, whilst the creative spirit works in the light of the Sun, i.e. the spiritual Sun. This is what our age must learn to understand. And especially in our own time many forces are still arrayed against any understanding of the creative spirit and are actively engaged in suppressing that knowledge.

Cato's policy was to establish a highly centralized political system. In order to achieve this he felt it was necessary to exile the adherents of Hellenistic philosophy. "They only prate", he said, "and that has a disturbing effect upon the decrees of the authorities." And the celebrated Florentine Machiavelli was also of this opinion and gave high praise to Cato because he proposed to banish those who used the weapon of spiritual knowledge in order to raise objections to State decrees. Machiavelli fully appreciated the fact that in the Roman Empire any interference with the structure of the social order was on certain occasions punishable by death. Intercourse with the spiritual world was anathema especially to the Roman Empire and the successor States in Europe. Every effort was therefore made to ensure that the greatest uncertainty should prevail in these matters and they were hushed up as much as possible. If a conception of the Mystery of Golgotha that is both radical and uncompromising gains a firm foothold in the world, then we shall have to modify considerably our mental attitude. This is not to our liking, but it will have to come. And a way must be found to arrive at a real understanding of the nature of Christ. In our next lecture I propose to discuss how we can directly experience the being and nature of Christ today.

We shall see this whole question in wider perspective through a study of two contrasting figures - Constantine who inaugurated the exoteric side of Western culture and Julian the Apostate who, when the times were out of joint (for him), attempted to take up the struggle against the exoteric side of Western evolution. It is a curious phenomenon that if anyone with a slight knowledge - I do not mean of occult facts, but with a real knowledge of those occult facts that can still be found in ancient writings - makes a study of Christian dogma, if, for example, we inquire into the origin of the Mass, or if ritual and dogma are studied in the light of this occult knowledge derived from ancient writings, we discover the most extraordinary things. What lies behind these dogmas and cult acts? Not I alone, but countless authors who have studied these questions from this standpoint have come to the conclusion that in ritual and dogma a large residuum of paganism has been preserved or has survived, so that an attempt was made for example by the French writer Drach (note 4), who was an authority on Hebraism, to demonstrate that the dogma and ritual of the Catholic Church were simply a revival of paganism. And others attempted to show that certain people were at pains to conceal from the faithful the fact that the dogmas and ritual of the Church were imbued with paganism.

Now it would have been a strange phenomenon if paganism in particular had survived quite unconsciously. In that event, we might ask, in what way would the survival of paganism have contributed to the survival of the Roman Empire? And what would have been the position of Julian the Apostate? If many recent writers are right in saying that the Catholic sacrifice of the Mass, for example, is in essence a pagan sacrifice and that Julian had been at great pains to preserve and perpetuate the ancient pagan rites, then to some extent Julian has achieved his aim after all. A study of these two contrasting figures, Constantine and Julian, raises countless problems of the highest importance, "thorny" problems as Nietzsche calls them, problems which are fraught with fateful consequences for us today and which without question will become the central problems of our time.

I propose to return to these problems in my next lecture.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Julian had received a strict Christian education; during his internment in Cappadocia he began to doubt the validity of Christianity and when sent to Athens in 354, the intellectual centre of Greece, he secretly abandoned Christian beliefs. His treatise "Against the Galileans" (referred to here) summarizes his polemical arguments against Christianity. Briefly they are as follows: Knowledge of God is natural to man and does not come by teaching. The story of Eden in the Old Testament is a fable and the account of Creation is inferior to that of Plato. The idea of a jealous God and a chosen people is unacceptable. The Mosaic law is barbarous; the Decalogue common to all nations. No man is better for reading the Jewish scriptures. The New Testament is full of inconsistencies. Matthew and Luke disagree on the genealogy of Jesus. Peter and Paul were hypocrites. Matt. 4:5 (Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple), is illogical and in Luke XXII, 42-47:

22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

22:43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

22:44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

22:45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

22:46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

22:47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

since the disciples were asleep, who could have told him the story of the angel? The Christians were fanatics and cheerfully massacred heretics. By contrast the Greeks were mild and forbearing, they were superior in wisdom and intelligence. Christianity has achieved little or nothing in the fields of science, astronomy, arithmetic and music. The achievements of Plato, Socrates, Aristides, Thales, Lycurgus, Agesilaus and Archedemus, the

Sibyls, the Delphic Oracle and the pagan Mysteries surpassed anything that Christianity had to offer.

The formal refutation of Julian's treatise was "Pro Christiana Religione" composed between A.D. 429 and 441 by Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria.

Note 2. Manichaeism and Augustine. Augustine (A.D. 345–410), an African by birth, was a Manichaean for ten years. He became dissatisfied with Manichaeism and when Faustus, a leader of the sect, failed to resolve his doubts he abandoned Manichaean teachings. (See *Confessions*, Books IV and V.) Augustine repaired to Rome where he was converted by St. Ambrose in A.D. 386. His chief works were directed against the Manichaeans, e.g. *Books against the Manichaeans* and *On the Utility of Believing*. The Scriptures were a means to faith and hope and the Canon was the testimony of Christianity in the Church. His dictum, "Better a man's body be destroyed than his soul" leads to the Inquisition. When Christianity became the State religion he distinguished between "Civitas Dei", which was perfect and in which all men were equal in the sight of God, and "Civitas terrena", which of necessity was imperfect. It was the devil's domain where sinful men had to submit to the authorities. Augustine was the founder of Western monasticism and monastic spirituality and exercised considerable influence on Pascal, Fenelon and Port Royal. On Manichaeism in general, see F. C. Burkitt, *Religion of the Manichees* 1925 and H. C. Puesch, *Le Manicheisme, son fondateur, sa doctrine* (1949).

Note 3. Liberal theology. The chief representatives of Liberal Protestant theology in the nineteenth century were Bauer, founder of the Tübingen school of New Testament research, and Ritschl (1822–89) who rejected metaphysics and mysticism and developed an objective and scientific method of research. The great exponent of the Ritschl school was A. von Harnack (1851–1930) whose *History of Dogma and What is Christianity?* are regarded as monuments of liberal historiography. Harnack eschewed metaphysical speculation, perfected the scientific-historical method and emphasized the need for source study and the faithful representation of facts. "The Gospel about Jesus does not belong to the Gospel preached by Jesus", said Harnack. Radical historical research led to Bultmann's "demythologization", the attempt to liberate the Church's teaching from the mythological language in which it is expressed. Myths, he said, need reinterpretation in terms of modern consciousness. The other burning question of the nineteenth century was: is the Gospel true and how can we know that it is true? Drews, Jensen and Kalthoff in Germany, J. M.

Robertson, W. B. Smith and T. A. Jackson in England claimed that the Christ figure was a copy of the cult-god of pagan beliefs under another name.

Note 4. Drach (1791–1865) studied at various Talmudic Schools and was converted to Christianity, 1823. He went to Rome and was appointed librarian of propaganda.

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Lecture 8

Berlin, 24th April, 1917

It is most important for the present age and for the future of mankind to realize that our understanding of Christ Jesus and the Mystery of Golgotha is not dependent upon the findings of the external history that is accepted as scientific today. In order to acquire a knowledge of Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha that carries conviction and is susceptible of proof we must rather look to other sources than those of contemporary historical investigation, even when these sources are the Gospels themselves. I have often stated, and anyone who refers to the relevant literature can verify this for himself, that the most diligent, assiduous and painstaking research has been devoted to Gospel criticism or Gospel exegesis during the nineteenth century. This Gospel criticism has yielded only negative results; in fact it has served rather to destroy and undermine our faith in the Mystery of Golgotha rather than to confirm and substantiate it. We know that many people today, not from a spirit of contradiction but because, on the evidence of historical investigation they cannot do otherwise, have come to the conclusion that there is no justification on purely historical grounds for assigning the existence of Christ Jesus to the beginning of our era. This of course cannot be disproved, but that is of no consequence.

I now propose to discuss whether it is possible to discover other sources than the historical sources which may contribute to an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. Before answering the question let us first examine a few facts of occult history.

In tracing the development of Christianity during the early centuries of our era we must bear in mind that it is difficult to comprehend this development unless we reinforce a purely historical enquiry with the findings of Spiritual Science. If we accept, purely hypothetically for the moment, the facts of spiritual-scientific investigation into this period, then a very remarkable picture unfolds before us. As we review this development during the early centuries we realize in effect that the Mystery of Golgotha has been fulfilled not only once - as an isolated event on Golgotha - but, in a figurative sense, a second time on the mighty panorama of history. When we study this period truly remarkable things are disclosed.

The Church of Rome has a tradition of continuity that is reflected in its Church history. This history describes the founding of Christianity, the early Church Fathers, the post-Nicene Fathers and the later Christian philosophers, and the formulation of the particular dogmas by Councils and infallible Popes and so on. History is seen as an unbroken chain, a uniform pattern of unchanging character. It is true that the early Church Fathers have been much criticized from certain angles. But on the whole people are afraid to reject them completely, for in that case the continuity would be broken. History proper begins with the Council of Constantinople in 869 of which I have already spoken. As I have said, history is represented as an unbroken chain, a continuous process. But if a radical gap is anywhere to be found in an apparently continuous process, then it is here. One can hardly imagine a greater contrast than the contrast between the spirit of the early Church Fathers and that of the post-Nicene Fathers and Conciliar decrees. There is a radical difference which is equally radically concealed because it is in the interest of the Church to conceal it. For this reason it has been possible to keep the faithful (today) in ignorance of what took place in the first centuries of the Christian era. Today, for example, there is no clear and reliable evidence, even from leading scholars, of how the Gnosis came to be suppressed. We are equally in the dark about the aims and intentions of such men as Clement of Alexandria, his pupil Origen and others (note 1), including Tertullian, because such fragmentary information as we possess is of doubtful provenance and is derived for the most part from writings of their opponents. For this reason, and because the most fantastic theories have been built on this fragmentary information, it is impossible to arrive at a reliable picture of the early Church Fathers.

In order to have a clear understanding of this problem we must turn our attention for a moment to the causes of this indefiniteness, to all that has happened so that the Mystery of Golgotha could take place a second time in history.

At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha the ancient pagan cults and Mysteries were widespread. And they were of such importance that a figure such as Julian the Apostate was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries and a long succession of Roman emperors also received initiation, though of a peculiar kind. Furthermore, everything connected with the ancient pagan cults still survived. But these facts are usually dismissed today in a few words by contemporary historians. The events of that early period are portrayed in a very superficial manner; but this

superficial portrayal may provide a sufficient justification in the eyes of many for speaking of a second Mystery of Golgotha. But people have not the slightest understanding of the inner meaning of those events.

From an external point of view one can say that in the early Christian centuries pagan temples, with their statues of a splendour and magnificence which are inconceivable today, were scattered over wide areas. These images (of the gods), even into their formalistic details, were a symbolic representation of all that had lived in the ancient Mysteries. Not only was there not a town or locality without abundant representations of symbolic art forms, but in the fields where peasants cultivated their crops were to be found isolated shrines, each with its statue of a God. And they never undertook agricultural work without first putting themselves in touch with those forces which, they believed, streamed down from the universe through the agency of the magic powers which resided in these images. The Roman emperors, with the support of bishops and priests, were concerned to destroy utterly these temples and shrines together with their images. We can follow this work of iconoclasm up to the time of the emperor Justinian in the sixth century. Countless edicts were promulgated ordering the ruthless destruction of these temples and shrines. During these centuries a wave of iconoclasm swept over the world that was unprecedented in the history of mankind; unprecedented because of the extent of the systematic destruction ([note 2](#)). Up to the time when St. Benedict with his own hands and the support of his workmen levelled the temple of Apollo on Monte Cassino in order to found a monastery dedicated to the service of the Benedictine Order on this site, and up to the time of the emperor Justinian, it was one of the foremost duties of the Roman emperors (who since Constantine had been converted to Christianity) to eradicate all traces of paganism. Edicts were promulgated whose apparent purpose was to arrest this work of destruction, but in reading them one receives a strange impression. One emperor, for example, issued an edict declaring that all the pagan temples should not be destroyed immediately for fear of inflaming the populace; the work of destruction should rather be carried out gradually, for the people would then accept it without demur.

All the terrible measures associated with this work of destruction are very often glossed over like so many other things. But this is a mistake. Whenever truth is in any way obscured, the path leading to Christ Jesus is also obscured and cannot be found. Since I have already spoken of this earnest love of truth, allow me to refer to a small incident which occurred in my early childhood and which I shall never forget. Such things are most

revealing. Unless we wilfully blind ourselves we learn from the history of the Roman emperors that Constantine was not precisely a model of virtue, otherwise he would not have accused his own stepson, without any justification, of illicit relations with his own mother. The accusation was a pure fabrication in order to find a pretext for murder. Constantine first had his stepson murdered on this trumped-up charge and then the stepmother. These were simply routine acts with Constantine. Since however the Church was deeply indebted to him, official Church history is ashamed to portray him in his true colours. With your permission I should like to read a passage from my school text-book on the history of religion which refers to Constantine: "Constantine showed himself to be a true son of the Church even in his private life" - and I have already given you an example of this! "Though often reproached for his irascibility and ambition one must remember that faith is not a guarantee against every moral lapse and that Christianity could not manifest its redemptive power in him because, to the end of his life, he never partook of the Sacrament." Now examples of this kind of whitewash are a commonplace. They demonstrate how seldom history displays a love of truth. And much the same applies to recent history. Here we find other distortions but we fail to detect them because other interests occupy our attention.

When we read the account of these Imperial edicts (relating to the destruction of the pagan temples) we are also informed that the Roman emperors expressly rejected animal sacrifice and similar practices which are alleged to have taken place in the temples. Now I do not intend to criticize or to gloss over anything, but simply to state the facts. But we must remember that "opposition to animal sacrifice" (from the entrails of which future events are said to have been predicted) was, in fact, a decadent form of sacrifice. It was not the trifling matter that history often suggests, but a profound science, different in character from that of today. The object of animal sacrifice - and it is difficult to speak of these practices today because we find them so revolting that we can only refer to them in general terms - was to stimulate powers which, at the time, could not be attained directly because the epoch of the old clairvoyance was past. Attempts were made within certain circles of the pagan priesthood to revive the old clairvoyant powers. This was one of the methods employed. A more satisfactory method of awakening this ancient atavistic clairvoyance in order to recapture the spirit of primeval times was to revive the particular form of sacrifice practised in the Mithras Mysteries and in the most spiritual form known to the Mysteries at that time. In the priestly Mysteries of Egypt and in Egyptian temples far more brutal and

bloodthirsty practices were carried out. When we study the Mithras Mysteries by occult means we realize that they were a means to gain insight into the secrets of the forces operating in the universe through sacrificial rites that were totally different in character from what we understand by sacrificial rites today; in fact they yielded a far deeper insight into the secrets of nature than the modern practice of autopsy which only leads to a superficial knowledge. Those who performed these sacrificial rites in the correct way were able to perceive clairvoyantly certain forces which are present in the hidden depths of nature. And for this reason the real motives for these ritual sacrifices were kept secret and only those who were adequately prepared were permitted to have knowledge of them.

