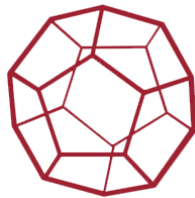


Goethe's Standard of the Soul

GA 22



Goethe's Standard of the Soul

GA 22

by

Rudolf Steiner

1925

Source: [Rudolf Steiner Archive](#)

Table of Contents

Translator's Note

1. Goethe's Faust: A Picture of his Esoteric World Conception
2. Goethe's Standard of the Soul, as Illustrated in Faust
3. Goethe's Standard of the Soul, as Illustrated in his Fairy Story of "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily"
4. Goethe's Fairy Tale – The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily

Notes

Translator's Note

The rendering of the passages from Faust quoted by Dr. Steiner in the two first chapters of this book has been a matter of some difficulty. With one exception, indicated in a Footnote on Page 17, the translation by Bayard Taylor has been used because of its undoubted superiority over other metrical translations. Unfortunately for English students of Goethe's masterpiece, Mr. Taylor's translation has been long out of print, and I am indebted to Mr. Stanley Jast, of the Manchester Public Reference Library, for his kindness in putting a copy of this very rare book at my disposal. The most easily accessible of other metrical translations is that of Miss Anna Swanwick, in Bohn's Popular Library, published by G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., price 2/4.

A translation of the Fairy Tale of "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily" has been added in order that readers may better be able to follow Dr. Steiner's chapter on the subject.

The whole manuscript has been revised and improved by Mr. H. Collison, who is ever ready to put his unrivalled knowledge of English translations of Dr. Steiner's works at the disposal of less experienced students.

D. S. Osmond



Goethe's Faust: A Picture of his Esoteric World Conception

It is Goethe's conviction that man can never solve the riddle of existence within the limits of a synthetic conception of the world. [1] He shares this idea with those who, as a result of certain proofs of inner life, have acquired insight into the nature and substance of knowledge. Such men, unlike some philosophers, find it impossible to speak of a limitation of human cognition; and while realising that there are no bounds to man's search for wisdom, but that it is capable of infinite expansion, are aware that the depths of the universe are unfathomable, that in every unmasked secret lies the origin of the new; and in every solution of a riddle another lies unrevealed. Yet they also know that each new riddle will be capable of solution when the soul has risen to the requisite stage of evolution. Convinced as they are that no mysteries of the Universe are absolutely beyond the reach of man, they do not always desire to reach the contentment of a complete and finished knowledge. They strive only to reach certain vantage points in the life of the soul whence the perspectives of knowledge open out and lose themselves in the far distance.

It is the same with knowledge in general as it is with knowledge acquired from great works of the spiritual life. They proceed from unfathomable depths of soul life. We may really say that the only significant spiritual creations are those in whose presence we feel this to an ever increasing degree the more often we return to them. It must be assumed that a man's soul life has itself advanced in development each time he returns to the work. Goethe's Faust must surely produce a similar feeling in all who approach it with this attitude of mind.

Students who bear in mind that Goethe began Faust as a young man and finished it shortly before his death, will guard against entertaining conclusive opinions about it. In his long, varied life, the poet advanced from one stage of development to another, and he allowed his creation of Faust to participate in the fullest sense in this development. He was once asked whether the conclusion of Faust accorded with the words of the "Prologue in Heaven," written in 1797:

*A good man through obscurest aspiration,
Has still an instinct of the one true way.*

He answered that this was "enlightenment" but that Faust was finished in old age and then man becomes a mystic. Goethe, as a young man, could not of course realise that in the course of his life he would rise to the conception which at the end of Faust in the "Chorus Mysticus" he was able to express in the words:

*All things transitory
But as Symbols are sent.*

At the end of Goethe's life the Eternal element in existence was revealed to him in a sense other than he could have dreamed in 1797, when he allows "the Lord" to speak to the Archangels of this Eternal element, in the words:

And what in wavering apparition gleams

Fix in its place with thoughts that stand for ever! Goethe was fully aware that the truth he possessed had developed within him by degrees, and he would have judged his Faust from this standpoint. On 6th December, 1829, he said to Eckermann: "In old age one's view of things of the world has changed. ... I am like a man who in youth has many small silver and copper coins which in the course of life he changes into more and more valuable coin, so that he finally sees his youthful heritage in gold pieces before him.

Why was it that old age brought to Goethe a different view of "things of the world?" Because in the course of his life he attained to higher and higher points of view in his soul life, from which new perspectives of truth were perpetually revealed to him. Only those who follow Goethe's inner development can hope to read aright the portions of Faust which were written in the poet's old age. But to such men new depths of this world

poem will ever and again be revealed. They advance to a stage where all the events and figures take on an esoteric significance; an inner, spiritual meaning is there beside the external appearance. Those who are incapable of this, will, according to their personal artistic perception, be like the famous aesthetic Vischer, who called the second part of Faust a patched up production of old age, or they will find delight in the rich world of imagery and fable which streams from Goethe's imagination.

Anyone who speaks of an esoteric meaning in Goethe's Faust will naturally arouse the opposition of those who claim that a "work of art" must be accepted and enjoyed purely "as art," and that it is inadmissible to turn living figures of artistic imagination into dry allegory. They think that because the spiritual content is barren so far as they are concerned, it must be so for everyone else. But there are some who breathe a higher life that streams from a mighty Spirit, where others hear only words. It is difficult to meet on common ground those who have not the will to follow us into the spiritual world. We have at our disposal only the same words as they; and we cannot force anyone to sense within the words, that totally different element which is perceptible to us. We have no quarrel with such people; we admit what they say, for with us, too, Faust is primarily a work of art, a creation of the imagination. We know how great our loss would be if we were unable to appreciate the artistic value of the work. But it must never be urged that we have no perception of the beauty of the lily because we rise to the spirit which it reveals, nor that we are blind to the picture that in a higher sense is for us like "all things transitory," which "as symbols are sent.

We agree with Goethe, who said to Eckermann on 29th January, 1827: "Yet everything (in Faust) is of a sense nature, and on the stage will be quite evident to the eye. I have no other wish. If it should chance that the general audience find pleasure in the representation, that is well; the higher significance will not escape the initiate." Those who want truly to understand Goethe must not hold aloof from such initiation. It is possible to indicate the exact point in Goethe's life when he came to the realisation which he has clothed in the words:

*All things transitory
But as symbols are sent.*

Standing before the ancient works of art his soul was flooded with this thought: This much is certain, that the artists of antiquity possessed equally with Homer a mighty knowledge of Nature, a sure conception of what lends itself to portrayal, and of how it ought to be portrayed. Unfortunately the number of works of art of the first rank is all too small. But when we find them our only desire is to understand them in truth and approach them in peace. Supreme works of art, like the most sublime products of Nature, are created by man in conformity with true and natural Law. All that is arbitrary, all that is invented, collapses: there is Necessity, there is God." These thoughts are inscribed in Goethe's Diary of his Italian Journey" under the date, 6th September, 1787.

Man can also penetrate to the spirit of things" by other paths. Goethe's nature was that of the artist; hence for him the revelation of this spirit had to come through art. It can be shown that the scientific knowledge which enabled him to proclaim the scientific views of the nineteenth century in advance, was born from his artistic qualities. One personality will arrive at a similar perspective of knowledge and truth through religion, another through the development of philosophic understanding. (c.f. my book [Goethe's World Conception.](#))

We must seek in Goethe's Faust for the picture of an inner soul development, — a picture such as an inherently artistic personality is bound to produce. Goethe was by reason of his spiritual gifts able to look into the very depths of Nature in all her reality. We can see how in the boy Goethe there develops, out of his faith, a profound reverence for Nature. He describes this in *Poetry and Truth*: The God who stands in immediate connection with Nature and recognises and loves it as His handiwork, seemed to him the real God, who might enter into closer relationship with man, as with everything else, and who would make him His care, as well as the motion of the stars, times and seasons, plants and animals." The boy selects the best minerals and stones from his father's collection and arranges them on a music stand. This is the altar upon which he likes to offer his sacrifice to the God of Nature. He lays tapers on the stones and by means of a burning glass lights the tapers with the intercepted rays of the rising morning sun. In this way he kindles a sacred fire through the essence of the Divine Nature forces. We may perceive here the beginning of an inner soul development that — speaking in the terms of Indian Theosophy — seeks for the Light at the centre of the Sun, and for Truth at the centre of the Light. Anyone who follows Goethe's life can trace this Path along which, in inter-mediate stages, he seeks those deeper levels of

consciousness where the eternal Necessity, God, was revealed to him. He tells us in *Poetry and Truth* how he explored every possible region of science, including experimental Alchemy.

*Wherefore from Magic I seek assistance,
That many a secret perchance I reach
Through spirit power and spirit speech.
(Faust's Monologue at the beginning of Part I.)*

Later on Goethe sought for the expression of eternal law in the creations of Nature and in his "Archetypal Plant" and "Archetypal Animal" he discovered what the spirit of Nature proclaims to the human spirit when the soul has attained to a mode of thought and conception that is in conformity with the Idea." Between these two turning points of Goethe's soul life lies the period of the composition of that part of the Drama in which, after Faust's despair of all external Science, he invokes the Earth Spirit. The eternal truth-bearing Light speaks in the words of this Earth Spirit.