Now when we look into the origin of the Mithras Mysteries we find that they date back to the Third post-Atlantean epoch and so they were already decadent at the time of which we are speaking. In their purer form they were suited to the Third post-Atlantean epoch only. They had reached their high point in this epoch. Through the performance of particular rites they had the power, albeit in a mysterious and somewhat dangerous way, to penetrate deeply into the secrets of nature. The priest performed certain rites in the presence of the neophyte by which he was enabled to "decompound" natural substances (i.e. to resolve them into their constituent parts) in order thereby to arrive at an understanding of the processes of nature. Through the manner in which the fire and water in the organisms interacted on each other and through the manner in which they reacted upon the neophyte who took part in the sacrifice, a special path was opened up which enabled him to attain to a self-knowledge that reached down into the very fibres of his being and thereby arrive at an understanding of the universe.

By participating in these sacrificial rites man learned to see himself in a new light. But this knowledge made considerable allowance for man's weakness. Self-knowledge is extremely difficult to acquire, and these sacrificial rites were intended to facilitate such knowledge and enabled him to feel and experience his inner life more intensely than through intellectual or conceptual processes. He therefore strove for a self-knowledge that penetrated into his physical organism, a self-knowledge that can be seen in the souls of the great artists of antiquity, who, to a certain extent, owed their sense of form to an instinctive feeling for the forms and movements of nature which they experienced in their own organism. As we look back into the history of art, we find there was a time when the artist never dreamt of working from models; any suggestion of

working from the model would have been unthinkable. We become increasingly aware that the artist portrayed his visual imaginations in concrete form. Visual imagination is virtually a thing of the past; we hardly dare mention it because words are inadequate to give any real indication of what we mean by it. It is incredible how much times have changed.

Now the Eleusinian Mysteries were a direct continuation of the Mithras Mysteries which were widely diffused at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, but at the same time they represented a totally different aspect. Whilst the Mithras Mysteries emphasized the attainment of self-knowledge through the physical organism, the Eleusinian Mysteries were quite different from those of the Mithras Mysteries. In the latter the neophyte was thrust deeply into himself; in the Eleusinian Mysteries his soul was liberated from the body so that he could experience outside the body the hidden impulses of the creative activity of nature and the spirit. Now if we ask what man learned from these Mysteries - from the Mithras Mysteries which were already decadent and from the Eleusinian Mysteries that had reached their high point towards the fourth century B.C. - if we ask what benefit man derived from these Mysteries, then the answer is found in the well-known injunction of the Delphic oracle: "Know thyself". Initiation was directed to the attainment of self-knowledge along two different paths: first, self-knowledge through being thrust inwards so that the astral and etheric bodies were "condensed", so to speak, and through the impact of the psychic on the physical, man realized: "Now you perceive yourself for what you are; you have attained self-awareness." Such was the legacy of the Mithras Mysteries. In the Eleusinian Mysteries, on the other hand, he attained to self-knowledge through the liberation of the soul from the body by means of various rites which cannot be described in detail here. The soul thus came in contact with the secret power of the Sun, with solar impulses irradiating the Earth, with the forces of the Moon impulse streaming into the Earth, with the forces of stellar impulses and the impulses of the individual elemental forces - the warmth, air and fire forces and so on. The external elements streamed through man's soul (which had been withdrawn from the body) and in this encounter with the external forces he attained self-knowledge. Those who were aware of the real meaning of the Mystery teachings knew that man could attain to all kinds of psychic experiences outside the body, but he was unable to grasp concretely the idea of the ego. Outside the Mysteries the idea of the ego was a purely abstract concept at that time. Man could experience other

aspects of the psychic and spiritual life, but the ego had to be nurtured through Mystery training and needed a powerful stimulus. This was the aim of the Mysteries and was known to the initiates.

Now as you know, there occurred at this time a kind of fusion between evolving Christianity and the Roman empire. I have already described how this arose and how, because of this fusion, the Church was anxious to suppress, as far as possible, those rites I have just described to you, to efface all traces of the past and to conceal from posterity all knowledge of the Mystery practices which over the centuries had sought to bring man, whether in the body or outside the body, in touch with those spiritual forces which help him to develop his ego consciousness. If we wish to make a more detailed study of the evolution of Christianity we must consider not only the development of dogma, but especially the development of ancient cults from certain points of view; this is of far greater importance than the evolution of dogma. For dogmas are a source of controversy and like the phoenix they rise again from their own ashes. However much we may imagine they have been eradicated, there is always some crank who comes along and revives the old prejudices. Cults are far easier to eradicate. And these ancient cults which, in a certain sense, were the external signs and symbols of Mystery practices were suppressed, so that it would be impossible to discover from the survival of ancient rites the methods by which man sought to come in touch with divine-spiritual forces.

In order to get to the bottom of the matter we must take a look at the chief sacrament of the Church of Rome, the sacrifice of the Mass. What is the inner significance of the Catholic Mass? In reality, the Mass and all that is related to it, is a continuation and development of the Mithras Mysteries, blended to some extent with the Eleusinian Mysteries. The sacrifice of the Mass and many of the related ceremonies is simply a further development of the ancient cults. The original ritual has been somewhat transformed; the sanguinary character which the Mithras Mysteries had assumed has been modified. But we cannot fail to note many similarities in the spirit of these two cults, especially if we appreciate certain details. For example, before receiving the Host the priest as well as the communicant must fast for a certain period. This detail is more important for the understanding of the Mystery in question than many of the issues that were so fiercely debated in the Middle Ages. And if the priest, as may well happen, neglects the order to fast before celebrating the Eucharist, then the Communion loses its meaning and the effect it should have. Indeed its efficacy is largely lost because the communicants have not been properly instructed.

It can be effective only if suitable instruction has been given to the communicant on what he should experience immediately after receiving the "unbloody sacrifice (sic) of His Body and Blood". But you are no doubt aware of how little attention is paid to these subtleties nowadays, how little people realize that communion must be followed by an inward experience, that one should experience an inner intimation, a kind of modern renewal of that stimulation which the neophyte experienced in the Mithras Mysteries. This is what really lies behind the Christian cult. And ordination was an attempt by the Church to establish a kind of continuation of the ancient principle of Initiation. But she forgot in many cases that Initiation consisted in giving instruction in the way to respond to certain experiences.

Now Julian's avowed object was to discover how the Eleusinian Mysteries into which he had been initiated were related to the Mysteries of the Third post-Atlantean epoch. What could he learn from these Mysteries? On this subject history tells us little. If we were to embark upon a serious study of how men such as Clement of Alexandria, his pupil Origen, Tertullian and even Irenaeus (note 3), to say nothing of the still earlier Fathers, derive in part from the pagan principle of initiation and came to Christianity in their own way, if we were to enter into the minds of these great souls, we should find that their concepts and ideas were informed by an inner vitality peculiar to them alone, that an entirely different spirit dwelt in them from that which was later reflected in the Church. If we wish to understand the Mystery of Golgotha we must catch something of the spirit of these early Fathers.

Now in relation to the great cultural manifestations men are fast asleep, and I mean this literally. They see the world as if in a dream and we can observe this at the present time. I have often spoken to you of Herman Grimm (note 4), and I must confess that when I speak of him today I am a different person from the person who spoke of him some four or five years ago. After nearly three years of War the decades before the War and the years immediately preceding the War seem like a golden age. All that has happened in those years seems centuries ago. Things have changed so much that one has the feeling that time has been infinitely prolonged. And in like manner the most important things pass unnoticed because mankind is asleep to them.

If today we try to grasp the ideas of ancient writers with the ordinary method of understanding - conventional academic teachers of course understand everything that has been transmitted to posterity - but if one is not one of these enlightened mortals, one may come to the conclusion that

it is impossible to understand ancient Greek philosophers unless one has recourse to occult knowledge. They speak a different language; the language in which they communicate their ideas is different from that of normal communication. And this applies to Plato. Hebbel (note 5) was aware of this and in his diary he sketched the outline of a dramatic composition which depicted the reincarnated Plato as a Grammar School pupil who had read Plato with his master, but was unable to cope with Plato although he himself was the reincarnation of the philosopher. Hebbel wanted to dramatize this idea but never carried it out. Hebbel, therefore, felt that even Plato could not readily be understood; one needed further preparation. Understanding in the sense of the accurate grasping of ideas first began with Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. Philosophy before Aristotle is incomprehensible by normal human standards. This explains the many commentaries on Aristotle for, whilst on the one hand he is perfectly intelligible, on the other hand in the formation of certain concepts we have not advanced beyond Aristotle because in this respect he belongs to his age. It is impossible to adopt the thought-forms of another epoch; that is tantamount to asking a man of fifty-six to become twenty-six again in order to relive for a quarter of an hour his experiences as a man of twenty-six. A certain mode of thinking is only valid for a particular epoch and the peculiarity attaching to the thinking of a particular epoch is merely repeated time and time again. It is interesting to note how Aristotle dominated the thinking of the Middle Ages and how his philosophy was revived again by Franz Brentano (note 6) and precisely at this moment of time. In 1911 Brentano wrote an excellent book on Aristotle in which he elaborated those ideas and concepts that he wished to bring to the attention of our present epoch. It is a curious symptom of the Karma of our age that Brentano should have written at this precise moment of time a comprehensive study of Aristotle which should be read by all who value a certain kind of thinking. And let me add in addition that the book is eminently readable.

Now it was the fate of Aristotle's writings to have been mutilated, not by Christianity, but by the Church (though not directly), so that essential parts of his work are missing. Consequently these lacunae must be supplemented by occult means. The most important omissions refer to the human soul. And, in connection with Aristotle, I now come to the question posed by all today: how can I find, by means of inner soul-experiences, a sure way to open myself to the Mystery of Golgotha? How can I direct towards this end the practice of meditation described in my writings, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and elsewhere. To a certain extent

Aristotle attempted on his own initiative to awaken within himself the inner experiences which those who pose this question must attempt to undertake. But, according to the commentators, whenever Aristotle is on the point of describing his method of meditation, he breaks off and is silent. It is not that he did not describe his technique, but that the later transcripts failed to record it, so that it was never transmitted to posterity. Aristotle had already embarked upon a specific path, the path of mysticism. He strove to find within his soul that which gives certainty of the soul's immortality.

Now if a man honestly and sincerely practises meditation for a time he will unquestionably attain the inner experience of the immortality of the soul because he opens the doors to the immortal within him. Aristotle never doubted for a moment that it is possible to experience within ourselves something which proclaims: I now feel something within me that is independent of the body and which is unrelated to the death of the body. But he goes even further. He strove to develop this deep inner experience which we know (when we become conscious of it) is connected with the body. He experienced quite definitely - but the passage has been mutilated or bowdlerized - that inner solitude which must be felt by all who wish to arrive at an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. Mystical experience inevitably leads to solitude. And when this feeling of solitude overwhelms us we ask: "What have I forsaken that I have become so lonely?", we shall be obliged to answer: "I have forsaken father, mother, brothers, sisters, I have forsworn the vanities of the world. I am emotionally detached from them." Aristotle was aware of this. This inner experience can be felt by everyone, it can be systematically developed. In this feeling of solitude we come to realize that we have something within us that transcends death, something that pertains to the ego alone and is unrelated to the external world. Aristotle, too, realized that our contact with the external world is mediated through the physical organs. It is possible for man to experience himself in other ways, but the organs of the body are indispensable in order to experience the external world. Hence the feeling of solitude that overtakes us. And Aristotle realized, as everyone who follows in his steps must realize, that he had experienced his immortal soul which death cannot destroy. He was no longer attached to the finite and transient. "I am henceforth alone with myself" he said, "but my idea of immortality is limited; I realize that after death I shall know utter solitude, that through all eternity I shall be faced with the good and evil deeds that I have perpetrated in life and these will always be before my eyes, and this

is all I can attain by my own efforts. If I wish to gain a deeper insight into the spiritual world I cannot rely on my own efforts alone; either I must receive Initiation or be instructed by Initiates."

All this could be found in Aristotle's writings, but his successors were forbidden to transmit the knowledge. And because Aristotle anticipated this possibility he was regarded to a certain extent as a kind of prophet; he became the prophet of that which was not possible in his day, and which is different today from what it was in Aristotle's time. There is no need to appeal to history; we know from personal experience that times have changed.

Now let us turn our attention once again to this feeling of total solitude which assails us today, to this mystical experience which is completely different from the mystical experiences usually described. People often speak of them complacently and say: "God is experienced within myself." That is not, however, the full mystical experience. In full mystical experience we experience God in total and utter solitude. Alone in the presence of God man experiences himself. And then he must find the necessary strength and perseverance to continue in this state of isolation. For this experience of solitude is a potent force! If we do not allow ourselves to be oppressed by solitude, but allow it to become an active force in us, then we meet with a further experience - these things of course can only be described, but everyone can experience them - we have the firm conviction that the solitude we suffer is self-created, that we have brought it upon ourselves. We create our gods in our own image. This solitude is not born with us, it is created by us, we ourselves are responsible for it. This is the second experience.

And this second experience leads to the feeling that we share direct responsibility for the death of that which is born of God. When man has suffered the dark night of the soul for a sufficient length of time the divine element in him has been slain by the all-too-human. This has not always been the case, otherwise evolution would have been impossible. There must have been a time when this feeling did not exist. At this moment man begins to feel that he shares responsibility for the death of the divine within him. If time permitted I could explain more fully the meaning of the slaying of the "Son of God". Remember that mystical experience is not a vague, indefinite, isolated experience; it unfolds progressively; we ourselves experience the death of the Christ.

And when this experience has become a powerful force in us, then (I can express it in no other way) the Christ, the Risen Lord is born in us. For the Risen Lord, He who has suffered death, is first felt as an inner mystical experience and the reason for His death is experienced in the manner already described.

There are three degrees of mystical experience. To find the path leading to the sources of the Mystery of Golgotha is of itself not enough; something more must be added, something that has been grotesquely misrepresented, even concealed, at the present time. The only person who forcefully pointed out what had been concealed from mankind by the nineteenth century was Friedrich Nietzsche in his book *On the Uses and Abuses of History*. Nothing is more calculated to destroy our understanding of Christ than what is called history today. And the Mystery of Golgotha has never been more thoroughly misrepresented than by the objective historians of the nineteenth century. I am aware that anyone who criticizes the objective history of today is regarded as a fool. I have no wish to denigrate the painstaking philological and scholarly achievements of historical research, but however scholarly or however exact this history may be, it is a spiritual desert. It has no understanding of the things that are of vital importance to the life of man and to mankind as a whole. They are a closed book to modern history.

Perhaps I may be permitted to speak from personal experience in this field, for these things have personal associations. Since my nineteenth year I have been continually occupied with the study of Goethe but I have never been tempted to write a factual history of his life or even portray him in the academic sense, for the simple reason that from the very first I felt that what mattered most was that Goethe was still a living force. The physical man Goethe who was born in 1749 and died in 1832, is not important; what is important is that after his death his spirit is still alive amongst us today, not only in the Goethe literature (which is not particularly enlightened), but in the very air we breathe.

This spiritual atmosphere that surrounds us today did not as yet exist in the men of antiquity. The etheric body, as you know, is separated from the soul after death as a kind of second corpse, but, through the Christ Impulse that informs us since the Mystery of Golgotha, the etheric body is now preserved to some extent; it is not completely dissolved. If we believe - and I use the word belief in the sense which I defined in an earlier lecture - that Goethe is "risen" in an etheric body and if we begin to meditate upon him, then his concepts and ideas become alive in us, and

we describe him not as he was, but as he is today. The idea of resurrection has then become a living reality and we believe in the resurrection. We can then say that we believe not only in ideas that belong to the past, but also in the living continuity of ideas. This is connected with a profound mystery of modern times. No matter what we may think, so long as we are imprisoned in the physical body our thoughts cannot manifest in the right way. (This does not apply to our feeling and will, but only to our thoughts and representations.) Great as Goethe was, his ideas were greater than he. That they were unable to rise to greater heights was due to the limitations of his physical body. The moment they were liberated from these limitations of the body and could be developed by someone who has sympathy and understanding for them, they are transformed and acquire new life. (I am referring here to the thoughts which persist to some extent in his etheric body, not to his feeling and will.) Remember that the form in which ideas first arise in us is not their final form. Believe therefore in the resurrection of ideas! Believe this so firmly that you willingly seek union with your forefathers - not with your forefathers to whom you are linked through ties of blood, but with your spiritual forefathers - and that you will ultimately find them. They need not be Goethes, they might equally well be a Smith or a Brown. Try to fulfil the injunction of Christ: do not cling to ties of consanguinity, but seek rather a spiritual relationship. Then the thought of resurrection becomes a living reality in your life and you will believe in resurrection. It is not a question of invoking incessantly the name of the Lord; what matters is that we grasp the living spirit of Christianity, that we hold fast to the vitally important idea of resurrection as a living force. And he who in this way draws support for his inner life from the past, learns that the past lives on in us, we experience in ourselves the continuity of the past. And then - it is only a question of time - the moment arrives when we are aware of the presence of the Christ. Everything depends upon our firm faith in the Risen Christ and in the idea of resurrection, so that we can now say: "We are surrounded by a world of spirit and the resurrection has become a reality within us."

You may object, however, that this is pure hypothesis. So be it. Once you have had the experience of having been in touch with the thoughts of someone who has died, whose physical body has been committed to the Earth and whose thoughts live on in you, then a time comes when you say: "The thoughts that have newly arisen in me I owe to Christ; they could never have become so vitally alive but for the incarnation of Christ."

There is an inward path to the Mystery of Golgotha; but one must first abandon so-called "objective" history which in reality is entirely subjective because it deals with surface phenomena and ignores the spirit. Many Goethe biographies have been written which set out to portray Goethe's life with maximum fidelity. In every case the authors, of necessity, stifle something in themselves. For Goethe's way of thinking has been transformed and lives on in a different form. It is important that we should grasp Christianity in the same spirit.

In short, it is possible to have a mystical experience of the Mystery of Golgotha - mystical in the true sense of the word. One must not be content with abstractions, one must be prepared to suffer through the inner experiences I have already described. And if the question is raised: how can I draw near to Christ? (it must be understood that we are referring to the Risen Christ), if we have the patience and necessary perseverance to follow the path indicated, we can be sure of finding the Christ at the right moment. But when we find Him, we must be careful not to overlook what is most important.

I said in an earlier lecture that Aristotle was a prophet and that Julian the Apostate inherited something of the same prophetic gift. Owing to the form which the Eleusinian Mysteries had assumed at that time, he could not discover their true meaning; he hoped to find the answer in the Mithras Mysteries. It was for this reason that Julian embarked on his Persian campaign. He wished to discover the continuity in the Mystery teachings, to find the connection between them. And because this was not permitted he was assassinated.

Now the early Church Fathers sought to experience the Christ after the fashion of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Whether we call them Gnostics or not - the true Gnostics were rejected by the Church, though Clement of Alexandria could justifiably be called a Gnostic - they had a totally different relation to Christ than later times. They sought to approach Him through the Eleusinian Mysteries and accepted Him as a Cosmic Being. They repeatedly raised the question: How does the Logos operate purely in the spiritual world? What is the true nature of the Being whom man encounters in Paradise? What is his relation to the Logos? Such were the questions which occupied the minds of the Gnostics', questions that can only be answered by those who are familiar with the world of spiritual ideas. When we study the Eleusinian Mysteries (that were extirpated root and branch), it is evident that in the first centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha the Risen Christ was Himself present in the Mysteries in order to reform them.

And we can truly say that Julian the Apostate had a deeper understanding of Christianity than Constantine. In the first place, Constantine had not been initiated and had only accepted Christianity in a superficial way. But Julian felt intuitively that Christ could only be found in the Mysteries. It was through Initiation that we must find the Christ; He would endow us with the ego which could not be granted us at that time because we were not ready to receive it.

It was a historical necessity that these Mysteries should be destroyed because they did not lead to the Christ. We today must find access to Hellenism once again, but without the aid of documents. Hellenism must be revived, not of course in its original form, otherwise it becomes the travesty that can be seen in the aping of the Olympiad, for example. It is not a question of aping Hellenism; I am not suggesting any such thing. Hellenism must be renewed from within and unquestionably will be renewed. We must find the path to the Mysteries once again, but within ourselves, and then we shall also find the path to the Christ.

Just as Christ was crucified for the first time on Golgotha, so He was crucified a second time through Constantinism. By suppressing the Mysteries, Christ, as a historical reality, was crucified a second time. For those acts of vandalism which lasted for centuries destroyed not only priceless treasures of art, but destroyed also man's experience of the spiritual world, the most important experience he could have. People had no understanding of what had been destroyed by this vandalism, because they had lost all sense of values. When the temples of Jupiter and Serapis were demolished together with their statues the mob applauded. "It is right to destroy them," they said, "for it has been foretold that when the temple of Serapis is destroyed, then the Heavens will fall and the Earth will be plunged in chaos. The Heavens however have not fallen, nor has the world collapsed in chaos despite the fact that the Roman Christians have levelled the temple to the ground." It is true that outwardly the stars have not fallen, nor has the Earth been plunged in chaos. But all that man had formerly known through the experience of the Sun initiation was extinguished. That majestic wisdom, more grandiose than the firmament of ancient astronomy, collapsed along with the ruins of the temple of Serapis. And this ancient wisdom, the last traces of which Julian still found in the Mysteries of Eleusis, where the spiritual Sun and the spiritual Moon had been revealed to him, this wisdom was lost forever. All that the men of ancient times experienced in the Mithras Mysteries and Egyptian Mysteries when, through sacrificial worship, they relived inwardly the mysteries of the Moon and the Earth as they are enacted in man himself when he came

to self-knowledge through the "inner compression" of his soul - all this has collapsed in chaos. Spiritually, however, the Heavens had fallen and the Earth was plunged in chaos; for what was lost in the course of those centuries is comparable to the loss that we should suffer if we were suddenly bereft of our senses, when we would know neither the Heavens above nor the Earth beneath our feet. The loss of the ancient world is not the trivial episode recorded in history, but has far deeper implications. We must believe in the resurrection even if we are unwilling to believe that what has disappeared is lost for ever. This demands that we should be resolute in thought and have the courage of our convictions. We realize the imperative need today for the Christ Impulse to which I have so often referred in these lectures.

Through karmic necessity (a necessity from a certain standpoint only) man has for centuries been destined to live a life that was empty and purposeless, to live in a spiritual vacuum, so that through a strong inner urge for freedom he could find the Christ again and in the right way. But he must first rid himself of that self-complacency from which he so often suffers at the present time.

Sometimes this self-complacency assumes most remarkable forms. In the eighties, a Benedictine father, Knauer, gave a course of lectures in Vienna on the Stoics. I should like to read you a passage from one of these lectures. The leading representatives of the Stoic school of philosophy were Zeno (342-270), Cleanthes (331-232) and Chrysippus (282-209); the school therefore flourished several centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha. This is what Knauer says:

"In conclusion I should like to say in defence of the Stoics that they strove for a league of nations, embracing the whole of mankind, which would end war and racial hatred. I need hardly say that in this respect the Stoics rose superior to the often inhuman prejudices of their time - and even of later generations."

A league of nations! I had to read the lecture again. Could it be that my ears had deceived me when I heard Woodrow Wilson and other statesmen talking of a league of nations? For here was the voice of the Stoics, but they said it far better because they had the power of the Mysteries behind

them. The inner power which inspired their discourses is now lost, leaving but the shell behind. Only those historians who stand a little apart from the normal species of historian can sometimes see historical events in a new and different light.

And Knauer continued - I withdraw nothing of what I said recently about Immanuel Kant; but it is none the less remarkable that a capable philosopher such as Knauer should have said the following about the Stoa in the eighties:

"Amongst the more recent philosophers" - he is referring to the league of nations idea of the Stoa - "no less a person than Kant has revived this idea and declared it to be a feasible proposition in his treatise 'On Perpetual Peace. A philosophical outline', a work that has not received the recognition it deserves. The fundamental idea of Kant is both sound and practicable. He shows that eternal peace must become a reality when the 'Great Powers' introduce a genuinely representative system." In Kant this idea is considerably emasculated, but today it has been still more emasculated so that it is a shadow of its former self. And this nebulous conception is now graced with the name "the new orientation". And Knauer continues: "Under such a system the wealthy and propertied classes and the professional classes who are the chief victims of war will have the right to decide issues of war and peace. Our constitutions which are modelled on that of England are not genuine representative systems in Kant's opinion. They are dominated by party prejudice and sectional interests which are promoted by an electoral system that is based for the most part on statistical calculations and the counting of heads. The crux of Kant's argument is this: international law must be based upon a federation of independent States which have wide powers of autonomy."

Is this the voice of Kant or the voice of the "new orientation"? Kant argues his case more vigorously, it is more firmly grounded. I do not propose to read you what follows, otherwise the worthy Kant would incur the displeasure of the censor.

What I have been discussing was the subject of a book by the American author Brook Adams ([note 7](#)), *The Law of Civilisation and Decay*, a study of the importance of evolutionary theory in human history. Brook Adams tried to account for the continual revival of old institutions and forms of life by certain peoples, for example, the revival of the Roman empire by the Teutonic peoples. Surveying the present epoch he finds many nations who have affinity with the Roman empire, but no indications of the peoples who

will renew it - certainly not the American people, and in this he was perfectly right. This regenerative power will not come from without; it must come from within through the quickening of the spirit. It must spring from the soul and will only be possible when we grasp the Christ Impulse in all its living power. All these empty phrases one hears on every hand apply to the past and not to the present or future. All this empty talk with its everlasting refrain: "Yes, the old proverb is true: 'Minerva's owl can only spread her wings in the twilight' was valid for ancient times." And to this we reply: "When nations had grown old they established schools of philosophy; they looked back in spirit to what they owed to instinct. Things will be different in the future, for this instinct will no longer exist. The spirit itself must become instinct and from out of the spirit new creative possibilities must arise."

Reflect upon these words for they are of momentous importance: out of the spirit new creative possibilities will arise! The power of the spirit must work unconsciously within you. And this depends upon the idea of resurrection. That which has been crucified must arise again. This will not come to pass by passively waiting on events, but by quickening the spiritual forces within us, by quickening the creative power of the spirit itself.

This is what I wished to say on the subject of the Mystery of Golgotha at this particular juncture of time.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Clement of Alexandria (301–232 B.C.) was head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, a training school for catechumens. In the conflict between *pistis* (faith) and *gnosis* (knowledge) he favoured the latter and was close to the Gnostics in that he supported Platonism and the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures. He believed in the idea of the "Disciplina Arcani", the withholding of higher knowledge from those unfitted to receive it, which was common to all ancient Mystery teaching. Origen (A.D. 186–253) became head of the Catechetical School. Nurtured in neo-Platonism through the influence of Ammonius Saccus. Adjudged to be a heretic by the fifth Ecumenical Council. He accepted the theory of pre-existence, free will and the necessity of grace. He also used symbol and allegory in his exegesis. He wrote commentaries on nearly every work in scripture. His crowning work was *Contra Celsum* who attacked Christianity

on moral and intellectual grounds. Book VI of Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* is devoted to him. See also Appendix I in the perceptive commentary of A. P. Shepherd and Mildred Robertson Nicoll, in *The Redemption of Thinking* (Hodder & Stoughton).

Note 2. The systematic destruction of pagan temples began under Constantine. Out of expediency the emperors remained neutral in the conflict between Christian and pagan cults. But the Christian monks not only incited the populace to pillage, but were themselves the first to burn and pillage the temples and to ransack trophies, statues and anything of value. It was during the outburst of iconoclasm that the famous library in the temple of Serapis was destroyed in A.D. 391.

Note 3. Irenaeus, born in Asia, heard St. Polycarp in his youth. The date of his death is unknown. His chief work was *Adversus Haereses*, c.179, an attack upon the Gnostics and the principal heresies.

Note 4. Herman Grimm (1828–1901), son of Wilhelm Grimm who with his brother Jacob collected and edited the *Nursery and Household Tales*. Herman was an art historian who wrote works on Goethe, Dante, Shakespeare, Raphael and Michelangelo.

Note 5. Hebbel (1813–63), poet and dramatist. Tragedy, according to Hebbel arises out of conflict. Innovators, leaders of new movements, men of original mind, representatives of new principles, though they may lead to the amelioration of society, are doomed to destruction. This was the tragedy of Christ. The first and last representative of a movement, he declared, is either tragic or comic.

Note 6. Franz Brentano (1838–1917). An Austrian philosopher, ordained 1864, but was unable to accept the doctrine of papal infallibility and relinquished his clerical status. Professor of Philosophy in Wurzburg 1872 and taught at the University of Vienna 1874–95. *Aristoteles and seine Weltanschauung* (1911) was a re-assessment of Aristotelian philosophy. Brentano attempted to revise Aristotle's logic and psychology from the standpoint of empiricism. Brentano believed in the existence of a personal and immortal soul. (See D. Kraus, *Franz Brentano*, 1919, and H. O. Eaton, *The Austrian Philosophy of Values*, 1930.)

Note 7. Brooks Adams (1848–1927), also wrote *The Dream and the Reality*, 1917. Predicted that by the mid-twentieth century the two great Powers in the world would be America and Russia. American prosperity

would contribute to the decay of American democracy because great
wealth exercises power without responsibility.

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Lecture 9

Berlin, 1st May, 1917

In the course of our studies I have spoken of the events in the early development of Western civilization. My aim was to ascertain from these enquiries into the past what is of importance for the present, and with this object in view I propose to pursue the matter in further detail. Our present epoch, as we can see from a cursory glance, is an epoch when only thoughts derived from the Mystery teachings concerning human evolution can exercise effective influence. Now in order to grasp the full implication of this claim we must not only have a clear understanding of many things, but we must also look closely into the needs and shortcomings of contemporary thinking, feeling and willing. We shall then begin to feel that our present epoch has need of new impulses, new thoughts and ideas, and especially of those impulses and thoughts which spring from the depths of the spiritual life and which must become the subject of spiritual-scientific study.

At the present time there is much that fills us with sadness. We must not allow ourselves to be depressed by this mood of sadness, rather should it be something that can prepare us and teach us to work and strive in our present circumstances. I recently came across a publication which I felt would give me the greatest pleasure. The author is one of the few who are receptive to the ideas of Spiritual Science and the more is the pity that he was unable to introduce into his writings the fruits of anthroposophical endeavour. The book to which I am referring is *The State as Organism*, by Rudolf Kjellén (note 1), the Swedish political economist. After reading the book, I must confess that I was left with a feeling of disappointment because I realized that here was a person who, as I said, was receptive to the ideas of Spiritual Science, but whose thoughts were still far removed from the thoughts we stand in need of today, thoughts which must be clearly formulated and become concrete reality, especially today, so that they may enter into the evolution of our time. In his book Kjellén undertook to study the State and its organization, but at no time does one feel that he possessed the ideas or the intellectual grasp which could offer the slightest chance of solving his problem. It is a melancholy experience to be disillusioned time and again - but let us not be discouraged, let us rather brace ourselves to meet the challenge of our time.