*In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth and the Grave,
An eternal sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all-glowing,
Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of Life which the Deity weaves!*

This is an expression of the all-embracing conception of Nature which we also find in the Prose Hymn Nature, written by Goethe somewhere about the 30th year of his age. Nature! We are surrounded and embraced by her, we cannot draw back from her, nor can we penetrate more deeply into her being. She lifts us, unmasked and unwarned, into the gyrations of her dance, and whirls us away until we fall, exhausted, from her arms. She creates new forms eternally. What is, had no previous existence; what was,

comes not again; all is new and yet is ever the old. She builds and destroys eternally, and her laboratory is inaccessible ... She lives in the purity of children, and the Mother, where is she? Nature is the only artist. Each of her creations is an individual Being, each of her revelations a separate concept; yet all makes up a unity. ... She transforms herself eternally and has never a moment of inactivity. ... Her step is measured, her exceptions few, her laws are unchangeable. ... All men are within her, she is within all men. ... Life is her fairest device, and Death is her artifice for acquiring greater life. ... Man obeys her laws even when he opposes them. ... She is the All. She rewards and punishes, delights and distresses herself ... She knows not past and future. The present is her Eternity. ... She has placed me within life and she will lead me out of it. I trust myself to her. ... It was not I who spoke of her. It was she who spoke it all, whether it were true or false. Her's is the blame for all things, her's the credit.

In old age, looking back at this stage of his soul development, Goethe himself said that it represented an inferior conception of life and that he had acquired one more lofty. But this stage revealed to him that eternal, universal law which streams alike through Nature and the human soul. It inspired the grave conception that an eternal, iron Necessity binds all beings into unity, and taught him to consider man in his indissoluble connection with this Necessity. This attitude of mind is expressed in his Ode, The Divine, written in the year 1782.

Let man be noble, resourceful and good! For this alone distinguishes him from all other beings known to us. According to eternal, mighty Laws of iron must we complete the circle of our existence.

The same conception is expressed in Faust's Monologue written about the year 1787:

*Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me, gav'st me all
For which I prayed. Not unto me in vain
Hast thou thy countenance revealed in fire.
Thou gav'st me Nature as a kingdom grand,
With power to feel and to enjoy it. Thou
Not only cold, amazed acquaintance yield'st,
But grantest, that in her profoundest breast I gaze,
as in the bosom of a friend.
The ranks of living creatures thou dost lead
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers*

*In air and water and the silent wood.
And when the storm in forests roars and grinds,
The giant firs, in falling, neighbour boughs
And neighbour trunks with crushing weight bear down,
And falling, fill the hills with hollow thunders, —
Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,
Then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast
The deep, mysterious miracles unfold.*

The perspective of his soul was revealed to Goethe by the mysteries of his own breast. It is a perspective which can no longer be revealed in the external world alone, but only when a man descends into his own soul in such a way that in ever deeper regions of consciousness, sublimer secrets may come to light. The world of the senses and intellect then takes on a new significance. It becomes a symbol" of the Eternal. Man perceives that he has a more intimate connection between the external world and his own soul. He learns to know that in his inner being there is a voice destined also to solve all riddles of the outer world.

*Here the inadequate
Becomes attainment ^[2]*

The highest facts of life, the division into male and female becomes the key to the riddle of humanity. The process of cognition becomes that of life, of fecundation. The soul, in its depths, becomes woman, that element which, impregnated by the world Spirit, gives birth to the highest life-substance. Woman becomes a symbol" of these soul depths. We ascend to the mysteries of existence by allowing ourselves to be drawn upwards and on" by the eternal feminine," the woman soul. Higher existence begins when we experience the action of wisdom as a process of spiritual fecundation. The deeper mystics of all ages have realised this. They allowed the highest knowledge to grow out of the action of spiritual fecundation as in the case of the Egyptian Horus, the soul-man, born of Isis, who was overshadowed by the spiritual eye of Osiris, — He who was awakened from the dead." The second part of Goethe's Faust is written from such a point of view.

Faust's love for Gretchen in the first part, is of the senses. Faust's love for Helena, in the second part, is not merely a sense process, but a symbol" of the most profoundly mystical soul experience. In Helena, Faust seeks for the eternal feminine," the woman soul; he seeks the depths of his own soul. The fact that Goethe should allow the archetypal figure of Greek feminine beauty to represent the woman in man" is connected with the essential nature of his personality. The realisation of Divine Necessity dawned in him as he contemplated the beauty of the Greek masterpieces.

Faust became a mystic as the result of his union with Helena, and he speaks as a mystic at the beginning of the fourth Act of Part II. He sees the female image, the depths of his own soul, and speaks the words:

*... Towering broad and formlessly,
It rests along the East like distant icy hills,
And shapes the grand significance of fleeting days.
And still there clings a light and delicate band of mist
Around my breast and brow, caressing, cheering me.
Now light, delayingly, it soars and higher soars
And folds together. — Cheats me an ecstatic form,
As early youthful, long foregone and highest bliss?
The first glad treasures of my deepest heart break forth;
Aurora's love, so light of pinion, is its type,
The swiftly-felt, the first, scarce-comprehended glance,
Out-shining every treasure, when retained and held.
Like Spiritual Beauty mounts the gracious Form,
Dissolving not, but lifts itself through ether far,
And from my inner being bears the best away.*

In this description of the ecstasy experienced by one who has descended into the depths of his own soul and has there felt the best within him drawn away by the eternal feminine," it is as though we were listening to the words of the Greek Philosopher: When, free from the body, thou ascendest to the free Aether, thy soul becomes an immortal god, who knows not death.

For at this stage Death becomes a symbol." Man dies from the lower life in order to live again in a higher existence. Higher spiritual life is a new stage of the Becoming"; time becomes a symbol" of the Eternal that now

lives in man. The union with the eternal feminine" allows the child in man to come into being, — the child, imperishable, immortal, because it is of the Eternal. The higher life is the surrender, the death of the lower, the birth of a higher existence. In his West-East Diva" Goethe expresses this in the words: And as long as thou art without this 'dying and becoming' thou art but an uneasy guest on the dark Earth." We find the same thought in his prose aphorisms: Man must give up his existence in order to exist." Goethe is in agreement with the Mystic Herakleitos when he speaks of the Dionysian cult of the Greeks. It would have been an empty, even a dishonourable cult in his eyes if it had made sacrifices merely to the god of nature and of sense pleasure. But that was not the case. The worship was not alone directed to Dionysos, the god of the immediate sense prosperity of Life, but to Hades, the god of death as well. The Greeks prepared tumultuous fire" both for Hades and Dionysos, for in the Greek Mysteries life was honoured in company with death; this is the higher existence that passes through material death of which the Mystics speak when they say that Death is after all the root of all life." The second part of Faust represents an awakening, the birth of the higher man" from the depths of the soul. From this point of view we can understand the meaning of Goethe's words: If it should chance that the general audience find pleasure in the representation, that is well; the higher significance will not escape the initiate.

Those who have developed true mystical knowledge find it in high degree in Goethe's Faust. After the scene with the Earth Spirit in Part I., when Faust has conversed with Wagner and is alone, despairing of the insignificance of the Earth Spirit, he speaks the words:

*I, God's own image, from this toil of clay
Already freed, with eager joy who hailed
The mirror of eternal Truth unveil'd,
Mid light effulgent and celestial clay:—
I, more than cherub, whose unfettered soul
With penetrative glance aspir'd to flow
Through Nature's veins, and, still creating, know
The life of Gods, — how am I punished now! (Miss Swanwick's
translation)*

What is the Mirror of Eternal Truth"? We can read of it in the following words of Jacob Boehme, the Mystic: All that, whereof this world is an earthly mirror, and an earthly parable, is present in the Divine Kingdom in great perfection and in Spiritual Being. Not only the spirit conceived as a will or thought, but Beings, corporate Beings, full of strength and substance, though to the outer world impalpable. For from the self-same spiritual Being in whom is the pure element — and from the Being of Darkness in the Mystery of Wrath — from the origin of the eternal Being of manifestation whence all the qualities come forth, this visible world was born and created, a spoken sound proceeding from the Being of all Beings.

For the sake of those who love truisms let it be observed that it is not in any sense correct to state that Goethe had precisely this passage of Jacob Boehme in his mind when he wrote the words quoted above. What he had in his mind was the mystical knowledge which finds expression in Boehme's sentences. Goethe lived in this mystical knowledge and it grew riper and riper within him. He created from the kind of knowledge possessed by the mystics. And from this source he derived the capacity for seeing Life, — things transitory" as symbols only, as a reflection. A period of inexhaustible inner development lies between the time (Part I.) when Goethe wrote his words of despair at being so remote from the mirror of eternal truth," and the time when he wrote the Chorus Mysticus" whose words express the fact that things transitory" are to be seen only as symbols" of the Eternal.

The theme of the mystical dying and becoming" runs through the Introductory Scene of Part II.:

A pleasing landscape. Faust reclining upon flowery turf, restless, seeking sleep." The elves, under Ariel, bring about Faust's Awakening.

*Who round this head in airy circles hover,
Yourselves in guise of noble Elves discover!
The fierce convulsions of his heart compose;
Remove the burning barbs of his remorse,
And cleanse his being from the suffered woes!
Four pauses makes the Night upon her courses,
And now, delay not, let them kindly close!
First on the coolest pillow let him slumber,
Then sprinkle him with Lethe's drowsy spray!
His limbs no more shall cramps and chills encumber,*

*When sleep has made him strong to meet the day.
Perform, ye Elves, your fairest rite:
Restore him to the holy Light!*

And at sunrise Faust is restored to the holy Light:

*Life's pulses now with fresher force awaken
To greet the mild ethereal twilight o'er me;
This night, thou, Earth! hast also stood unshaken,
And now thou breathest new-refreshed before me,
And now beginnest, all thy gladness granting,
A vigorous resolution to restore me,
To seek that highest life for which I'm panting.*

For what was Faust striving in his study (Part I.), and what had happened at the stage he has reached at the beginning of Part II.? His striving is clothed in the words of the Wise man:

*The spirit world no closures fasten;
Thy sense is shut, thy heart is dead:
Disciple, up! untiring, hasten
To bathe thy breast in morning-red!*

As yet Faust cannot bathe his earthly breast" in the morning red." When he has invoked the Earth Spirit he is forced to acknowledge the insignificance of this being. This he is able to do at the beginning of Part II. Ariel proclaims how it comes to be:

*Hearken! Hark! — the Hours careering!
Sounding loud to spirit-hearing,
See the new-born day appearing!*

The new-born day" of knowledge and of life born out of the morning red" inspired Jacob Boehme's earliest work entitled *Aurora or The Rise of Dawn*, which was imbued with mystical knowledge. The passage in Act IV., Part II., of *Faust* already quoted shows how deeply Goethe lived in such conceptions. The first glad treasures" of his deepest heart" are revealed to him by Aurora's Love." When Faust has really bathed his earthly breast in the morning red" he is ready to lead a higher life within the course of his earthly existence. He appears in the company of Mephistopheles at the imperial palace during a feast of pleasure and empty amusements and must himself help to increase them. He appears in the Mask of Hades, the God of Wealth, in a masquerade. He is desired to add to the amusements by charming Paris and Helena from the Underworld. This shows us that Faust had attained to that stage in his soul life where he understood the dying and becoming." He participates joyfully in the Feast, but while it is going on he sets out on the path to the Mothers," where alone he can find the figures of Paris and Helena which the emperor wishes to see. The eternal archetypes of all existence are preserved in the realm of the Mothers. It is a realm which man can only enter when he has given up his existence in order to exist." There, too, Faust is able to find the part of Helena that has outlived the ages. But Mephistopheles, who has up to now been his guide, is not able to lead him into this realm. This is characteristic of his nature. He says emphatically to Faust:

*Thou deem'st the thing is quickly fixed:
Here before steeper ways we're standing;
With strangest spheres would'st thou be mixed.*

Mephistopheles is a stranger to the realm of the Eternal. This may well appear inexplicable when we consider that Mephistopheles belongs to the kingdom of Evil, itself a kingdom of Eternity. But the difficulty is solved when we take Goethe's individuality into account. He had not experienced eternal Necessity" within the realm of Christianity where, to him, Hell and the Devil belong. This idea of the Eternal arose for Goethe in a region alien to the conceptions of Christendom. It is to be admitted of course that the ultimate origin of a figure like Mephistopheles is to be found in the conceptions of Heathen religions too. (*Cp. Karl Kiesewetter's Faust in history and tradition.*) So far as Goethe was concerned, however, this figure belonged to the Northern world of Christendom, and the source of his creation was there. He could not in personal experience find his

kingdom of the Eternal within the scope of this world of conceptions. To understand this, we need only be reminded of what Schiller said of Goethe in his deeply intuitive letter of 23rd August, 1794: If you had been born a Greek or even an Italian with a special kind of Nature and an idealistic Art around you from the cradle, your path would have been infinitely limited and perhaps made quite superficial. Even in the earliest conception of things you would have absorbed the Form of Necessity and you would have developed a mighty style together with your earliest experience. But being born a German with your Greek spirit thrown into the milieu of this Northern world, you had no choice but to become either an Artist of the North, or to re-establish in your Imagination by the help of the power of thought, what Reality withheld from you, and so, as it were, from within outwards, and on a rationalistic path, give birth to a Greek world.

It is not our task here to embark upon a consideration of the different conceptions formed by man as to the meaning of the Mephistopheles figure. These conceptions express the endeavour to change figures of Art into barren allegories or symbols, and I have always opposed this. So far as an esoteric interpretation is concerned, Mephistopheles must be accepted, in the sense, naturally, of poetical reality, as an actual being. For an esoteric interpretation does not look for the spiritual value which certain figures in the first instance receive from the poet, but the spiritual value they already have in life. The poet can neither deprive them of this nor can he impart it; he takes it from life, as he would anything visible to the eye. It is, however, part of the nature of Mephistopheles that he lives in the material sense world. Hell, too, is nothing but incarnate materiality, The Eternal in the womb of the Mothers can only be an entirely alien realm to anyone who lives in materiality as intensely as Mephistopheles. Man must penetrate through materiality in order again to enter into the Eternal, the Divine, whence he has sprung. If he finds the way, if he gives up his existence in order to exist," then he is a Faust being; if he cannot abandon materiality he becomes a character like Mephistopheles. Mephistopheles is only able to give to Faust the key" to the realm of the Mothers. A mystery is connected with this key." Man must have experienced it before he can fully penetrate it. It will be most easy of attainment to those who are scientists in the true sense.

It is possible for a man to accumulate much scientific learning and yet for the spirit of things," the realm of the Mothers, to remain closed to him. Yet in scientific knowledge we have, fundamentally, the key to the spiritual world in our hands. It may become either academic erudition or wisdom. If a man of wisdom makes himself master of that dry erudition" which a man

who is merely scientific has accumulated, he is led into a region which to the other is entirely foreign. Faust is able to penetrate to the Mothers with the key given him by Mephistopheles. The natures of Faust and Mephistopheles are reflected in the way in which they speak of the realm of the Mothers.

Mephistopheles:

*...Naught shalt thou see in endless Void afar, —
Not hear thy footstep fall, nor meet
A stable spot to rest thy feet.*

Faust:

*... I to the Void am sent,
That art and power therein I may augment;
To use me like the cat is thy desire,
To scratch for thee the chestnuts from the fire.
Come on then! We'll explore, whate'er befall;
In this, thy Nothing, may I find my All!*

Goethe told Eckermann how he came to introduce the "Mothers " scene. "I can only tell you," he says, "that in Plutarch I found that in Greek Antiquity the Mothers were spoken of as Divinities." This necessarily made a profound impression upon Goethe, who as the result of his mystical knowledge, realised the significance of the "eternal feminine.

From the realm of the Mothers, Faust conjures up the figures of Helena and of Paris. When he sees them before him in the imperial palace he is seized by an irresistible desire for Helena. He wants to take possession of her. He sinks unconscious to the ground and is carried off by Mephistopheles. Here we come to a stage of great significance in Faust's evolution. He is ready and ripe to press forward into the spiritual world. He can rise in spirit to the eternal archetypes. He has reached the point where the spiritual world in an infinite perspective becomes visible to man.

At this point it is possible for a man either to resign himself to the realisation that this perspective cannot be gauged in one bound, but must rather be traversed by numberless life stages; or he may determine to make himself master of the final aim of Divinity at one stroke. The latter was Faust's desire. He undergoes a new test. He must experience the truth that man is bound to matter and that only when he has passed through all stages of materiality is he made pure for attainment of the final aim.

Only a purely spiritual being, born in a spiritual fashion, can unite himself directly with the spiritual world. The human spirit is not a being of this kind and it must pass through the whole range of material existence. Without this life-journey the human spirit would be a soulless, lifeless entity. The very existence of the human spirit implies that the journey through materiality has been begun at some point. For man is what he is only because he has passed through a series of previous incarnations. Goethe had also to express this conception in Faust. On 16th December, 1829, he speaks of Homunculus to Eckermann: "A spiritual being like Homunculus, not yet darkened and circumscribed by a fully human evolution, is to be counted a Daemon.