Before I say a few words on these matters I should like to call your attention once again to those ancient Mysteries which, as you can well imagine from the statements I recently made about the iconoclasm of the (Christian) Church, are known to history today only in a mangled version. It is all the more necessary therefore for our present age that Spiritual Science should bring an understanding of these Mysteries. I mentioned in my last lecture the unprecedented fury with which Christianity in the first centuries destroyed the ancient works of art and how much that was of priceless value was swept away. One cannot take an impartial view of Christianity unless one is prepared to see this destructive side with complete objectivity. And bear in mind at the same time that the various books which deal with this subject present a particular point of view. Everyone today who has received a minimum of education has a picture of the spiritual development of Antiquity, of the spiritual evolution that preceded Christianity. But how different this picture would be if Archbishop Theophilus ([note 2](#)) of Alexandria had not burnt in the year 391 seven hundred thousand scrolls which contained vitally important records of Roman, Egyptian, Indian and Greek literature and their cultural life. Just imagine how different would be the picture of Antiquity if these seven hundred thousand scrolls had not been burnt. And from this you will realize how much reliance can be placed on the history of the past which has documentary support - or rather how little reliance!

Let us now follow up the train of thought which I touched on in my lecture yesterday. I pointed out that the forms of Christian worship were in many respects borrowed from the symbols and ceremonies of the ancient pagan Mystery cults, that the forms of these Mystery cults and symbols had been totally eradicated by Christianity in order to conceal their origin. Christianity had made a clean sweep of the pagan forms of worship so that people had no means of knowing what had existed prior to their time and would simply have to accept what the Church offered. Such is the fate of human evolution. We must be prepared to recognize without giving way to pessimism that the course of human evolution is not one of uninterrupted progress.

I also showed in the course of my lecture yesterday that the rites and rituals of the Roman Church owed much to the Eleusinian Mysteries which had been interrupted in their development because Julian had been unable to carry out his intentions; his plan had failed to materialize. But the rites and sacraments of later years owed still more to the Mithras Mysteries. But the spirit of the Mithras Mysteries, that which justified their existence, the source from which they derived their spiritual content, can no longer be

investigated. The Church has been careful to remove all traces of it and to close the door to enquiry. Knowledge of this can only be recovered if we strive to come to an understanding of these things through Spiritual Science. Today I propose to touch upon only one aspect of the Mithras Mysteries (note 3). I could of course speak at greater length about the Mithras Mysteries if I had more time at my disposal, but in order to understand them we must first gradually become conversant with their details.

In order to grasp the true spirit of the Mithras Mysteries whose influence spread far into the West of Europe during the first post-Christian centuries, we must be aware that they were based upon a central core of belief (which was right for the world of Antiquity and perfectly justified up to the time of the Mystery of Golgotha), that the community or the individual communities, for example, the folk-communities or other groups within the folk-communities consisted not only of the individual units or members, but that, if they were to have any reality, communities must be imbued with a community spirit which has a super-sensible origin. A community was determined not only by the counting of heads, but for the people of Antiquity it represented the external form, the incarnation, if I may use the word in this connection, of a genuinely existing communal spirit. The aim of those who were received into these Mysteries was to participate in this spirit, to share the thoughts of this group-soul; not to insulate themselves from the community by obstinately pursuing their own egoistic thoughts, feelings and volitional impulses, but to live in such a way that they were receptive to the thoughts of the group-soul. In the Mithras Mysteries in particular the priests maintained that this union with the group-soul cannot be achieved if one looks upon a larger community simply as an external manifestation, for thereby that which lies in the community spirit is in the main obscured. The dead, they claimed, are part of our immediate environment and the more we can commune with those who have long been dead the better we shall order our present life. Therefore the longer these souls had been discarnate, the more beneficial they found it to commune with these souls. And in order to be able to commune with the spirit of the ancestor of a tribe, folk-community or family they found it best to make contact with the ancestral soul. It was assumed that this soul develops further after passing through the gates of death and therefore has a deeper insight into the future destiny of the Earth than those who are living on this Earth in their present physical bodies. Thus the whole

purpose of these Mysteries was to establish those dramatic representations which would put the neophyte into touch with the souls of those who had long passed through the gates of death.

Those who were admitted to these Mysteries had to undergo a first stage of initiation which was usually characterized by a term borrowed from the bird-species; they were called "Ravens". A "Raven" was a first-degree initiate. Through the particular Mystery rites, through the potent use of symbols and especially through dramatic performances he became aware not only of the sensible world around him or of what one learns through contact with one's fellow-men, but also of the thoughts of the dead. He acquired a certain capacity which enabled him to recall memories of the dead and the ability to develop it further. The "Raven" was under the solemn obligation to be conscious in the moment, to be alert and responsive to the world around, to be aware of the needs of his fellow-men and to familiarize himself with the phenomena of nature. He who spends his life in day-dreaming, who has no feeling for the indwelling spirit of man and nature was considered to be unsuitable material for reception into the Mysteries. For only the ability to see life around him clearly and in its true perspective fitted him for the task which he had to fulfil in the Mysteries. His task was to participate as far as possible in the changing circumstances of the world in order to widen the range of his experience, to share in the joys and sorrows of contemporary events. He who was unresponsive or indifferent to contemporary events was an unsuitable candidate for initiation. For the first task of the aspirant was to "reproduce", to re-enact in the Mysteries the experiences gained through participation in the life of the world. In this way these experiences served as a channel of communication with the dead with whom the Initiates sought to make contact. Now you might ask: Would not a high Initiate have been more suitable for this purpose? By no means, for the first-degree Initiates were eminently suited to act as intermediaries because they still possessed all the feelings, shared all the sympathies and antipathies which fitted them for life in the external world, whilst the higher Initiates had more or less purged themselves of those emotions. Therefore these first-degree Initiates were specially suited to experience contemporary life in terms of the ordinary man and to incorporate it into the Mysteries. It was therefore the special task of the "Ravens" to mediate between the external world and those long dead. This tradition has survived in legend. As I have often stated legends as a rule have deep implications. The Kyffhäuser legend tells how Friedrich Barbarossa who had long been dead is instructed by Ravens, or how Charles the Great in the "Salzburg Untersberg" is

surrounded by Ravens that brought him news of the outside world. These are echoes of the ancient pagan Mysteries and especially of the Mithras Mysteries.

When the aspirant was ready for the second degree of initiation he became an adept or "occultist" as we should say today. He was then able not only to incorporate into the Mysteries his experience of the sensible world, but also to receive clairvoyantly the communications from the dead, the impulses which the super-sensible world (this world of concrete reality which the dead inhabit) had to impart to the external world. And only when he was fully integrated into the spiritual life which originates in the super-sensible and is related to the external, sensible world was he considered to be adequately prepared for the third degree, and he was now given the opportunity to give practical expression to the impulses he had received in the Mysteries. He was now singled out to become a "warrior", one who mediates to the sensible world that which must be revealed from the super-sensible world.

But was it not a gross injustice, you may ask, to withhold vital information from the people and to initiate only a select few? You will only understand the reason for this if you accept what I stated at the outset, namely, that the people were dependent upon a group-soul and were content for these select few to act on behalf of the whole community. They did not look upon themselves as separate individuals but as members of a group. It was only possible therefore to pursue this policy of selection at a time when the existence of a group-soul, when the selfless identification with the group was a living reality.

And when, as a "warrior" the initiate had championed for a time the cause of the super-sensible, he was considered fitted to establish smaller groups within the framework of the larger group, smaller communities within larger groups as the need arose. If, in those ancient times, anyone had taken into his head to found an association on his own initiative, he would have been ignored. Nothing would have come of it. In order to establish a union or association the initiate must become a "lion", as it was termed in the Mithras Mysteries, for that was the fourth degree of initiation. He must first have reinforced his spiritual life through association with those impulses which existed not only amongst the living, but which united the living with the dead. From the fourth degree the initiate rose to a higher degree of initiation which permitted him through certain measures to take over the leadership of an already existing group, a folk-community in which the dead also participated. The eighth, ninth and tenth centuries

before the Mystery of Golgotha are totally different from those of today. It would never have occurred to anyone to claim the right to choose arbitrarily the leader of their community; such a leader had to be an initiate of the fifth degree. Then, at the next higher degree, the initiate attained to those insights which the Sun Mystery (of which he had recently received intimations) implanted in the human soul. Finally he attained the seventh degree of initiation. I do not propose to enter into the details of these later degrees of initiation, for I simply wished to characterize the progressive development of the initiate who owed to his contact with the spiritual world his capacity to take an active part in community life.

Now you know that the group-soul nature has gradually declined in accordance with the necessary law of human evolution. It was at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha that man first developed ego consciousness. This had been prepared for centuries, but the crisis, the critical moment in this development had been reached at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. One could no longer assume that the individual had the power to carry the whole community with him, to transfer his feelings and impulses to the entire community in a spirit of altruism.

It would be foolish to imagine that the course of history could have been other than it has been. But sometimes a thought such as the following may prove fruitful: what would have happened if, at the time when the message of Christianity first made its impact on human evolution, the pagan traditions had not been eradicated root and branch, but if historically a certain knowledge (which would be transparent even to those who relied on documents) had been transmitted to posterity? But Christianity was opposed to such a possibility. We will discuss later the reason for this attitude; today I wish simply to register the fact that Christianity was opposed to the transmission of this knowledge. Thus Christianity was confronted by a totally different kind of humanity which was not so much attached to the group-souls as that of former times, a humanity in which the approach to the individual had to be totally different from that of ancient times when the individual was virtually ignored and when men looked to the group-soul for guidance and acted out of the group-soul. Through the fact that Christianity suppressed all documentary evidence of the early centuries the people were kept in ignorance; Christianity in fact consciously fostered ignorance of the epoch when it had first developed. This Christianity borrowed those aspects of the pagan teaching which served its purpose and incorporated them in its traditions and dogmas and especially in its cults or religious ceremonies and then effaced all traces of the origin of these cults. The ancient cults have a deep symbolic meaning,

but Christianity gave them a different interpretation. The performance of cult acts or ceremonies was still a familiar sight, but the source of the primeval wisdom from which they derived was concealed from the people.

Take for example the bishop's mitre of the eighth century. This mitre was embroidered with swastikas which were arranged in different patterns. The swastika which was originally the Crux Gammata dates back to the earliest Mysteries, to the ancient times when man was able to observe the activity of the "lotus flowers" in the human etheric and astral organism, how that which was active in the lotus flower was one of the chief manifestations of the etheric and astral forces. The bishop wore the swastika as a symbol of his authority, but its significance was lost and it had become a dead symbol. All traces of its origin had been eradicated. What history tells us of the origin of such symbols is only dry bones. Only through Spiritual Science can we rediscover the living spiritual element in these things.

Now I said earlier that people were consciously kept in ignorance, but the time has now come to dispel this ignorance. And over the years I think that I have said enough and in a variety of ways to show that it is essential at the present time to be alive and alert to these questions. For our epoch is an epoch in which the necessary period of darkness has run its course and when the light of spiritual life must dawn again. It is devoutly to be wished that as many as possible should feel in their hearts that this spiritual light is a necessity for our time and that the failures and endless sufferings of our time are connected with all these questions. We shall realize that superficial judgements are inadequate when we come to speak of the causes of our present situation. So long as we speak only from a superficial standpoint we shall be unable to develop thoughts or impulses which are sufficiently potent to dispel the ignorance which is the source of our attendant ills. It is indeed remarkable how mankind today - but this need not depress us, rather should it encourage us to observe and understand our present condition - is unwilling to face up to the situation because, for the most part, man is as yet unable to perceive what is really necessary for our evolution. It is heartbreaking to see what Nietzsche felt about the prevailing darkness and confusion of our age, a man who suffered deeply from, and was driven to the point of madness by the chaos and confusion of the second half of the nineteenth century. We shall not come to terms with a personality such as Friedrich Nietzsche if we look upon him as someone whom one blindly follows, as so many have done. For he answered these blind followers in the original prelude to the "Gay Science".

*I am sufficient unto myself
I owe allegiance to none,
And I laugh at every master
Who cannot laugh at himself.*

That is also the underlying mood of the whole of "Thus spake Zarathustra". But this did not prevent Nietzsche from being surrounded by many who were merely hangers-on. They, in any case, have nothing positive to contribute to our present situation. But the other extremists - and between these two groups can be found every shade of opinion - are equally of no help, for they say that although Nietzsche had many creative ideas, he ultimately lost his reason and so can be safely ignored. Friedrich Nietzsche is a strange phenomenon; one need not be his willing slave, yet the fact remains that even in his period of mental sickness he was acutely sensitive to the darkness and chaos of the age.

Indeed the account of the distress which Nietzsche suffered in his time provides us with a good yardstick with which to measure the difficulties of our own time. I propose to read two passages from Nietzsche's posthumous writings: "The Will to Power; the Transvaluation of all Values" (note 4) which was written at a time when his mind was unhinged, passages which could have been written today with a wholly different intent than Nietzsche's and could have been written to expose the deeper underlying cause of our present situation. Nietzsche wrote:

"What I am about to relate is the history of the next two centuries. I shall describe what is foreshadowed and from which there is no escape - the triumph of nihilism. This history can be written now, for necessity is already at work here. This future is already presaged by a hundred different omens; this destiny announces its presence everywhere; for the music of tomorrow all ears are pricked. The whole of European culture is slowly moving towards catastrophe in an agony of suspense which increases from decade to decade - restless, violent, precipitate like a river in spate hastening to its ocean bed, and which refuses to reflect and even dreads reflection."

Judge then of your own reactions in the light of these words from the pen of a man of rare sensitivity at the end of the eighties of the nineteenth century and compare these words with another passage which I will now read to you and which vividly portrays the deep distress he felt and which everyone can experience himself.

"My friends, we had a hard time in our youth; we even suffered from youth as if it were a serious disease. This is owing to the age in which we are born - an age of great internal decay and disintegration which, with all its weakness and even with the best of its strength is opposed to the spirit of youth. Disintegration, that is to say a sense of insecurity, is peculiar to our age; nothing stands on solid ground or on sound faith or belief. People live for the morrow, because the day after tomorrow is uncertain. Our path is slippery and dangerous and the ice that still bears us has become precariously thin: we all feel the mild and ominous breath of the thaw-wind. Within a short space of time the path we are treading will never be able to know the footsteps of man again."