Homunculus, therefore, is a man but without the element of materiality that is essential to man. He is brought into existence by magical methods in the laboratory. On the date above mentioned Goethe speaks further of him to Eckermann: "Homunculus, as a being to whom actuality is absolutely clear and transparent, beholds the inner being of the sleeping Faust. But because everything is transparent to his spirit, the spirit has no point for him. He does not reason; he wants to act." In so far as man is a knower, the impulse to will and action is awakened through knowledge. The essential thing is not the knowledge or the spirit as such, but the fact that this spirit must be led to pass through the material, through action. The more knowledge a being possesses, the greater will be the impulse to action. And a being who has been produced by purely spiritual means must be filled with the thirst for action. Homunculus is in this position. His powerful urge towards reality leads Faust with Mephistopheles to Greece, into the "Classical Walpurgis Night." Homunculus is bound to become corporeal in the realm where Goethe found the highest reality. It then becomes possible for Faust to find the real Helena, not merely her archetype. Homunculus leads him into Greek reality. To understand fully the nature of Homunculus we need only follow his journeys through the Classical Walpurgis Night. He wants to learn from two Greek Philosophers how he can come into being, that is, to action. He says to Mephistopheles:

*From place to place I flit and hover.
And in the best sense. I would fain exist.
And most impatient am. my glass to shatter;
But what till now I've witnessed, is't
Then strange if I mistrust the matter?
Yet I'll be confidential. if thou list:
I follow two Philosophers this way.
'Twas 'Nature! Nature!' — all heard them say;
I'll cling to them and see what they are seeing,
For they must understand this earthly being,
And I shall doubtless learn, in season.
Where to betake me with the soundest reason.*

His wish is to gain knowledge of the natural conditions of the genesis of corporeal existence. Thales leads him to Proteus. the Lord of Change, of the "eternal Becoming." Thales says of Homunculus:

*He asks thy counsel, he desires to be.
He is, as I myself have heard him say.
(The thing's a marvell!) only born half-way.
He has no lack of qualities ideal,
But far too much of palpable and real.
Till now the glass alone has given him weight,
And he would fain be soon incorporeate.*

And Proteus gives utterance to the Law of Becoming:

*No need to ponder here his origin;
On the broad ocean's breast must thou begin!
One starts there first within a narrow pale.
And finds, destroying, lower forms, enjoyment:
Little by little, then, one climbs the scale,
And fits himself for loftier employment.*

Thales gives the counsel:

*Yield to the wish so wisely stated,
And at the source be thou created!
Be ready for the rapid plan!
There, by eternal canons wending,
Through thousand, myriad forms ascending,
Thou shalt attain, in time, to Man.*

Goethe's whole conception of the relationship of all beings, of their metamorphic evolution from the imperfect to the perfect is here expressed in a picture. At first the spirit can only exist germinally in the world. The spirit must pour itself out, must dip down into matter, and into the elements, before it can take on its sublimer form. Homunculus is shattered by Galatea's shell chariot and is dissolved into the elements. This is described by the Sirens:

*What fiery marvel the billows enlightens,
As one on the other is broken and brightens?
It flashes and wavers, and hitherward plays!
On the path of the Night are the bodies ablaze,
And all things around are with flames overrun:
The Eros be ruler, who all things began!*

Homunculus as a spirit no longer exists. He is blended in the Elements and can arise from out of them. Eros, desire, will, action, must go forward to the spirit. The spirit must pass through matter, through the Fall into Sin. In Goethe's words, the spiritual essence must be darkened and circumscribed, for this is necessary to a full human development. The second Act of Part II. presents the mystery of human development. Proteus, the Lord of corporeal metamorphosis, discloses this Mystery to Homunculus:

*In spirit seek the watery distance!
Boundless shall there be thine existence,
And where to move, thy will be free.*

*But struggle not to higher orders!
Once Man, within the human borders,
Then all is at an end for thee.*

This is all that the Lord of corporeal metamorphosis can know about human development. So far as his knowledge goes evolution comes to an end when man, as such, has come into existence. What comes after that is not his province. He is only at home in the corporeal; and as a result of man's development the spiritual element separates itself from the merely corporeal. The further development of man proceeds in the spiritual world. The highest point to which the process is brought by the Eros of Nature is the separation into two sexes, male and female. Here spiritual development sets in; Eros is spiritualised. Faust enters into union with Helena, the archetype of Beauty. Goethe was well aware of all that he owed to his intimate connection with Greek beauty. The mystery of spiritualisation was for him of the nature of Art. Euphorion arises out of Faust's union with Helena. Goethe himself tells us what Euphorion is. (Eckermann quotes Goethe's words of 20th December, 1829): "Euphorion is not a human but an allegorical being. Euphorion personifies poetry that is bound neither to place nor person." Poetry is born from the marriage experienced by Faust in the depths of his soul. This colouring of the spiritual Mystery must be traced back to Goethe's personal experience and nature. He saw in Art, in Poetry, "a manifestation of secret Laws of Nature," which without them would never be revealed. (Compare his *Prose Aphorisms*.) He attained the higher stages of soul life as an artist. It was only natural that he should ascribe to poetry not only quite general qualities but those of the poetical creations of his time. Byronic qualities have passed over to Euphorion. On 5th July, 1827, Goethe said to Eckermann: "I could never choose anyone else but Byron as the representative of the most modern school of poetry, for he has unquestionably the greatest talent of the century. Byron is neither ancient nor modern, but like the present day itself. I had to have one like him. Besides this, he was typical, on account of his unsatisfied nature and that warlike temperament which led him to Missolonghi. It is neither opportune nor advisable to write a treatise on Byron, but in the future I shall not fail to pay him incidental tribute and to point to him in certain matters of detail.

The union of Faust with Helena cannot be permanent. The descent into the depths of the soul, as Goethe also knew, is only possible in "Festival moments" of life. Man descends to those regions where the highest

spirituality comes to birth. But with the metamorphosis which he has there experienced he returns again to the life of action. Faust passes through a process of spiritualisation, but as a spiritualised being he has to work on in everyday life. A man who has passed through such "Festival moments" must realise how the deeper soul element in him vanishes again in everyday actuality. Goethe expressed this in a picture. Euphorion disappears again into the realm of darkness. Man cannot bring the spiritual to continuous earthly life, but the spiritual is now inwardly united with his soul. This spiritual element, his child, draws his soul into the realm of the Eternal. He has united himself with the Eternal. As a result of the loftiest spiritual activity man enters into the Eternal in his highest being, in the depths of his soul. The union into which his soul has entered enables him to ascend to the All. The words of Euphorion sound forth as this eternal call in the heart of ever-striving man:

*Leave me here, in the gloomy Void,
Mother, not thus alone!*

A man who has experienced the Eternal in the Temporal perpetually hears this call from the spiritual in him. His creations draw his soul to the Eternal. So will Faust live on. He will lead a dual life. He will create in life, but his spiritual child binds him on his earthly path to the higher world of the spirit. This will be the life of a mystic, but in the nature of things not a life where the days are passed in idle observation, in inner dream, but a life where deeds bear the impress of that nobility attained by man as the result of spiritual deepening.

Faust's outer life, too, will now be that of a man who has surrendered his existence in order to exist. He will work absolutely selflessly in the service of humanity. But still another test awaits him. At the stage to which he has attained he cannot bring his activity in material existence into full harmony with the real needs of the spirit. He has taken land from the sea and has built a stately abode upon it. But an old hut still remains standing and in it live an aged couple. This disturbs the work of new creation. The aged couple do not want to exchange their dwelling for any nobler estate. Faust must see how Mephistopheles carries out his wish, turning it to evil. He sets the homestead on fire and the aged couple die of fright. Faust must experience once again that "perfect human evolution darkens and

circumscribes," and that it must lead to guilt. It was his material sense life that laid this blow, this test upon him. As he hears the bell sound from the aged couple's Chapel he breaks forth into the words:

*Accurséd chime! As in derision
It wounds me, like a spiteful shot:
My realm is boundless to my vision,
Yet at my back this vexing blot!
The bell proclaims; with envious bluster,
My grand estate lacks full design:
The brown old hut, the linden-cluster,
The crumbling chapel are not mine.
If there I wished for recreation,
Another's shade would give no cheer:
A thorn it is, a sharp vexation, —
Would I were far away from here!*

Faust's senses engender in him a fateful desire. There still remains in him some element of that existence which he must "surrender in order to exist." The homestead is not his. In the "midnight hour" four grey women appear. Want, Blame, Care, Need. These are they who darken and circumscribe man's existence. He passes through life under their escort, and at first he cannot exist without their guidance. Life alone can bring emancipation from them. Faust has reached the point where three of these figures have no power over him. Care is the only one from whom this power has not been taken away. Care says:

*Ye sisters, ye neither can enter, nor dare:
But the keyhole is free to the entrance of Care.*

And Care exhorts him in a voice that lies deep in the heart of every man. No man can eradicate the last doubt as to whether he can with his life's reckoning stand steadfast in face of the Eternal. At this moment Faust has such an experience. Has he really only pure powers around him? Has he freed his "inner man" from all that is impure? He has taken Magic to his aid along his path, and acknowledges this in the words:

*Not yet have I my liberty made good:
If I could banish Magic's fell creations,
And totally unlearn the incantations,
Stood I, O Nature! Man alone in thee,
Then were it worth one's while a man to be!*

Faust too is unable to cast the last doubt away from him. Care may say of him also:

*Though no ear should choose to hear me,
Yet the shrinking heart must fear me:
Though transformed to mortal eyes,
Grimmest power I exercise.*

In the face of Care, Faust would first ask himself whether those remains of doubt as to his life's reckoning have vanished:

*The sphere of Earth is known enough to me,
The view beyond is barred immutably:
A fool, who there his blinking eyes directeth,
And o'er his cloud of peers a place expecteth!
Firm let him stand, and look around him well!
This world means something to the Capable,
Why needs he through Eternity to wend?*

In these very sentences Faust shows that he is about to fight his way to full freedom. Care would urge him on to the Eternal after her own fashion. She shows him how men on the earth only unite the Temporal to the Temporal. And even if they do this, believing that this world means something to the 'Capable,' she, nevertheless, remains with them to the last. And what she has been able to do in the case of others, Care thinks she can also do in the case of Faust. She believes in her power to enhance

in him those doubts that beset a man when he asks himself whether all his deeds have indeed any significance or meaning. Care speaks of her power over men:

*Shall he go, or come? — how guide him?
Prompt decision is denied him;
Midway on the trodden highway
Halting he attempts a by-way;
Such incessant rolling, spinning,
Painful quitting, hard beginning, —
Now constraint, now liberation,
Semi-sleep, poor recreation,
Firmly in his place ensnare him
And, at last, for Hell prepare him!*

Faust's soul has progressed too far for him to fall into the power of Care to this extent. He is able to cry in rejoinder:

*And yet, O Care, thy power, thy creeping shape,
Think not that I shall recognize it!*

Care is only able to have power over his bodily nature. As she vanishes she breathes on him and he becomes blind. His bodily nature dies in order that he may attain a higher stage:

*The Night seems deeper now to press around me,
But in my inmost spirit all is light.*

After this it is only the soul element in Faust which comes into consideration. Mephistopheles who lives in the material world has no power here. Since the Helena Scene the better and deeper soul of Faust has lived in the Eternal. This Eternal takes full possession of him after his death. Angels incorporate Faust's immortal essence into this Eternal:

*This noble Spirit now is free,
And saved from evil scheming:
Who'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.
And if with him celestial love
Hath taken part, — to meet him
Come down the angels from above;
With cordial hail they greet him.*

The "Celestial Love" is in strong contrast to "Eros," to whom Proteus refers when he says at the end of the second Act, Part II.:

*All things around are with flames overrun:
Then Eros be ruler who all things began!*

This Eros is the Love "from below" that leads Homunculus through the elements and through bodily metamorphosis in order that he may finally appear as man. Then begins the "Love from above" which develops the soul further.

The soul of Faust is set upon the path to the Eternal, the Infinite. An unending perspective is open before it. We can dimly sense what this perspective is. To make it poetically objective is very difficult. Goethe realised this and he says to Eckermann: "You will admit that the conclusion, where the soul that has found salvation passes heavenward, was very difficult to write and that in reference to such highly supersensible and hardly conceivable matters I could have very easily fallen into vagueness if I had not, by the use of sharply defined Christian-Theological figures and concepts, given a certain form and stability to my poetical intentions." The inexhaustible content of the soul must be indicated, and the deepest inner being expressed in symbol. Holy Anchorites "dispersed over the hill," "stationed among the clefts" represent the highest states of the evolution of the soul. Man is led upwards into the regions of consciousness, of the soul, — wherein the world becomes to an ever increasing extent the "symbol" of the Eternal.

This consciousness, the deepest region of the soul, are mystically seen in the figure of the "eternal feminine," Mary the Virgin. Dr. Marianus in rapture prays to her:

*Highest Mistress of the World!
Let me in the azure
Tent of Heaven, in light unfurled
Here thy Mystery measure!*

With the monumental words of the Chorus Mysticus, Faust draws to its conclusion. They are words of Wisdom eternal. They give utterance to the Mystery that "All things transitory are only a symbol." This is what lies before man in the farthest distance; to this leads the path which man follows when he has grasped the meaning of this "dying and becoming:

*Here the Inadequate
Becomes attainment.*

This cannot be described because it can only be discovered in experience; this it is that the Initiates of the "Mysteries" experienced when they were led to the path of the Eternal; it is unutterable because it lies in such deep clefts of the soul that it cannot be clothed in words coined for the temporal world:

*The indescribable,
Here it is done.*

And to all this man is drawn by the power of his own soul, by the powers that are dimly sensed when he passes through the inner portals of the soul, when he seeks for that divine voice within calling him to the union of the "eternal masculine," — the universe, with the "eternal feminine," — consciousness:

*The Eternal Feminine draws us
Upwards and on.*



2 Goethe's Standard of the Soul, as Illustrated in Faust

The inner soul's conflict which Goethe has embodied in the personality of Faust comes to light at the very beginning of the Drama, when Faust turns away from the sign of the Macrocosm to that of the Earth Spirit. The content of the first Faust Monologue up to this experience of the soul is preliminary. Faust's dis-satisfaction with the sciences and with his position as a man of learning is far less characteristic of Goethe's nature than the kinship which Faust feels to the Spirit Universal on the one side and to the Earth Spirit on the other. The all-inclusive harmony of the universe is revealed to the soul by the sign of the macrocosm:

*How each the Whole its substance gives,
Each in the other works and lives!
Like heavenly forces rising and descending,
Their golden urns reciprocally lending,
With wings that winnow blessing
From Heaven through Earth I see them pressing,
Filling the All with harmony unceasing!*

If we take these words in conjunction with Goethe's knowledge of the sign of the Macrocosm, we come upon an experience of great significance in the soul of Faust. There appears before Faust's soul a sense picture of the Universe, — a picture of the sun itself, of the earth in connection with the other planets of the solar system, and of the activity of the single heavenly bodies as a revelation of the Divine Being guiding movement and reciprocal interplay. This is not a mechanical heaven, but a cosmic weaving of spiritual hierarchies whose effluence is the life of the world. Into this life man is placed, and he comes forth as the apotheosis of the work of all these Beings. Faust, however, cannot find in his soul the experience for which he is seeking even in the vision of this universal harmony. We can sense the yearning that gnaws in the depths of this soul: "How do I become Man in the true sense of the word?" The soul longs to experience what makes man consciously truly Man. In the sense image hovering there,

the soul cannot call up from the depths of being that profound experience which would make it able to realise itself as the epitome of all that is there as the sign of the macrocosm. For this is the "knowledge" that can be trans-formed through intense inner experience, into "Self-Knowledge." The very highest knowledge cannot directly comprehend the whole being of man. It can only comprehend a part of man. It must then be borne through life, and in inter-relation with life its range is gradually extended over the whole being of man. Faust lacks the patience to accept knowledge with those limitations which, in the early stages, must exist. He wants to experience instantaneously a soul-realization which can only come in the course of time. And so he turns away from the revelation of the Macrocosm:

How grand a show! but, ah! a show alone.

Knowledge can never be more than a picture, a reflection of life. Faust's desire is not for a picture of life, but for life itself. He turns therefore to the sign of the Earth Spirit, in which he has a symbol before him of the whole infinite being of man as a product of earth activity. The symbol calls forth in his soul a vision of all the infinitude of being which man bears within him, but which would stun him, overwhelm him, if he were to receive it gathered up into the perception of a single moment of discovery rather than drawn out into the many pictures of that knowledge which is discovered to him in the long course of life.

In the phenomenon of the Earth Spirit Faust sees what man is in reality, but the result is confusion when in the weakened reflection of the forces of cognition it does not penetrate to the consciousness. There was present in Goethe, not of course in a philosophical form, but as a living concept, that spiritual fear which overtakes man in his life of thought: what would become of me if I suddenly were to behold the riddle of my existence and had not the knowledge to master it!

It was not Goethe's intention to express in his Faust the disillusionment of a misguided yearning for knowledge. His aim was rather to represent the conflict associated with this yearning — a conflict that has its seat in the being of man. Man in every moment of his existence is more than can be disclosed if his destiny is to be fulfilled. Man must evolve from his inner being; he must unfold that which he can only fully know after the

development has taken place. The constitution of his forces of knowledge is such that when brought to bear prematurely upon what at the right time they must master, they are liable to deception as the result of their own operations. Faust lives in all that the words of the Earth Spirit reveal to him. But this, his own being, confuses and deceives him when it appears objectively before his soul at a time when the degree of maturity, to which he has attained, does not yield him the know-ledge whereby he can transform this being into a picture:

Thou'rt like the Spirit which thou comprehendest. Not me!