It is clear that these sentiments were born of a profound insight into the realities of the time. He who would understand the age in which we live and especially the task that faces the individual, he who can look beyond the moment and the day will himself feel what is expressed in those passages and will perhaps say: Nietzsche's mental derangement prevented him from adopting a critical attitude to the ideas which arose in him. None the less these ideas stemmed from an acute sensitivity to the immediate realities of the present age. Perhaps we shall one day draw a comparison between Nietzsche's response to his age and the customary pronouncements of "experts" which do not even touch the fringe of the causes which lie at the root of our present difficult times. We shall then change our attitude and see the necessity for Spiritual Science today. People are unwilling to listen to the teachings of Spiritual Science; but in saying this I have no wish to imply reproach. Far be it from me to attach blame to anyone. The people to whom I am referring are for the most part those for whom I feel great respect and who, in my opinion, would be the first to take to Spiritual Science. I simply wish to point out how difficult it is

for the individual to be receptive to Spiritual Science if he is impervious to spiritual appeal, if he succumbs entirely to the Zeitgeist, to the superficial trends of the time. One must be fully aware of this.

At this juncture I can now revert to Kjellen's book, *The State as Organism*. It is a curious book because the author strives with every fibre of his being to clarify the question: What is the State in reality? - and because he does not believe in the capacity of man's ideas and concepts to understand this question. It is true that the book contains many fine things which have been praised by contemporary critics, but the author has not the slightest idea of the deeper layers of understanding and knowledge which are necessary in order to rescue mankind from its present predicament. I have only time to refer to the central theme of his book. Kjellen raises the question: What is the relation of the individual to the State? And in attempting to answer this question he immediately came up against a difficulty. He wished to depict the State as a reality, as an integrated whole, in other words, as an organism primarily. Many have already described the State as an organism and are then always faced with the question: an organism consists of cells, what then are the cells of the State? Clearly the individual members of the State! - And on the whole Kjellen also shared this view: the State is an organism as the human or animal organism is an organism, and just as the human organism consists of individual cells, so too the State consists of individual cells, of human beings who are the cells of the State.

One can hardly imagine a more misguided or misleading analogy. If we follow up the analogy we shall never arrive at a clear understanding of man. Why is this? The cells of the human organism are juxtaposed, and this juxtaposition has a special significance. The whole structure of the human organism depends upon this juxtaposition. In the organism of the State the individual units or members are not contiguous like the individual cells in the human or animal organism. That is out of the question. In the totality of the State the human personality is something wholly different from the cells in the organism. And even if at a pinch we compare the State with an organism we must realize that we and the whole of political science are sorely mistaken if we overlook the fact that the individual is not a cell; only the productive element in man can sustain the State, whilst the organism is an aggregate of cells and it is they which determine its functioning. Therefore the present State in which the group-soul is no longer the same as in ancient times can only progress through the endeavour or initiative of the single individual. This cannot be compared with the function of the cells. As a rule it is immaterial what we choose to

compare, but if we make a comparison between two objects they must be related objects. As a rule it is accepted that analogies are valid to some extent, but they should not be so far fetched as Kjellén's analogy. There is no objection to his comparing the State with an organism; one could equally well compare it with a machine (there is no harm in that) or even with a penknife - doubtless points of similarity can be found here too - but, if the comparison is carried through, it must be consistent. But people are not sufficiently familiar with the principles of logic to be aware of this.

Now Kjellén is perfectly entitled to compare the State with an organism if he so wishes. But if he wishes to make this comparison he must look for the right cells. But they cannot be found because the State has no cells! If we think about the matter concretely the analogy breaks down. I simply wish to point out that one can only carry this analogy through if one thinks in an abstract way like Kjellen. The moment one thinks realistically, one demurs, because the idea has no roots in reality. We find that the State has no cells. On the other hand we discover that the individual States can perhaps be compared to cells and that the sum total of States on Earth can be compared to an organism. A fruitful idea then occurs to us. But first we must answer the question: what kind of organism? Where can one find something comparable in the kingdom of nature where the cells fit into each other in the same way as the individual "State cells" fit into the entire organism of the Earth? Pursuing this idea we find that we can only compare the entire Earth organism with a plant organism, not with an animal organism and still less with a human organism. Whilst natural science is only concerned with the inorganic, with the mineral kingdom, political science must be founded on a higher order of ideas, on the ideas of the plant kingdom. We must look to neither the animal nor the human kingdom and we must free ourselves from mineralized thinking, dead thought forms to which the scientists are so firmly attached. They cannot rise to the higher order of ideas embodied in the plant kingdom, but apply laws of the mineral kingdom to the State and call it political science.

In order to arrive at this fruitful conception mentioned above our whole thinking must be rooted in Spiritual Science. We shall then be able to satisfy ourselves that the whole being of man by virtue of his individuality is far superior to the State, he penetrates into the spiritual world where the State cannot enter. If therefore you compare the State with an organism and the individual member of the State with the cells, then, if you think realistically, you will arrive at the idea of an organism consisting of individual cells, but the cells would everywhere extend beyond the epidermis. You would have an organism with its cells which extends

beyond the epidermis; the cells would develop independently of the organism and would be self-contained. You would therefore have to picture the organism as if "living bristles" which felt themselves to be individuals were everywhere projecting beyond the epidermis. Living thinking thus brings us into touch with reality, and shows us the impossible difficulties that must face us if we wish to grasp any idea that is to be fruitful. It is not surprising therefore that ideas which are not impregnated with Spiritual Science have not the capacity to sustain us in coping with our present situation. For how can one reduce to order the chaos in the world if one has no idea of its cause? No matter how many Wilsonian manifestos are issued by all kinds of international organizations or associations and the like, so long as they have no roots in reality, they are so much empty talk. Hence the many proposals which are put forward today are a sheer waste of time.

Here is an example which demonstrates how imperative it is that our present age should be permeated with the impulses of Spiritual Science. It is the tragedy of our time that it is powerless to develop ideas which could reconcile and control the organic life of the State. Hence everything is in a state of chaos. But it must now be clear to you where the deeper causes of this chaos are to be sought. And it is not surprising therefore that books such as Kjellen's *The State as Organism* conclude in the most remarkable manner. We are now living in an age when everybody is wondering what is to be done so that men may once again live in harmony, when with every week they are increasingly determined to live in enmity and to slaughter each other. How are they to be brought together again? But the science which deals with the question of how men are once again to develop social relationships within the State concludes in Kjellen's case with these words: "This must be the conclusion of our enquiry into the State as organism. We have seen that for compelling reasons the State of today had made little progress in this direction and has not yet become fully aware that this is its function. None the less we believe in a higher form of State which recognizes a more clearly defined rational purpose and which will make determined efforts to achieve this goal."

That is the concluding passage in his book; but we do not know, we have no idea what will come of it. Such are the findings of a painstaking and conscientious thinking that is so caught up in the stream of contemporary thought that it overlooks the essentials. One must face these problems squarely; for the impulse, the desire to gain insight into these problems only arises when we face them squarely, when we know what are the driving forces in our present age.

Even without looking far beneath the surface we perceive today an urge towards a kind of "socialization", I do not mean towards socialism, but towards "socialization" of the Earth organism. But socialization - because it must be conscious, and not proceed from the unconscious as in the last two thousand years - socialization, reorientation or reorganization, is only possible if we understand the nature of man, if we learn to know once again the being of man - for that was the object of the ancient Mysteries. Socialization applies to the physical plane. But it is impossible to establish a social order if one ignores the fact that on the physical plane are to be found not only physical men, but men endowed with soul and spirit. Nothing can be achieved if we think of man only in physical terms. You may socialize, you may order social life in accordance with contemporary ideas, and within twenty years everything will be in chaos again if you ignore the fact that man is not only the physical being known to natural science, but a being endowed with soul and spirit. For soul and spirit are active agents and exercise a powerful influence. We may ignore their existence in our ideas and representations, but we cannot abolish them. If the soul is to inhabit a physical body which participates in a social order appropriate to our time it must have freedom of thought and opinion. Socialization cannot be realized without freedom of thought. And socialization and freedom of thought cannot be realized unless the spirit is rooted in the spiritual world itself.

Freedom of thought as an attitude of mind or way of thinking, pneumatology, spiritual maturity and spiritual science - as scientific foundation of all ordinances and directives - these are inseparably linked. We can only discover through spiritual science how these things are related to man and how they can be realized practically in the social order. Freedom of thought, that is, an attitude to one's neighbour that fully recognizes his right to freedom of thought, cannot be realized unless we accept the principle of reincarnation, for otherwise we look upon man as an abstraction. We shall never see him in the right light unless we look upon him as the result of repeated lives on Earth. The whole question of reincarnation must be examined in connection with the question of freedom of thought and opinion. The life of man will be impossible in the future unless the inner life of the individual can be rooted in the life of the spirit. I am not suggesting that he must become clairvoyant, though this will certainly occur in individual cases, but I maintain that he must be firmly rooted in the life of the spirit. I have often explained that this is perfectly possible without becoming clairvoyant. If we look around a little we shall find where the major hindrances lie and in what direction we must

look for the source of these obstacles. It is not that people are unwilling to search for the truth - and as I have said, I do not wish to reprove or to criticize - but they erect psychic barriers and are the victims of their many inhibitions.

Often an isolated instance is so instructive that we are able to gain a real understanding of many contemporary phenomena from these symptoms. There is one symptom peculiar to our own time which is most remarkable. It is curious how people who are normally so brave and courageous today, are terrified when they hear that the claims of spiritual knowledge are to be recognized. They are bewildered. I have often told you that I noticed that many who had attended one or two lectures were not seen again for some time. Meeting them in the street I asked why they had never turned up again. "I dare not", came the reply. "I am afraid you might convince me." They find such a possibility dangerous and disturbing and are not prepared to expose themselves to the risk. I could cite many other examples of a similar kind from my own experience, but I prefer to give examples from the wider field of public life.

A short time ago I spoke here of Hermann Bahr ([note 5](#)) who recently gave a lecture here in Berlin entitled "The Ideas of 1914". I pointed out how he attempted - you need only read his last novel *Himmelfahrt* - not only to move a little in the direction of Spiritual Science, but he even tried in his later years to arrive at an inner understanding of Goethe, that is, to follow the path which I would recommend to those who wish to provide themselves with a sound background for their introduction to Spiritual Science. There are very many today who would like to speak of the spirit once again, who would welcome any and every opportunity to revive knowledge of the spirit. I do not wish to lecture or criticize, least of all a person such as Hermann Bahr for whom I feel great affection. Even if it is far from our intention to sermonize, we none the less have the strange feeling that an outlook such as that of Hermann Bahr has contributed to the corruption of thought and has infected human thinking with original sin.

Now in his Berlin lecture Hermann Bahr expressed many fine and admirable sentiments; but many astonishing things come to light. He began by saying that this war had taught us something completely new. It had taught us to integrate the individual once again into the community in the right way, to sacrifice our individualism, our ego centricity for the benefit of the whole. This war has taught us, he said, to make a clean sweep of the past with its antiquated ideas and to fill our inner life with

something completely new. And he proceeded to describe the inestimable benefits this war has brought us. I have no wish to criticize, quite the reverse. But after a lengthy disquisition on how the war has transformed us all, how we shall be completely` changed through the war, it is strange to come upon the concluding passage: "Man always cherishes hope of a better future, but himself remains incorrigible. Even the war will leave us much as we are." As I said before, I have no wish to criticize, but I cannot help being touched by these high hopes. These people are motivated by the best of intentions; they wish to find once again the path to the spiritual. And Bahr therefore emphasized that we had relied too much upon the individual; we had practised the cult of individualism far too long. We must learn once again to surrender to the whole. Those who belong to a nation have learned to merge with the nation, to sacrifice their separateness. And nations too, he believes, are only totalities of individual characteristics, parts of a greater whole which will later emerge. Thus Bahr sometimes betrays, and especially in this lecture, the paths he none the less follows in order to arrive at the spirit. Sometimes he gives only vague indications, but these indications are most revealing. Ring out the old, the past is dead, is his motto. The Aufklärung wished to found everything on a basis of reason; but all to no purpose, everything has ended in chaos. We must find something that brings us in touch with Reality and saves us from chaos. And in this context Bahr once again makes astonishing revelations:

"Perhaps nations and individuals would then have learned what is most difficult for them to learn - to grant to others the right to individuality that each individual claims for himself, for, in the final analysis, the individuality of others is the precondition of one's own. If we were all alike there would be no distinguishing features. And they would have learned that just as each individual with his distinctive gifts in his own particular field is necessary to the nation, in order through his self-fulfilment to sustain the nation and thus at the same time to be self-sufficient and also to serve the nation, so too the universality of mankind, the common membership of all mankind that reaches to the Divine grows out of nations and transcends nations."

That is a hint, if not a broad hint, at least it is a clear hint. People are striving to find the way to God, but are unwilling to follow the path that is appropriate to our time. They are looking therefore for a different path which already exists, but it never occurs to them that this traditional path was indeed effective up to 1914 and now, in order to obviate its consequences, they want to return to it again!

The symptoms manifested here are, I think, deserving of quiet examination, for these are the views not of a single individual, but of a vast number of people who feel and think in this way. A book by Max Scheler (note 6) recently appeared with the title *Der Genius des Krieges and der deutsche Krieg*. It is a good book and I can safely recommend it. Bahr too thinks highly of it. He is a man of taste and well informed and has every reason to commend it. But he also wishes to publicize the book and proposes to write a highly favourable review, a puff to boost Scheler. He wonders how best to proceed. To scandalize the public is not the right approach; some other way must be found to attract their attention. What was he to do? Now Hermann Bahr is a very sincere and honest man and leaves no doubt as to what he would do in such a case. In his article on Scheler he begins by saying: Scheler has written many articles to show how we could escape from our present predicament. Scheler caught the public eye. But, says Bahr, people today do not approve of being told whom to read; it goes against the grain. And so Hermann Bahr characterizes Scheler in the following way: "People were curious about him and yet rather suspicious of him; we Germans want to know above all where we stand in relation to an author. We do not like indefiniton."

Let us have therefore a clear picture. This is not achieved by reading books and accepting their arguments; something more is needed. Bahr now gives a further hint: "Even the Catholics preferred to reserve judgement (on Scheler) lest they should be disappointed. His idiom displeased them. For every mental climate creates in the course of time its own native idiom which gives a particular flavour and meaning to words of common usage. In this way one recognizes who 'belongs', with the result that ultimately one pays less attention to what is said than to how it is said."

Hermann Bahr decided to announce Scheler with a flourish of trumpets. Now, like Bahr himself, Scheler hints at those remarkable catholicizing endeavours - always tentatively at first, he never commits himself immediately. Now according to Bahr, Scheler does not speak like a genuine Catholic. But Catholics want to know where they stand in relation to

Scheler, and especially Bahr himself since he intends to puff Scheler in the Catholic periodical "Hochland". After all, people must know that Scheler can be safely recommended to Catholics. They do not like to be left in the dark, they want to know the truth.

And this is the crux of the matter. People will know where they stand if they are told that it is perfectly safe for Catholics to read Scheler! The fact that he is exceptionally clever and witty is of no consequence; Catholics have no objection to that. Bahr, however, proposes to hold up Scheler as an outstanding personality in order to boost his importance, but at the same time he does not wish to offend people. First of all he bewails the fact that mankind has become empty and vapid, that man has lost all connection with the spirit; but he must find his way back to the spirit once again. I quote a few passages from Hermann Bahr on Scheler which touch upon this subject:

"Reason broke away from the Church and arrogantly assumed that of itself it could understand, determine, order, command, shape and direct life."

Hermann Bahr lacks the courage to say: reason must now seek contact with the spiritual world. He therefore says: reason must look to the Church once again.