Faust is profoundly shocked by these words. He has really looked upon himself, but he cannot compare himself to what he sees, because he does not know what he really is. The contemplation of the Self has deceived and confused the consciousness that is not ripe for it. Faust puts the question: "Not thee? Who then?" The answer is given in dramatic form. Wagner enters and is himself the answer to this, "Who then?" It was pride of soul in Faust that at this moment made him desire to grasp the secret of his own being. What lives in him is at first only the striving after this secret; Wagner is the reflected image of what he is able at the moment to know of himself. The scene with Wagner will be entirely misunderstood if the attention is merely directed to the contrast between the highly spiritual Faust and the very limited Wagner. In the meeting with Wagner after the Earth Spirit scene Faust has to realise that his power of cognition is really at the Wagner stage. In the dramatic imagination of this scene Wagner is the reflected image of Faust.

This is something that the Earth Spirit cannot immediately reveal to Faust, for it must come to pass as a result of development. And Goethe felt compelled not to allow Faust to experience the depths of higher human existence only from the point of view of forty years of life, but also to bring before his soul in a kind of retrospect, all that had escaped him in his abstract striving for knowledge. In Wagner Faust confronts himself in his soul vision. The monologue uttered by the real "Faust," beginning with the words:

How him alone all hope abandons ...

contains nothing but waves beating up from subconscious depths of soul, expressing themselves finally in the resolve to commit suicide. At this moment of experience Faust cannot but draw the inference from his life of feeling that "all hope" must "abandon" men. His soul is only saved from the consequences of this by the fact that life invokes before him something that to his abstract striving for knowledge was formerly meaningless: the Easter Festival of the human heart in its simplicity and the Easter Procession. During these experiences, brought back to him in retrospect from his semi-conscious youth, the contact with the spiritual world that he has had as a result of the meeting with the Earth Spirit, works in him. As a result he frees himself from this attitude of soul during the conversation with Wagner when he sees the Easter procession. Wagner remains in the region of abstract scientific endeavour. Faust must bring the soul experiences through which he has passed into real life in order that life may give him the power to find another answer than "Wagner" to the question "Not thee? Then who?"

A man who, like Faust, has had contact with the spiritual world in its reality, is bound to face life differently from men whose knowledge is limited to the phenomena of sense existence and consists of conceptions derived from this alone. What Goethe has called the "eye of spirit" has opened for Faust as a result of experience. Life brings him to "conquests", other than that of the Wagner being. Wagner is also a portion of that human nature which Faust has within him. Faust conquers it in that he subsequently makes living within him all that he failed to make living in his youth. Faust's endeavour to make the word of the Bible living is also part of the awakening. But during this process of awakening still another reflected image of his own being — Mephistopheles — appears before Faust's soul. Mephistopheles is the further, weightier answer to the "Not thee? Then who?" Faust must conquer Mephistopheles by the power of the life experiences in the soul that has had contact with the spiritual world. To see in the figure of Mephistopheles a portion of Faust's own being is not to sin against the artistic comprehension of the Faust Drama, for it is not suggested that Goethe intended to create a symbolical figure and not a living, dramatic personage in his Mephistopheles. In life itself man beholds in other men portions of his own being. Man recognises himself in other men. I do not assert that to me John Smith is only a symbol when I say: 'I see in him a portion of my own being.' The dramatic figures of Wagner and of Mephistopheles are individual, living beings; what Faust experiences through them is Self Perception.

What does the School Scene in Faust really bring before the souls of those who allow it to work upon them? Nothing more nor less than the nature which Faust manifests to the students — the Mephistophelian element in him. When a man has not conquered Mephistopheles in his own nature he can be manifested as this figure of Mephistopheles who confronts the pupils. It appears to me that in this scene Goethe allowed something from an earlier composition to remain — something that he would certainly have remodelled, if as he remodelled the older portions he had been able completely to understand the spirit which the whole work now reveals. In accordance with the import of this spirit all Mephistopheles' dealings with the students must also be experienced by Faust. In the earlier composition of Faust, Goethe was not intent upon giving everything so dramatic a form that it appears in some way as an experience of Faust himself. In the final elaboration of his poem he has simply taken over a great deal that is not an integral part of the spirit of the later dramatic composition.

The writer of this Essay belongs to the ranks of those readers of Faust who return to the poem again and again. His repeated reading has afforded him increasing insight into the infinite knowledge and experience of life which Goethe has embodied in it. He has, however, always failed to see Mephistopheles — in spite of his living dramatic qualities — as an unitary, inwardly uniform being. He fully understands why the commentators of Faust do not know how they should really interpret Mephistopheles. The idea has arisen that Mephistopheles is not a devil in the real sense, that he is only a servant of the Earth Spirit. But this is contradicted by what Mephistopheles himself says: "Fain would I go over to the Devil, if only I myself were not a Devil!" If we compare all that is expressed in Mephistopheles, we certainly do not get a uniform view.

As Goethe worked out his Poem he found that it drew nearer and nearer to the deepest problems of human experience. The light streaming from these problems of experience shines into all the events narrated in the poem. Mephistopheles is an embodiment of what man has to overcome in the course of a deeper experience of life. In the figure of Mephistopheles there stands an inner opponent of what man must strive for from out of his being. But if we follow closely those experiences which Goethe has woven subtly into the creation of Mephistopheles, we do not find one such spiritual opponent of the nature of Man, but two. One grows out of man's willing and feeling nature, the other out of his intellectual nature. The willing and feeling nature strives to isolate man from the rest of the universe wherein the root and source of his existence exist. Man is

deceived by his nature of will and feeling into imagining that he can traverse his life's path by relying on his inner being alone. He is deceived into a disregard of the fact that he is a limb of the universe in the sense that a finger is a limb of the organism. Man is destined to spiritual death if he cuts himself off from the universe, just as a finger would be destined to physical death if it attempted to live apart from the organism. There is a rudimentary striving in man in the direction of such a separation. Wisdom in life is not gained by shutting the eyes to the existence of this rudimentary striving, but by conquering it, transforming it in such a way that instead of being an opponent, it becomes an aid to life. A man who like Faust, has had contact with the spiritual world, must enter into the fight against this opposing force in human life much more consciously than one who has had no such contact. The power of this Luciferic adversary of man can be dramatised into a Being. This Being works through those soul forces which strive in the inner man for the enhancement of Egoism.

The other opposing force in human nature derives its power from the illusions to which man is exposed as a being who perceives and forms conceptions of the outer world. Experience of the outer world that is yielded by cognition is dependent upon the pictures which, in accordance with the particular attitude of his soul, and other multifarious circumstances, a man is able to make of this outer world. The Spirit of Illusion creeps into the formation of these pictures. It distorts the true relation to the outer world and to the rest of humanity into which man could bring himself if its operations were not there. It is also, for instance, the spirit of dissension and strife between man and man, and sets human beings into that state of subjection to circumstances which brings remorse and pangs of conscience in its train. In comparison with a figure of Persian Mythology, we may call it the Ahrimanic Spirit. The Persian Myths ascribe qualities to their figure of Ahriman which justify the use of this name.

The Luciferic and Ahrimanic opponents of the wisdom of man approach human evolution in quite different ways. Goethe's Mephistopheles has clearly Ahrimanic qualities, and yet the Luciferic element also exists in him. A Faust nature is more strongly exposed to the temptations both of Ahriman and of Lucifer than one without spiritual experiences. It may now appear that instead of the one Mephistopheles Goethe might have placed two characteristic beings there in contrast to Faust. Faust would then have been led through his life's labyrinth in one way by the one figure, and in another by the second. In Goethe's Mephistopheles, the two different kinds of qualities, Luciferic and Ahrimanic, are mingled. This not only hinders the reader from making an uniform picture of Mephistopheles in his

imagination, but it proved to be an obstacle to Goethe himself when again and again he tried to spin the thread of the Faust poem through his own life. One is conscious of a very natural desire to witness or hear much of what Mephistopheles does or says, from a different being. Of course Goethe attributed the difficulties which confronted him in the development of his Faust to many other things; but in his sub-consciousness there worked the twofold nature of Mephistopheles, and this made it difficult to guide the development of the course of Faust's existence into channels which must lead through the powers of opposition.

Considerations of this kind call forth all too readily the cheap objection that one wants to put Goethe right. This objection must be tolerated for the sake of the necessity for understanding Goethe's personal relationship to his Faust poem. We need only be reminded of how Goethe complained to friends of the weakness of his creative power just at the time when he wanted to bring his "life-poem" to an end. Let us remember that Goethe in his advanced age needed Eckermann's encouragement to rouse him to the task of working out the plan of the continuation of Faust which he intended to incorporate as such into the third book of *Poetry and Truth*. Karl Julius Schröder rightly says (*page 30, Third Edition, Part II., of his Essay on Faust*): "Without Eckermann we should really have had nothing more than the plan which possibly would have had some sort of form like the 'scheme of continuation' of the 'Natural daughter' that is embodied in the work." We know what such a plan is for the world "an object of consideration for the literary historian and nothing else." The cessation of Goethe's work on Faust has been attributed to every kind of possibility and impossibility. People have tried in one way or another to reconcile the contradictions that are felt to exist in the figure of Mephistopheles. The student of Goethe cannot well disregard these things. Or are we to make a confession like that of Jacob Minor in his otherwise interesting book *Goethe's Faust* (Vol. II., p. 28): "Goethe was approaching his fiftieth year; and from the period of his Swiss journey comes, as far as I know, the first sigh which the thought of approaching age drew from him in the beautiful poem *Swiss Alps* (*Schweizeralpe*). Thought as a harbinger of the wisdom of old age came more to the foreground even in him — with his eternal youth — who hitherto was only accustomed to behold and create. He makes plans and schemes on his Swiss journey like any real child of circumstance, just as he does in Faust." But a consideration of Goethe's life can lead us to the view that in a poem like Faust, certain things must be presented which could

only be the result of the experience of mature age. If poetic power can wane in old age — even in a Goethe — how could such a poem have some into being at all?

Paradoxical as it may seem to many minds, a serious study of Goethe's personal relationship to his Faust and to the figure of Mephistopheles seem to force us to see in the latter an inner foundation of the difficulties experienced by Goethe in his life poem. The dual nature of the figure of Mephistopheles worked in the depths of his soul and did not emerge above the threshold of his consciousness. But because Faust's experiences must contain reflections of the deeds of Mephistopheles, obstacles were continually being set up when it was a question of developing dramatically the course of Faust's life, and as a result of the working of the dual nature of the opposing forces, the right impulses for the development would not come to light.

The *Prologue in Heaven*, which with the *Dedication* and the *Prologue of the Theatre* now forms an introduction to the first Part of Faust, was first written in the year 1797. In Goethe's discussions with Schiller on the subject of the poem, and their outcome which is to be found in the correspondence between the two men, we can see that about this time Goethe altered his conception of those basic forces which revealed themselves as the life of Faust. Until then everything that comes to light in Faust flows out of that inner being of his soul that is urging him towards the consummation and widening of life. This inner impulse is the only one in evidence. Through the *Prologue in Heaven* Faust is placed in the whole world process as a seeking man. The spiritual powers that temper and maintain the world are revealed and the life of Faust is placed in the midst of their reciprocal co-operation and reaction. And so for the consciousness of the poet and of the reader, the being of Faust is removed into the Macrocosm where the Faust of Goethe as a youth did not wish to be. Mephistopheles appears "in Heaven" among the active cosmic beings. But just here the twofold being of Mephistopheles comes clearly into evidence. The "Lord" says:

*Of all the bold denying spirits
The waggish knave least trouble doth create.*

There must therefore be yet other spirits who "deny" in the world struggle. And how does this agree with Mephistopheles' unrest at the end of Part II. in reference to the corpse, when he says "in Heaven:

*I much prefer the cheeks where ruddy blood is leaping
And when a corpse approaches close my house.*

Let us imagine that instead of one Mephistopheles, a Luciferic and an Ahrimanic spirit oppose the "Lord" in the fight for Faust. An Ahrimanic spirit must feel unrest before a "corpse," for Ahriman is the spirit of illusion. If we go to the sources of illusion we find them to be connected with the mortal, material element working in human life. The forces of knowledge, of cognition, which become active to the degree in which the impulses appear in them which finally bring about death, underlie the Ahrimanic illusion. The impulses of Will and of reeling work in opposition to these forces. They are connected with budding, growing life; they are most powerful in childhood and youth. The more a man preserves the impulses of youth, the more vitally do these forces emerge in his old age. In these forces lie the Luciferic temptation. Lucifer can say: "I love the cheeks where ruddy blood is leaping"; Ahriman cannot "close his house" to a corpse. And the "Lord" can say to Ahriman:

*Of all the bold denying spirits
The waggish knave least trouble cloth create.*

The scoffing nature is akin to the nature of illusion. And so far as the "Eternal" in man is concerned, the Ahrimanic being governing the material and transitory, is less significant than the other denying spirit who is inwardly bound up with the kernel of man's being. The perception of a dual nature in Mephistopheles is not the result of an arbitrary fancy but the self-evident feeling of the existence of a duality in the constitution of man's universe and life. Goethe could not help being aware subconsciously of an element which made him feel: I am confronting the universal form of life with the Faust-Mephistopheles paradox, but it will not harmonise.

If what has here been said were taken in the sense of the pedantic, critical suggestion that Goethe ought to have drawn Mephistopheles otherwise, it could easily be refuted. It would only be necessary to point out that in Goethe's imagination this figure grew as unity, — nay had to grow as such, out of the tradition of the Faust Legend, out of Germanic and Northern Mythology. And over against the evidence of "contradictions" in a living figure, apart from the fact that what is full of life must necessarily contain "life and its contradictions," we could adduce Goethe's own clear words: "If phantasy (imagination) did not produce things which must for ever remain problematic to the intellect, there would not be much in it. This is what distinguishes poetry from prose." What is here suggested does not in any sense lie in this region. But what Karl Julius Schröer says (*page xciv., 3rd edition of Part II. of his Essay on Faust*) is indisputable: "Sparkling, witty, brilliantly descriptive, and manifesting a penetration of the obscure background of the most sublime problems of humanity ... the poem stimulates in us feelings of the most intense reverence ..." This is the whole point: all that lay before Goethe's imagination in his Faust poem appeared to him against the "obscure background of the most sublime problems of humanity" which he penetrated again and again. The attitude in which Schröer, with his deep knowledge and rare love of Goethe's genius, makes these statements is unassailable, because Schröer cannot be reproached with having wished to explain Goethe's poem in the sense of an abstract development of ideas. But because the background of the most sublime problems of humanity stood before Goethe's soul, the traditional figure of the "Northern Devil" expanded before his spiritual gaze into that dual Being to which the profound student of life and the universe will be led when he realises how Man is placed within the whole world process.

The Mephistopheles figure which hovered before Goethe when he began his poem was in line with Faust's estrangement from the import of the Macrocosm. The conflicts of the soul then rising from his inner being led to a struggle against the opposing power that lays hold of man's inner nature and is Luciferic. But Goethe was bound to lead Faust into the struggle with the powers of the external world also. The nearer he came to the elaboration of the second part of Faust, the more strongly did he feel this necessity. And in the "Classical Walpurgis Night" which was meant to lead up to the actual meeting between Faust and Helena, world powers and macrocosmic events entered into connection with human experiences. Mephistopheles entering into this connection must assume an Ahrimanic character. As a result of his scientific world conception Goethe had built for

himself the bridge over which he was able to bring world events into connection with human evolution. He did this in his "Classical Walpurgis Night." The poetic value of this will only be appreciated when it is fully realised that in this part of Faust Goethe so completely succeeded in moulding Nature's conceptions into artistic form that nothing of a conceptual, abstract nature remained in them; everything flowed into imagery, into an imaginative form. It is an esthetic superstition to reproach the "Classical Walpurgis Night" with containing a distressing element of abstract scientific theories. And perhaps the bridge between supersensible, macrocosmic events and human experiences is more marked in the mighty concluding picture of the Fifth Act of Part II.

There seems no doubt that Goethe's genius underwent a development in the course of his life as a result of which the dual nature of the cosmic powers opposing man came before his soul's vision and that in the development of his Faust he realised the necessity for overcoming its own beginning, for the life of Faust is turned again to the Macrocosm, from which his incomplete knowledge had at first estranged him.

A wondrous show! but ah! a show alone.

Yet into this show there played the forces of all embracing macrocosmic events. The "show" became Life, because Faust strove towards goals that lead man, as a result of the life struggle in his inner being, into conflicts with Powers that make him appear not only as a struggling member of the universe, but as a match for the struggle.

∴

3

Goethe's Standard of the Soul, as Illustrated in his Fairy Story of "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily."

About the time of the beginning of his friendship with Goethe, Schiller was occupying himself with the ideas which found expression in his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*.^[3] In 1794, he elaborated these letters, which were originally written for the Duke of Augustenberg, for *Die Horen*. The direction of thought in the verbal discussions and the correspondence which took place at that time between Goethe and Schiller approximated again and again to the orbit of ideas contained in these letters. Schiller's thoughts encountered this question: "What condition of the human soul forces corresponds in the best sense of the word to an existence worthy of man?" "It may be urged that every individual bears within himself, at least in adaptation and destination, a purely ideal man. The great problem of his existence is to bring all the incessant changes of his outer life into conformity with the unchanging unity of this ideal.