"Reason broke away from the Church and arrogantly assumed that of itself it could understand, determine, order, command, shape and direct life. It (reason) had scarcely begun to take the first steps in this direction than it took fright and lost confidence in itself. This self-awareness of reason, the consciousness of its boundaries, of the limitations of its own power when bereft of the divine afflatus, began with Kant. He recognized that reason of itself cannot achieve that which by its very nature it is constrained to will; it cannot achieve the goal it has set itself. He called a halt to reason at the very moment where it promised to be fruitful. Kant set boundaries to reason, but his disciples extended these boundaries and each went his own way. Ultimately godless reason had no other choice but to abdicate. It realized finally that it can know nothing. It searched for truth so long until it discovered that either truth was non-existent or that there was no truth to which man could attain."

Enough has now been said in defence of the modern outlook and all those fine sentiments about the "boundaries of knowledge."

"Since that time we have lived without truth, believing there is no truth. We continued to live however as if truth must none the less exist. In fact, in order to live we had to live by denying our reason. And so we preferred to abandon reason completely. We committed intellectual suicide. Soon man was regarded simply as a bundle of impulses. He was proud of his dehumanisation. And the consequence was 1914."

And so Hermann Bahr praises Scheler because of his Catholicizing bent. Then he proceeds to give a somewhat distorted picture of Goethe, for he had been at pains for some time to depict him as a dyed-in-the-wool Catholic. And then goes on to say:

"The modern scientist denied his spiritual birthright. Science abandoned presuppositions. Reason no longer derived from the divine the 'impulse' which is imperative for its effectiveness. What other path was open to it? None, save the appeal to the instincts. The man without established values was suspended over an abyss. And the result was - 1914."

"If we are to build afresh it must be from totally new foundations. If we are to bring about a spiritual renewal we must make a complete break with the past. It would be presumptuous to aim at the immediate spiritual rehabilitation of Europe. We must first rehabilitate man and restore his lost innocence; he must become aware once again that he is a member of the spiritual world. Freedom, individuality, dignity, morality, science and art have vanished from the world since faith, hope and love are no more. And only faith, hope and love can restore them. We have no other choice, either the end of the world or - omnia instaurare in Christo" (to renew all things in Christ).

But this "omnia instaurare in Christo" does not imply a search for the spirit, a move towards the investigation or exploration of the spirit, but the inclusion of the nations in the Catholic fold. How is it, Bahr asks, that men are able to think for themselves and yet are able to remain good Catholics? We must look to those who are suited to the present age. And Scheler fits the bill for he is not such a fool as to speak for example of an evolution into the spiritual world, or to specify a particular spiritual teaching. He is not such a fool as to commit himself openly, as is the case with those who speak of the spirit and then suggest: the rest will be added unto you if you enter the Church, i.e. the Catholic Church - for that is implied both by Bahr and Scheler which in their opinion is sufficiently all-embracing. In this way conflicting opinions can be reconciled under the umbrella of the Church.

None the less people today want to think for themselves and Scheler adapts himself to their thoughts. Indeed, Bahr believes that Scheler in this respect is a master of giving people what they want:

"Scheler attracts attention because he does not gesticulate or raise his voice. Involuntarily people ask who can it be who appears to be so sure of his influence that he does not feel it necessary to raise his voice. It is a favourite device of seasoned orators to open on a quiet note and thus command the silent attention of the audience; the orator must also have the power to hold them spellbound. Scheler can do this in masterly fashion. He so captivates his listener that the listener is unaware whither he is being led and suddenly finds himself at a destination that was wholly unforeseen. Starting from unexpected propositions which the listener innocently accepts, Scheler forces him imperceptibly to conclusions which he would have actively resisted had he been in any way forewarned. In this respect Scheler's art of persuasion is unrivalled. He is a born educator; I know of no one who can lead us so easily but firmly to the truth."

Indeed it is a special art to be able to take people by surprise in this way. First one makes statements that are unexceptionable; then the argument proceeds slowly and leads to a conclusion at which the audience would have demurred had they been aware of it from the start. How does one account for this, Bahr asks, and what must be done in order to act with the right intentions? In this review of Scheler Bahr gives his honest and candid opinion:

"The question now is whether the average German can grasp the magnitude of the moment and all that it portends. He is animated by the best of intentions, but still fondly imagines that belief is no longer possible for modern man since it has been scientifically refuted. He does not suspect that this 'science or dogma of unbelief' has itself long been refuted scientifically. He knows nothing of the quiet preparatory work

in this direction of the outstanding German philosophers of our time - Lotze, Franz Brentano, Dilthey, Eucken, and Husserl." (note 7).

I now beg you to give special attention to the following:

"The ordinary person still hears in the last faint echo of the Münchhausen posthorn, the latest aberration which, unbeknown to him, has already been refuted. Amidst this confusion a calm clear voice will soon be heard which gives no suspicion of the sentimental day dreaming, romanticism or mysticism which fills the ordinary person with unholy dread. And precisely because Scheler pleads the cause of a recovery of faith straightforwardly and unemotionally and in the customary jargon of the 'cultivated man of our time', he is the man we need today."

So now we know! Now we know why Bahr approves of Scheler. He (Scheler) cannot be accused of being a visionary or a mystic, for the average German is mortally afraid of them. And woe betide anyone who does not respect this fear, for if he were take it into his head to banish this fear or recognize the need to struggle against it, it would need more than a little courage to venture on such an undertaking.

Because I have great respect and affection for Hermann Bahr I would like to show that he is typical of those who find great difficulty in accepting a spiritual teaching of which our time stands in need. But there is promise of hope only if we overcome that terrible fear, if we have the courage to acknowledge that Spiritual Science is not an idle fancy, that the greatest clarity of thought is called for if we wish to make the right approach to Spiritual Science, for there is little evidence of clear thinking in the few examples which I have quoted to you today from Hermann Bahr and other contemporary writers. Spiritual courage is called for if we wish to develop ideas that are strong and effective. We need not go all the way with Nietzsche, nor need we wholly share the view he expresses in a passage which none the less may attract our attention; but when this sensitive spirit, stimulated perhaps by his illness, expresses his boldest and most

courageous opinions we must nevertheless go along with him. The fear of being misunderstood must not deter us. It would be the greatest calamity that could befall us today if we were to be afraid of being misunderstood. We must sometimes perhaps pass judgements like the following judgement of Nietzsche, even though it may not be sound in every detail; that is not important. In his treatise "On the History of Christianity" he wrote:

"Christianity as a historical reality must not be confused with that one root which its name recalls: the other roots from which it has sprung are by far the more important. It is an unprecedented abuse of language to associate such manifestations of decay and such monstrosities as the 'Christian Church', 'Christian belief' and 'Christian life' with that Holy Name. What did Christ deny? - Everything which today is called Christian!"

Although this is perhaps an extreme view, Nietzsche nevertheless touched upon something which has a certain truth; but he expressed it somewhat radically. It is true to the extent that one could say: What would Christ most vigorously condemn if He were to appear in our midst today? Most probably what the majority of people call "Christian" today, and much else besides, which I will discuss in our lecture on Tuesday next.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Rudolf Kjellen (1864–1922), Swedish historian, professor at Upsala. Belonged to the school of "geopolitics", the doctrine of the interaction of geographical and political factors in the constitution and development of States.

Note 2. Theophilus. Patriarch of Alexandria 385–412. He condemned Origen at the Synod of Alexandria 408. "He deprived the pagans of Alexandria of a temple ... and apparently destroyed other temples. A riot ensued and a number of Christians were slain. With Theophilus at their head the Christians retaliated by destroying the celebrated temple of Serapis on the ruins of which the patriarch erected a church." (Quotation from the Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. XIV, 1913.)

Note 3. Mithras Initiation. According to R. J. Vermaseren, in *Mithras, the Secret God* (Chatto & Windus, 1963) he who had acquired sufficient knowledge "could gain successively the title of Raven (Corax), Bride

(Nymphus), Soldier (Miles), Lion (Leo), Persian (Perses), Courier of the Sun (Heliodromus) and Father (Pater)". This book is a classic in the study of Mithraism. There are figures in the text and illustrations.

Note 4. Nietzsche. "The Will to Power and the Transvaluation of all Values." According to P. Tillich "will" here means "the universal dynamics of all life processes and 'power' the affirmation of one's own individual existence. It is the power of the best." The transvaluation of all values implies that since "God is dead", i.e. that traditional and ethical values no longer stem from belief in a transcendent authority, man himself must re-create them. The "übermensch" must be developed. He is the "superior" man physically, mentally and spiritually, the man of self-discipline who has learned to command and obey, to accept responsibility, whose watchword is duty and honour. It is an aristocratic ideal. According to Nietzsche his antitype is mass man, the "herd man" who has succumbed to ideologies that promise happiness and well-being. He is timid, bored, conformist, opposed to tradition and culture. This "slave morality" is utilitarian and keeps only its own advantage in view and prepares the ochlocracy, the "nihilism" towards which we are moving (p. 13 in the English text).

Note 5. Hermann Bahr (1863–1934). Austrian dramatist, novelist and essayist. In his later years he returned to the Church and represented the Catholic school of thought, cf. his novel *Himmelfahrt*.

Note 6. Max Scheler (1874–1928). Professor of Philosophy at Cologne, 1920–21. His writings have a strong theistic flavour and he was a subtle advocate of Catholicism.

Note 7. Lotze (1817–81), Dilthey (1833–1911), R. Eucken (1846–1929), Husserl (1859–1938) were philosophers of idealism. They were opposed to the mechanistic scientific philosophy of the age and pleaded the cause of ethical idealism.



Lecture 10

Berlin, 8th May, 1917

It might seem at first sight that in the centuries immediately following the Mystery of Golgotha mankind had not been touched by the light of spiritual illumination; that this was the normal condition of mankind and increasingly so up to the present day. This is not so, however. If we wish to see these things in perspective we must distinguish between the prevailing spirit of mankind and that which occurs here and there in the life of mankind and may play a decisive part in the different spheres of life. It would be most discouraging for many today to be told of the existence of a spiritual world, but that the doors to this world were closed to them. And there are many at the present time who have come to this depressing conclusion. The reason for this is not far to seek. Where there is a clear possibility of gaining insight into the spiritual world they refuse to commit themselves unreservedly. Nor have they the courage to pass an objective judgement on this issue. It may seem therefore - but in reality it is only apparently so - that today we are far removed from those early times when the spiritual world was revealed to the whole of mankind through atavistic clairvoyance, or from the later times when the few could find access to the spirit through initiation into the Mysteries. We must draw together certain strands which link early periods of human evolution with the present if we wish to arrive at a full understanding of the mystery of man's destiny and especially of those phenomena we have discussed in these lectures in connection with the nature of the Mysteries. I should like to select an example from recent times which is accessible to all and which will lend encouragement to those who are faced with the decision of choosing paths leading to the spiritual world. From the many examples at our disposal I would like to take an example which demonstrates at the same time how these phenomena are none the less misjudged from the materialistic point of view of the present day - and will also be misjudged in the immediate future.

No doubt you have all heard of Otto Ludwig ([note 1](#)) who was born in 1813, in the same year as Hebbel and Richard Wagner. Otto Ludwig was not only a poet - some may feel perhaps that he was not in the front rank of poets, but that does not concern us at the moment - but he was a man given to introspection, who sought self-knowledge and who succeeded in

penetrating into the inner life which is veiled from the majority today. Otto Ludwig describes very beautifully what he experiences in the process of poetic composition or when he reads the poetry of others and surrenders to its appeal. He then realizes that he does not read or compose like other men, but that an extraordinary ferment is set up within him. And Otto Ludwig gives a beautiful description of this in a passage I will now read to you because it reveals a piece of self-knowledge of a typically modern man who, in the course of this self-revelation, speaks of things which our present materialistic age regards as the wildest fantasy. But Otto Ludwig was no visionary or idle dreamer. By nature he was perhaps introspective, but if we take into consideration the information we have about his life, we shall find that alongside this introspective tendency there was something eminently sane and balanced in his make-up. He describes his own creative experience and his response to the poetry of others in these words:

"I experience first of all a musical impression which is transformed into colour (note 2). Then I see one or more figures in various postures executing formalized gestures, singly or facing each other, the whole resembling a copper engraving on parchment, coloured paper or, more precisely, like a marble statue or sculptural group on which the sun falls through a veil of that colour. I experience this colour phenomenon after reading poetry which has stirred me deeply. If I put myself in the mood which Goethe's poetry evokes I see a deep golden yellow passing over into golden brown. When I read Schiller I experience a brilliant crimson; with Shakespeare every scene is a particular nuance of the particular colour I associate with the whole drama. Strangely enough the image or the group evoked is not usually a representation of the denouement, sometimes it is only a characteristic figure in some moving posture which is immediately joined by a succession of other figures. At first I know nothing of the plot or content of the drama, but ever fresh miming figures, seemingly three-dimensional, are rapidly added, now from the beginning, now from the end of the initial dramatic situation until I experience the whole drama complete with all its scenes. The whole passes before me in rapid succession; meanwhile I remain passive and a kind of physical anxiety grips me. I can then reproduce at will the content of the individual scenes as they unfold; but I find it

impossible to condense the narrative content into a brief account. Next the gestures are accompanied by speech. I write down what I can recall, but, once the mood forsakes me, what I have noted down becomes a dead letter. Then I proceed to fill in the gaps in the dialogue, but for this purpose I must cast a critical eye over what I have written."

Here then we have the remarkable case of a man who experiences crimson-red on reading Schiller, or golden yellow passing over into golden brown on reading the dramas or poems of Goethe, who experiences a colour sensation with every drama of Shakespeare; who, when he composes or reads a poem sees figures like those of a copper engraving printed on a parchment-coloured background, or three-dimensional miming figures on which the sun falls through a veil which diffuses the light that evokes the total mood.

Now we must understand this experience in the correct way. It is not yet a clairvoyant perception, but it is a step towards spiritual vision. In order to have a right understanding of this mood from the standpoint of Spiritual Science we must realize that Otto Ludwig was no stranger to spiritual vision. For if he were to advance further along this path he would not only experience these visions, but, just as physical objects are visible to the physical eye, spiritual beings would be visible to his spiritual eye and he would know them as an inner experience. Just as we see scattered light when we gently rub our eyes in the dark, light that seemingly radiates from the eye and fills the room, so from his inner life Ludwig radiates impressions of colour and tone. As he rightly says, he experiences them first as musical impressions. He does not exploit them in order to gain spiritual insight; but we perceive that he is mature enough spiritually to embark on the path leading to the spiritual world.

It is no longer possible to deny that there exist people who are aware that "spiritual vision" is a reality, the vision that the neophytes learned to develop in the Mysteries in the way described in earlier lectures. For the real purpose of these ceremonies was primarily to call attention to the eye of the soul, to awaken man to the fact of its existence. That the phenomena which I have just described to you are not rightly understood today is evident from the observations of Gustav Freytag ([note 3](#)). When speaking of Otto Ludwig, he says:

"The work of this writer and indeed his whole makeup, was akin to that of an epic poet of the time when, in the early dawn of nations, the poetic figures were visioned by the poet as living Imaginations imbued with colour and sound."

This statement is perfectly correct, but has nothing to do with poetic composition. For the experiences of Otto Ludwig were not only shared by poets in ancient times, but by all men, and were shared in later times by those who had been initiated into the Mysteries irrespective of whether they were poets or not. These experiences have therefore no connection with poetic invention. Behind the barrier which the materialist of today has erected in his own soul there is to be found that which Otto Ludwig describes. It is found not only in the poet, but in every man today. The fact that he was a poet has nothing to do with the phenomenon of poetic vision, but is something that accompanies it. One may be a far greater poet than Otto Ludwig and that which one is able to describe may remain entirely in the subconscious. It is present in the substratum of the subconscious, but need not manifest itself. For poetry, indeed art as a whole today, is something other than the conscious fashioning of clairvoyant impressions.

I quote the case of Otto Ludwig as an example of a man - and men of his type are by no means rare today - who stands on the threshold of the spiritual world. If one practises the exercises given in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, that which already exists in the soul is raised into consciousness, so that one learns to use it or to apply it consciously. It is important to bear this in mind. The problem is not so much that it is difficult to reach the hidden depths of the soul, but that people today lack the courage to embark upon a spiritual training; and that for the most part those who would willingly do so from a heartfelt need to know and to understand, none the less feel constrained to admit this need, albeit somewhat shamefacedly in their own intimate circle, but conceal it when they later find themselves in the company of contemporary intellectuals. What we should characterize today as the right path, perhaps because we live in the Michael Age since 1879, need not of necessity be regarded as the only right path. Looking back over the recent past it is possible that many may have attained a high degree of clairvoyance, genuine

clairvoyance; there is no need for us therefore either to recognize fully or to accept this clairvoyance unreservedly, nor to regard it as something dangerous and to be rejected.

There are certainly many factors which for some time have undermined our courage to accept the validity of clairvoyance, and for this reason the assessment of Swedenborg (who has often been mentioned in your circle) has been so strange. He could act as a stimulus to many, in that people might see in him an individuality who had lifted to some extent the veils that concealed the spiritual world. Swedenborg had developed a high degree of Imaginative cognition which is a necessity for all who would penetrate to the spiritual world. It was indispensable to him; it was simply a kind of transition to higher stages of knowledge. And it was especially his clairvoyant sense for Imaginative cognition that he had developed. But precisely because this Imaginative cognition was stirring and pulsating in him he was able to make observations about the relations between the spiritual world and the phenomenal world, observations which are highly significant for those who seek to clarify their ideas about clairvoyance by studying the development of particular personalities. I should like to take Swedenborg as an example in order to illustrate how he came to self-understanding, how he thought and felt in order to keep his inner life attuned to the spiritual world. He was not motivated by egoism in his search for the spirit. He was already fifty-five years old when the doors of the spiritual world were opened to him (note 4). He was therefore a man of ripe experience; he had received a sound scientific training and had long been active in this field. The most important scientific works of Swedenborg have just been published in many volumes by the Stockholm Academy of Sciences and they contain material that may well determine the course of science for many years to come. But people today have learned the trick of recognizing a man such as Swedenborg (who was the leading scientist of his day) only in so far as they agree with him; otherwise they label him a fool. And they perform this trick with consummate skill. They attach no importance to the fact that from the age of fifty-five Swedenborg bears witness to the reality of the spiritual world - a man whose scientific achievement not only compares favourably with that of others - in itself no mean feat - but who, as a scientist, stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries.

Swedenborg was particularly interested in the question of the interaction of soul and body. After his spiritual enlightenment he wrote a superb treatise on this subject. The content was approximately as follows: In considering the interrelation of body and soul there are three possibilities.

First, the body is the decisive factor; sense-impressions are mediated by the body and react upon the soul. The soul therefore is to some extent dependent upon the body. The second possibility is that the body is dependent upon the soul which is the source of the spiritual impulses. The soul fashions the body and makes use of the body during its lifetime. In this case one must speak not of a physical influence, but of a psychic influence. The third possibility is as follows: body and soul are contiguous, but do not interact; a higher power brings about a harmony or agreement between them just as two clocks which are independent of each other agree when they show the time. When therefore an external impression is made upon the senses, a thought process is set up within the soul, but both are unrelated; a corresponding impression is made upon the soul from within by a higher power, just as an impression is made upon the soul through the senses from without. Swedenborg points out that the first and third possibilities are impossible for those who are able to see into the spiritual world, that it is evident to the spiritually enlightened that the soul by virtue of its inner forces is related to a spiritual sun in the same way as the (physical) body is related to the physical sun. And he also shows that everything of a physical nature is dependent upon soul and spirit. He throws fresh light upon what we called the Sun mystery (when speaking of the Mysteries), that mystery of which Julian the Apostate had a dim recollection when he spoke of the sun as a spiritual being. It was this which was the cause of his hostility to Christianity because the Christianity of his day sought to deny Christ's relation to the sun. Through Imaginative cognition Swedenborg restored the Sun mystery as far as was possible for his time.

I have placed these facts before you in order to show what Swedenborg experienced inwardly in the course of developing his spiritual knowledge. His reflections upon the question I have just touched upon were embodied in a kind of philosophical treatise - the kind of treatise written by one who has insight into the spiritual world, not the kind of treatise written by the academic philosopher who is devoid of spiritual vision. At the conclusion of his treatise Swedenborg speaks of what he calls a "vision". And by this vision he does not imply something he has conjured up, but something he has actually perceived with the eye of the spirit. Swedenborg is not afraid to speak of his spiritual visions. Furthermore he recounts what a particular angel said to him because he is certain of the fact. He no more doubts it than another doubts what a fellow human being has told him. He said: "I was once 'in the spirit'; three Schoolmen appeared to me, disciples of Aristotle, advocates of his doctrine that attributes a physical influence to all

that streams into the soul from without. They appeared on the one side. On the other side appeared three disciples of Descartes who spoke of spiritual influences upon the soul, albeit somewhat inadequately. And behind them appeared three disciples of Leibnitz who spoke of the pre-established harmony, i.e. of the independence of body and soul, of dissimilar monads existing and moving together in a state of absolute harmony pre-established by God. And I perceived nine figures who surrounded me. And the leaders of each group of the three figures were Leibnitz, Descartes and Aristotle, suffused in light". Swedenborg spoke of this vision as one speaks of an event in everyday life. Then, he said, from out of the abyss there rose up a spirit with a torch in his right hand and as he swung the torch in front of the figures they immediately began to dispute amongst themselves. The Aristotelians defended, from their standpoint, the primacy of physical influences, the Cartesians defended spiritual impulses, and likewise the Leibnitzians defended, with the support of Leibnitz himself, the idea of preestablished harmony. Such visions may describe even the smallest details. Swedenborg tells us that Leibnitz appeared dressed in a kind of toga and the lappets were held by his disciple Wolf. Such details always accompany these visions in which such peculiarities are very characteristic. These figures, then, began to dispute amongst themselves. They all had a good case - and any and every case can be defended. Thereupon, after prolonged conflict, the spirit appeared a second time. He carried the torch in his left hand and lit up their heads from behind. Then the battle of words was really joined. They said: "We cannot distinguish which is our body and which is our soul." And so they agreed to cast three slips of paper into a box. On the one slip was written "physical influence", on the second, "spiritual influence" and on the third, "pre-established harmony". Then they drew lots and drew out "spiritual influence" and said: "Let us agree to recognize spiritual influence." At that moment an angel descended from the upper world and said: "It is not fortuitous that you drew out the slip of paper labelled 'spiritual influence'; that choice had already been anticipated by the powers who in their wisdom guide the world because it accords with the truth."

This is the vision described by Swedenborg. It is open to anyone to regard this vision as of no importance, perhaps even as naive. The salient question however is not whether it is naive or not, but that he experienced it. And that which at first sight seems perhaps extremely naive has profound implications. For that which in the phenomenal world appears to be arbitrary, the vagary of chance, is something totally different when seen symbolically from the spiritual angle. It is difficult to come to an

understanding of chance, because chance is only a shadow-image of higher necessities. Swedenborg wishes to indicate something of special importance, namely that it is not he who wills it, but "it" is willed in him. This vision arises because "it" is willed in him. And this is an accurate description of the way in which he arrived at his truths, an accurate description of the spirit in which the treatise was written. How did the Cartesians react? They sought to demonstrate the idea of spiritual influence on purely human and rational grounds. It is possible to arrive at the spirit in this way but that seldom happens. The Aristotelians were no better than the Cartesians; they defended the idea of the spiritual influence, again on human grounds. The Leibnitzians were certainly no better than the other two for they defended the idea of "pre-established harmony". Swedenborg rejected these paths to the spirit; he did everything possible to prepare himself to receive the truth. And this waiting upon truth, not the determination of truth, this passive acceptance of truth was his aim and was symbolized by the drawing of the slips of paper from the box. This is of vital importance.

We do not appreciate these things at their true worth when we approach them intellectually. We only appreciate them in the right way when they are presented symbolically, even though intelligent people may regard the symbol as naive. Our response to symbols is different from our response to abstract ideas. The symbol prepares our soul to receive the truth from the spiritual world. That is the essential. And if we give serious attention to these things we shall gradually understand and develop ideas and concepts which are necessary for mankind today, ideas which they must acquire by effort and which appear to be inaccessible today simply because people are antipathetic towards them - and for no other reason - an antipathy that springs from materialism.

The whole purpose of our investigations was to study the course of human evolution, first of all up to a decisive turning-point - and this turning-point was the Mystery of Golgotha. Then evolution continues and takes on a new course. These two courses are radically different from each other. I have already described in what respects they differed from each other. In order fully to understand this difference let us recall once again the following: in ancient times it was always possible for man without special training of his psychic life (in the Mysteries this was connected with external ceremonies and cult acts) to be convinced of the reality of the spiritual world through the performance of these rites and ceremonies and thereby of his own immortality, because this certainty of immortality was still latent in his corporeal nature. After the Mystery of Golgotha it was no

longer possible for the physical body to "distil" out of itself the conviction of immortality; it could no longer "press" out of itself, so to speak, the perception of immortality. This had been prepared in the centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha. It is most interesting to see how Aristotle, this giant among philosophers, made every effort a few centuries before the Mystery of Golgotha to grasp the idea of the immortality of the soul; but the idea of immortality he arrived at was a most remarkable conception. Man, in Aristotle's opinion, is only a complete man when he possesses a physical body. And Franz Brentano, one of the best Aristotelians of recent time, says in his study of Aristotle that man is no longer a complete man if some member is lacking; how can he be a complete man when he lacks the whole body? Therefore, to Aristotle, when the soul passes through the gates of death it is of less significance than it was when in the body here on Earth. This shows that he had lost the capacity still to perceive the soul, whilst on the other hand the original capacity to accept the immortality of the soul still persisted. Now, strange to relate, Aristotle was the leading philosopher throughout the Middle Ages. All that can be known, said the Schoolmen, is known to Aristotle and as philosophers we have no choice but to rely upon him and follow in his footsteps. They had no intention of developing spiritual powers or capacities beyond the limits set by Aristotelianism. And this is very significant, for it explains clearly why Julian the Apostate rejected the Christianity that was practised by the Church during the age of Constantine. One must really see these things from a higher perspective. Apart from Franz Brentano, one of the leading Aristotelians of our time, I was personally acquainted with Vincenz Knauer, a Benedictine monk, whose relationship to Aristotle as a Roman Catholic was identical with that of the Schoolmen. In speaking of Aristotle he sought to discover at the same time what could be known of the immortality of the soul by purely human knowledge. And Knauer gave the following interesting summary of his opinion:

"The soul, that is, in this connection, the departed spirit - i.e. the soul of man that has passed through the gates of death - finds itself, according to Aristotle, not in a more perfect state, but in a highly imperfect state, inappropriate to its destiny. The image of the soul is by no means that which is often employed, namely, the image of a butterfly which after shedding its chrysalis takes wing. Rather does the soul

resemble a butterfly whose wings have been torn off by a cruel hand and now crawls helplessly in the dust in the form of a miserable worm."

It is very significant that those who are well versed in Aristotle admit that human knowledge could arrive at no other conclusion. And a certain effort therefore is demanded of us to resist the consequences of this attitude of mind. The materialism of the present time is unwittingly influenced by the Conciliar decree of 869 which abolished the spirit and declared that man consisted of body and soul only.

Modern materialism goes even further; it proposes to abolish the soul as well. That of course is the logical sequel. We need therefore both courage and determination in order to find our way back again to the spirit in the right way. Now Julian the Apostate who had been initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries was aware that a specific spiritual training could lead to the realization that the soul is immortal. This Sun mystery was known to him. And he now became aware of something that filled him with alarm. He was unable to grasp the fact that what he feared so much was a necessity. When he looked back to ancient times he realized that directly or indirectly through the Mysteries man was guided by Cosmic Powers, Beings and Forces. He realized that this may happen on the physical plane, that it is ordained from spiritual spheres because men have insight into these spiritual spheres. In Constantinism he saw a form of Christianity emerge which modelled Christian society and the organization of Christianity on the original principles of the Roman empire. He saw that Christianity had infiltrated into that which the Roman empire had intended for the external social order only. And he saw that the divine-spiritual had been harnessed to the Imperium Romanum. And this appalled him; he was unable to bring himself to admit that this was a necessity for a brief period. He realized that there was wide disparity between the mighty impulses of human evolution and what happened historically. I have often called attention to the need to bear in mind the golden age of the rise of Christianity before the era of Constantine. For at that time powerful spiritual impulses were at work which had been obscured solely because man's independent search for knowledge which he owed to the Christ Impulse had been harnessed to the Conciliar decrees.

If we look back to Origen and to Clement of Alexandria we find men who were open-minded, men still imbued with the Greek spirit: yet they were also conscious of the significance of what had been accomplished through the Mystery of Golgotha. Their conception of this Mystery and of the crucified Christ is considered to be pure heresy in the eyes of all denominations today. In reality the great Church Fathers of the pre-Constantine age who are recognized by the Church are the worst heretics of all. Though they were aware of the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha for the evolution of the Earth, they gave no indication of wishing to suppress the path to the Mystery of Golgotha, the gate to the Mysteries or the path of the old clairvoyance, which had been the aim of the Christianity of Constantine. In Clement of Alexandria especially we see that his works are shot through with great mysteries, mysteries which are so veiled that it is even difficult for contemporary man to make head or tail of them. Clement speaks of the Logos for example, of the wisdom that streams through and permeates the Universe. He pictures the Logos as music of the spheres fraught with meaning, and the visible world as the expression of the music of the spheres, just as the visible vibration of the strings of a musical instrument is the expression of the sound waves. Thus, in the eyes of Clement, the human form is made in the image of the Logos; that is, to Clement the Logos is a reality and he sees the human form as a fusion of tones from the music of the spheres. Man, he says, is made in the image of the Logos. And in many of Clement's utterances we find traces of that supernal wisdom that dwelt in him, a wisdom illuminated by the Christ Impulse. If you compare these utterances of Clement of Alexandria with the prevailing attitude today then the claim to recognize a man such as Clement of Alexandria without understanding him will appear as more than passing strange.

When it is said that the aim of Spiritual Science is to follow in the main stream of Christianity, to be a new flowering of Christianity to meet the needs of our time, then the cry is raised - the ancient Gnosis is being revived! And at the mention of Gnosis many professing Christians today begin to cross themselves as if faced by the devil incarnate. Gnosis for today is Spiritual Science; but the more developed gnosis of the present time is different from the gnosis known to Clement of Alexandria. What were the views of Clement of Alexandria who lived in the latter half of the second century? Faith, he says, is our starting-point - the orthodox Christian of today is satisfied with faith alone and asks no more. Faith, according to Clement, is already knowledge, but concise knowledge of what is needed; gnosis however confirms and reinforces what we believe,

is founded on faith through the teaching of Our Lord and so leads to a faith that is scientifically acceptable and irrefutable. In these words Clement of Alexandria expresses for his time what we must realize today. Christianity therefore demands that gnosis, the Spiritual Science of today, must actively participate in the development of Christianity. But the modern philistine protests: "We must distinguish between science (which he would limit to sense experience) and faith. Faith must have no part in science." Clement of Alexandria however says: To faith is added gnosis, to gnosis love, and to love the "Kingdom". This is one of the most profound utterances of the human spirit because it bears witness to an intimate union with the life of the spirit. First we are nourished in faith; but to faith is added gnosis, that is, knowledge or understanding. Out of this living knowledge, i.e. when we penetrate deeply into things, there is first born genuine love through which our Divine inheritance operates. Mankind can only be the vehicle of the influx of the Divine as it was in the "beginning" if to faith is added gnosis, to gnosis love and to love the "Kingdom". We must look upon these utterances as bearing witness to the deep spirituality of Clement.

Difficult as it may seem we must make the true form of Christian life once again accessible to mankind today. It is important to see certain things for what they are today and we shall then know where to look for the real cause of our present tribulations (i.e. the War of 1914). The effect of these calamities is such that, as a rule, no attempt is made to discover what really lies behind them. When, for example, an Alpine village is buried beneath an avalanche, everyone sees the avalanche crash down; but if we want to discover the cause of the avalanche we must look for it perhaps in an ice-crystal where the snow-slip began. It is easy enough to observe the destruction of the village by the avalanche, but it is not so easy to provide tangible evidence that the disaster was caused by an ice-crystal. And so it is with the great events of history! It is evident that mankind is now caught up in a terrible catastrophe; this is the conflagration that has overwhelmed us. We have to look for the sparks - and they are many - which first set the conflagration alight. But we do not pursue our enquiries far enough in order to ascertain where the conflagration first began. Today we are afraid to see things for what they are.

Let us assume that we wish to form an opinion about a certain field of science. Usually we rely upon the opinion of the specialist in that particular field. Why is his opinion accepted as authoritative? Simply because he is an expert in this field. Generally speaking it is the specialist or university professor who determines what is accepted as scientific today. Let us take a concrete case. I am well aware that it does not make for popularity to

call a spade a spade, but that is no matter. But unless an increasing number of people is prepared to get to the root of things today we shall not overcome our present tribulations. Let us assume that a leading authority says the following: people are always talking about man in terms of body and soul. This idea of the dualism of body and soul is fundamentally unsatisfactory. That we still speak of body and soul today is due to the fact that we are dependent on a language that is already outmoded, which we have inherited from an earlier epoch when people were far more stupid than today. These people were so foolish as to believe that the body and soul were separate entities. When we speak of these matters today we are compelled to make use of these terms; we are victims of a language which belongs to the past. And our authority continues: we have to accept body and soul as separate entities, but this is quite unjustified. Anyone speaking from the present standpoint and wholly uninfluenced by the views of ancient times would perhaps say: let us assume here is a flower and here is a man. I see his form and complexion, his external aspect, just as I see that of the flower. The rest must be inferred. - Now someone might come along and object: that is true, but the man in question also sees the flower in his soul. But that is pure illusion. What I really receive from the perception of a flower or a stone is a sense-impression and the same is true of the man in question. The idea that an inner image persists in the soul is pure illusion. The only things we know are external relationships.

You will say that you can make nothing of this argument! And a good thing too, because it is a farrago of nonsense, it is the acme of stupidity. This crass stupidity is supported by all kinds of careful laboratory investigations into the human brain and sundry clinical findings and so on. In short the man is a fool. He is in a position to provide good clinical results because laboratories are at his disposal; but the conclusions which he draws from these findings are pure nonsense. Men of this type are a commonplace today. To say these things does not make for popularity. The cycle of lectures which has appeared in book form by the man I am referring to - strangely enough his name is *Verworn*, [original note 1] I take this to be pure coincidence - is called "The Mechanism of the Spiritual Life". It would be about as sensible to write about the "ligneousness of iron" as about "the mechanism of spiritual life".

Now if this is typical of the intellectual acumen of our most enlightened minds it is not in the least surprising that if those disciplines which are far from being accurate at least in relation to external facts - and in this respect *Verworn* is capable of accurate observation because he describes

what he sees, but unfortunately muddies everything with his own foolish ideas - that if those disciplines which are unsupported by external evidence such as political science, for example, are exposed to the scientific mode of thinking, then the greatest nonsense results. Political science should be supported by thoughts that are rooted in reality, but lacks these thoughts for reasons I have indicated in my last lecture. And people are forcibly reminded of this fact.

I referred earlier in this lecture to *Kjellén*, one of the leading Swedish thinkers. His book *The State as Organism* is ingenious; towards the end of the book he puts forward a remarkable idea, but neither he, nor others today, can make anything of it. He quotes a certain *Fustel de Coulanges* (note 5), author of *La Cité antique*, who showed that when we analyse pre-Christian political and social institutions we find that they are entirely founded on religious rites and observances; the entire State has a social and spiritual foundation. Thus people are willy-nilly brought face to face with the facts, for I pointed out in my last lecture that the social order stemmed from the Mysteries and had a spiritual origin. In studying the body politic or political science people are faced with these questions but are at a loss to understand them. They can make nothing of what even history reports when they can no longer rely upon documents.

And still less can they make anything of the other idea which I indicated as a new path to the Christ. This idea which we find especially in the Mysteries and in Plato's writings, that remarkable echo of the Mystery teachings must arise once again. The central figure of Plato's dialogues is Socrates surrounded by his disciples. In the debate between Socrates and his disciples Plato unfolds his teachings. In his writings Plato was in communion with Socrates after the latter's death. Now this is something more than a literary device. It is the continuation, the echo of what was practised in the Mysteries where the neophytes were gradually prepared for communion with the souls of the dead who continue to direct the sensible world from the spiritual world. Plato's philosophy is developed out of his communion with Socrates, after the death of Socrates. This idea must be revived again and I have already indicated what form it must take. We must get beyond the dry bones of history, beyond the mere recording of external events. We must be able to commune with the dead, to let the thoughts of the dead arise in us once again. It is in this sense that we must be able to take seriously the idea of resurrection. It is through personal inner experience that Christ reveals Himself to mankind. It is by following this path that the truth of the Christ can be demonstrated. But this path demands of us that we develop the *will* in our thinking. If we can

develop only such thoughts as are suited to the observation of the external world we cannot arrive at those thoughts which are really in touch with the dead. We must acquire the capacity to draw thoughts from the well of our inmost being. Our will must be prepared to unite with reality, and then the will which is thus spiritualised by its incorporation in our thinking will encounter spiritual beings, just as the hand encounters a physical object in the external world. And the first spiritual beings we encounter will, as a rule, be the dead with whom we are in some way karmically connected. You must not expect to find guidance in these abstruse matters from a set of written instructions which can be carried about in one's waistcoat pocket. Things are not as simple as that. One encounters well-intentioned people who ask: How do I distinguish between dream and reality, between phantasy and reality? In the individual case one should not attempt to distinguish between them in accordance with a fixed rule. The whole soul must be gradually attuned so that it can pass judgement in the individual case, just as in the external world we seek to pass judgement irrespective of the individual case. We must develop a wider perspective in order to form a judgement about the particular case. The dream may be a close approximation to reality, but it is not possible in the individual case to state categorically: this is the right and proper way to distinguish a mere dream from reality. Indeed what I am saying at the moment may not apply in specific cases, because other points of view must be taken into consideration. It is important to develop in ourselves the power to discriminate in spiritual matters.

Let us take the familiar case of a person who is dreaming or who imagines he is dreaming. Now it is not easy to distinguish between dream and reality. People who study dreams today follow in the footsteps of Herr Verworn. He says that one can undertake an interesting experiment. He quotes the following example. Someone taps with a pin on the window of a house where the occupant is asleep. He is dreaming at the time, wakes up and says he had heard rifle-fire. The dream, according to Verworn, exaggerates. The tappings of the pin on the window-pane have become rifle-shots. Verworn explains this in the following way: we assume that in waking consciousness the brain is fully active. In dream consciousness the brain activity is diminished; only the peripheral consciousness is active. Normally the brain plays no part; its activity is diminished. That is why the dream is so bizarre and why, therefore, the tappings of the pin turn into rifle-fire. Now the public is highly credulous. They are first told in the relevant passage in Verworn's book that the dream exaggerates and then, later on, they are told (not precisely in the words I have used) that the

brain is less active and therefore the dream appears bizarre. The reader has meanwhile already forgotten what was told in the first place. He is unable to relate the two statements and simply says: the State has appointed an expert in these matters and so we must accept his word. Now, as you know, belief in authority is taboo today. He who does not hold these views about the dream may none the less feel that the following way of thinking might well be the right approach. Let us assume you are dreaming of a friend who is dead. You dream, or believe you are dreaming that you are sharing some situation in common with him - and then you wake up. Your first thought on awakening is of course: but he died some time ago! But in the dream it never occurred to you that he was dead. Now you can find many ingenious explanations of this dream if you refer to Verworn's book, *The Mechanism of the Spirit*. But if this is a dream, and a dream is only a memory of everyday life, you will have difficulty in understanding why the foremost thought in your mind, namely the death of your friend, plays no part in the dream when you have just experienced a situation which you know for certain you could not have shared with him when alive. You are then justified in saying: I have now experienced with X something I could not have experienced in life, something that I have not only not experienced, but which would have been impossible in our normal relationship. Assuming that the soul of X, the real soul, which has passed through the gates of death is behind this dream-picture, is it not self-evident that you do not share his death experience? There is no reason why X's soul should appear to be dead since it still lives on. If you take these two factors into consideration - perhaps in conjunction with other factors - you will conclude: my dream-picture veils a real meeting with the soul of X. The thought of death never occurs to me because the dream is not a memory of everyday life: in the dream I receive an authentic visitation from the deceased (i.e. X). I now experience the visitation in the form of a dream-picture, a situation which could not have arisen under the normal circumstances of everyday life. Furthermore the thought of death never occurs to me because the soul of the deceased persists. And then you have every reason for saying: when I experience this apparent dream I inhabit a realm where physical memory does not operate - and what I am about to say is most important - for it is characteristic of our physical life that our physical memory remains unimpaired. This memory does not exist to the same extent, nor is it of the same nature in the world of spirit which we enter at death. The memory which we need for the world of the spirit we must first develop in ourselves. The physical memory is tied to the physical body. Therefore anyone who is familiar with the super-sensible

realm knows that the physical memory cannot enter there. It is not surprising that we have no memory of the deceased; but we are aware that we are in communion with the living soul of X.

Those who are acquainted with this fact maintain that what we call memory in the physical life is something totally different in the spiritual life. Anyone who has succumbed to the impact of Dante's great work, the "Divine Comedy" will never doubt, if he has spiritual discernment, that Dante experienced spiritual visions, that he had insight into the world of the spirit. He who comprehends the language of those who were familiar with the world of the spirit will find convincing proof of this in Dante's introduction to the "Divine Comedy". Dante was well versed in spiritual knowledge; he was no dilettante in matters of the spirit; he was, so to speak, an expert in this field. He was aware that normal memory does not operate in the realm where we are in communion with the dead. He often speaks of the dead, of how the dead dwell in the "Light". In the "Divine Comedy" you will find these beautiful lines on the theme of memory:

*"O Light supreme, by mortal thought unscanned,
Grant that Thy former aspect may return,
Once more a little of Thyself relend.*

*Make strong my tongue that in its words may burn
One single spark of all Thy glory's light
For future generations to discern.*

*For if my memory but glimpse the sight
Whereof these lines would now a little say,
Men may the better estimate Thy might."*

(Paradiso. Canto XXXIII) [original note 2]

Thus Dante was aware that it is impossible with normal memory to grasp that which could originate in the spiritual world. There are many today who ask: why should we aspire to the spiritual world when we have enough to contend with in the physical world; the ordinary man seeks a practical answer to the problems of this life! - But have these people any reason to believe that those who were initiated into the Mysteries in ancient times were any less concerned with the physical world? The initiates knew that

the spiritual world permeates the physical world, that the dead are unquestionably active amongst us even though people deny it. And they knew that this denial merely creates confusion. He who denies that those who have passed through the gates of death exercise an influence on this world resembles the man who says: "Nonsense! I don't believe a word you say" - and then proceeds to behave as if he did believe it. It is not so easy, of course, to give direct proof of the havoc that is wrought when the influx of the spiritual world into the physical world is not taken into account, when people act on the assumption that this interaction can be ignored. Our epoch shows little inclination to bridge the gap that separates us from the kingdom where the dead and the higher Beings dwell. In many respects our present epoch harbours a veritable antipathy towards the world of the spirit. And it is the duty of the spiritual scientist who is really honest and sincere to be aware of the forces that are hostile to the development of Anthroposophy. For there are deep underlying reasons for this hostility and they stem from the same sources which are responsible for all the forces which are today in active opposition to the true progress of mankind.

Notes

Note 1. In the German text there is a play upon the word. If pronounced with an open "O" and a rolled "R" it gives the word *verworren*, i.e. muddle-headed or confused.

Note 2. Translation by Dorothy L. Sayers and Barbara Reynolds, Penguin Classics, 1962.

Translator's Notes

Note 1. Otto Ludwig (1813–65). Best known for his realist novels *Der Erbförster* and *Zwischen Himmel and Erde*, genre painting with careful observation of detail. He coined the term "poetischer Realismus". His "Shakespeare Studien" showed preoccupation with dramatic theory. During his process of poetic creation he experienced a spectrum of colours and forms, known as "synaesthesia".

Note 2. "Synaesthesia" had first been foreshadowed by E. P. A. Hoffman in *Kreisleriana*. The hearing of a word or sound evokes a sensation of colour varying in accordance with the quality of the sound (cf. Baudelaire's sonnet

"Correspondances" - "les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se repondent" and Rimbaud's sonnet "Voyelles" in which a definite colour-value is ascribed to each of the five vowels). F. W. H. Myers described synaesthesia as follows: "When the hearing of an external sound carries with it, by some arbitrary association of ideas, the seeing of some form or colour."

Note 3. Freytag (1816–95). Author of realistic novels which extolled the virtues of the German middle class - *Soll and Haben, Die Ahnen*.

Note 4. Swedenborg (1688–1772), engineer, scientist, philosopher and theologian. In his *Arcana Caelestia* he wrote: "... it has been granted me now for some years to be constantly and continuously in the company of spirits and angels, hearing them speak and speaking with them in turn. It has been given to me to hear and see the wonderful things which are in the other life ... I have been instructed there in regard to different kinds of spirits; the state of souls after death ... and especially concerning the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged in the universal Heaven."

Note 5. Fustel de Coulanges (1830–89). Originator of the scientific approach to history. His *Cité antique* showed that ancient institutions derived from religious beliefs common to primitive peoples. It was a study of the part played by religion in the political and social evolution of Greece and Rome.



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