Thus writes Schiller in the fourth letter. It is Schiller's aim to build a bridge from man as he is in immediate reality, to the ideal man. There exist in human nature two impulses which hold it back from idealistic perfection when they develop in an unbalanced way —the impulses of the senses and of reason. If the sense impulse has the upper hand man is the servant of his instincts and passions. In action that is irradiated by human consciousness is mingled a force that clouds this consciousness. His acts become the result of an inner necessity. If the reason impulse predominates man strives to suppress the instincts and passions and to give himself up to an abstract necessity that is not sustained by inner warmth. In both cases man is subject to coercion. In the first his sense nature subdues the spiritual; in the second his spiritual nature subdues that of the senses. Neither the one nor the other gives man in the kernel of his being which lies between the material and the spiritual, full and complete freedom. Complete freedom can only be realised in harmonisation of the two impulses. The material sense nature must not be subdued, but ennobled; the instincts and passions must be permeated with spirituality in such a way that they themselves come to be the fulfilment of the spiritual element that has entered into them. And reason must lay hold

of the soul nature in man in such a way that it imparts its power to what is merely instinctive and passionate, causing man to fulfil its counsels as a matter of course from out of his instinct and with the power of passion. "When we have desire for someone who is worthy of our disdain, we have painful experience of the constraint of Nature. When we are antagonistic to another who merits our respect, we have painful experience of the constraint of the intellect. As soon, however, as he interests our affections and wins our respect, the coercion of feeling and the coercion of reason both disappear, and we begin to love him. A man whose material nature manifests the spiritual qualities of reason, and whose reason manifests the basic power of passion, is a free personality." Schiller would like to found harmonious social life in human society upon the basis of free personalities. For him the problem of an existence really worthy of man was allied to the problem of the formation of man's social life. This was his answer to the questions facing man-kind at the time when he expressed these thoughts, as a result of the French Revolution (27th Letter). Goethe found deep satisfaction in such ideas. On 26th October, 1794, he writes to Schiller on the subject of the Aesthetic Letters as follows: "I read the manuscript sent to me with the very greatest pleasure; I imbibed it at one draught. These letters pleased and did me good in the same way as a delicious drink that suits our nature is easily imbibed and shows its healthy effects on our tongue through a pleasant humour of the nervous system. How could it be otherwise, since I found such a coherent and noble exposition of what I have long recognized to be true, partly experiencing it, partly longing to experience it in life.

Goethe found that Schiller's Aesthetic Letters expressed all that he longed to experience in life in order to become conscious of an existence that should be really worthy of man. It is therefore comprehensible that in his soul also, thoughts should be stimulated which he tried in his own way to elaborate in Schiller's direction. These thoughts gave birth to the composition that has been interpreted in so many different ways, — namely the enigmatical fairy tale at the end of the narrative which appeared in *Die Horen* under the title of *Conversations of German Emigrants*. The fairy tale appeared in this paper in the year 1795. These conversations, like Schiller's Aesthetic Letters, had as their subject the French Revolution. This concluding fairy tale cannot be explained by bringing all sorts of ideas from outside to bear upon it, but only by going back to the conceptions which lived in Goethe's soul at that time.

Most of the attempts to interpret this composition are recorded in the book entitled *Goethe's Wonder Compositions* by Friedrich Meyer von Waldeck Heidelberg (*Karl Wintersche Universitätsbuchhandlung*). Since the publication of this book new attempts at explanation have of course been made.

I have tried to penetrate into the spirit of the fairy tale, taking as my starting point the hypothesis of the Goethean school of thought from the ninetieth year of the eighteenth century onwards, and I first gave expression to what I had discovered in a lecture delivered on 27th October, 1891, to the Goethe Society of Vienna. What I then said has expanded in all directions. But everything that I have since allowed to be printed or that I have said verbally about the fairy tale, is only a further elaboration of the thoughts expressed in that Lecture and my Mystery Play, *The Portal of Initiation*, published in 1910, is also a result.

We must look for the embryonic thought underlying the fairy tale in the *Conversations* of which it formed the conclusion. In the *Conversations* Goethe tells of the escape of a certain family from regions devastated by war. In the conversations between the members of this family there lives all that was stimulated in Goethe's conceptual world as a result of his interchange of ideas with Schiller. The conversations revolve around two central points of thought. One of them governs those conceptions of man which make him believe in the existence of some connection between the events of his life, — a connection which is impermeable to the laws of material actuality. The stories told in this connection are in part phantom, and in part describe experiences which seem to reveal a "Wonder" element in contrast to natural law. Goethe did not write these narratives as the result of a tendency towards superstition, but from a much deeper motive. That soothing, mystical feeling which many people have when they hear of something that cannot be explained by the limited reason directed to the facts of natural law, was quite alien to Goethe. But again and again he was faced by the question: does there not exist for the human soul a possibility of emancipating itself from conceptions emanating from mere sense perception and of apprehending a supersensible world in a purely spiritual mode of conception? The impulse towards this kind of activity of the faculty of cognition may of course be a natural human aspiration based on a connection with this supersensible world, — a connection that is hidden from the senses and the understanding bound to them. And the tendency towards experiences which appear to sever natural connections may be only a childish aberration of this justifiable longing of man for a spiritual world. Goethe was interested in the peculiar direction of the soul's activity

when giving way to this fondness for the sweets of superstition rather than for the actual content of the tales and stories to which these tendencies give birth in unsophisticated minds.

From the second central point of thought flow conceptions concerned with man's moral life, the stimulus for which is derived not from material existence, but from impulses which raise man above the impacts of material sense existence. In this sphere a supersensible world of forces enters into the soul life of man.

Rays which must ultimately end in the supersensible proceed from both these central points of thought. And they give rise to the questions about the inner being of man, the connection of the human soul with the sense world on the one side and with the supersensible on the other. Schiller approached this question in a philosophical attitude in his Aesthetic Letters; the abstract philosophical path was not Goethe's. He had to give a picture form to what he wrote, as in the case of the fairy tale of *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*. In Goethe's imagination the different human soul powers assumed the form of figures in the fairy tale, and the whole soul life and soul striving of man was personified in the experiences and the lives of these figures. When anything of this kind is said one has to be prepared for the objection which will come from certain quarters that in this way a composition is lifted out of the realm of imagination, of phantasy, and made into an inartistic, symbolical representation of abstract concepts; the figures are removed from real life and transformed into symbols or even allegories that are not of the nature of art. Such an objection is based on the notion that nothing but abstract ideas can live in the human soul as soon as it leaves the realm of sense materiality. It ignores the fact that there is a living supersensible mode of perception as well as one that is of the senses. And in the fairy tale Goethe moves with his figures in the realm of supersensible perceptions and not of abstract concepts. What is here said about these figures and their experiences is not in any sense a statement that this figure means one thing, and that another. Such symbolical interpretation is as far removed as it could possibly be from the standpoint of this Essay. For it, the Old Man with the Lamp and the Will-o'-the-Wisps in the fairy tale are nothing more nor less than the phantasy figures as they appear in the composition. It is absolutely necessary, however, to look for the particular thought impulses which stimulated the imagination of the poet to create such figures. Goethe's consciousness did not of course lay hold of these thought-impulses in abstract form. He expressed himself in imaginative figures because to his genius any abstract form of thought would have been too

lacking in content. The thought-impulse holding sway in the substrata of Goethe's soul had as its outcome the imaginative figure. Thought, as the intermediate stage, lives only subconsciously in his soul and gives the imagination its direction. The student of Goethe's fairy tale needs the thought content, for this alone can enable his soul to follow the course of Goethe's creative phantasy in re-creative imagination. The process of growing into the content of this thought involves nothing more nor less than the adaptation of organs enabling us to live in the atmosphere that Goethe breathed spiritually when he created the fairy tale. This means that we focus our gaze upon the same soul world as Goethe. As a result of Goethe's control of this soul world, living, spiritual forms — not philosophical ideas, burst forth before him. What lives in these spiritual forms lives also in the human soul.

The mode of conception which permeates the fairy tale is also present in the Conversations. In the discussions narrated there, the human soul turns to the two world spheres between which man's life is placed — the material and the supersensible. The deeper nature of man strives to establish a right relationship to both these spheres for the purpose of attaining a free soul understanding that is worthy of man, and of building a harmonious social life. Goethe felt that what he brought to light in the narratives did not come to expression fully in the Conversations. In the all-embracing picture of the fairy tale he had to bring those human soul problems upon which his gaze was directed, nearer to the immeasurably rich world of spiritual life. The striving towards the condition truly worthy of man to which Schiller refers and which Goethe longs to experience, is personified in the Young Man in the fairy tale. His marriage with the Lily, who embodies the realization of the world of Freedom is the union with those forces which slumber in the human soul and when awakened lead to the true inner experience of the free personality.

The "Old Man with the Lamp" plays an important part in the development of the fairy tale. When he comes with his lamp into the clefts of the rocks, he is asked which is the most important of the secrets known to him. He answers, "the revealed," and when asked if he will not divulge this secret, replies, "When I have learnt the fourth." This fourth secret, however, is known to the Green Snake, who whispers it in the Old Man's ear. There can be no doubt that this secret concerns the condition for which all the figures in the fairy tale are longing. This condition is described at the end of the

tale. A picture portrays the way in which the soul of man enters into union with the subterranean forces of its nature. As a result of this, the soul's relationship to the supersensible, — the kingdom of the Lily, — and to the material, — the kingdom of the Green Snake, is so regulated that in experience and in action it is freely receptive to impulses from both regions. In union with both the soul is able to fulfil its true being. It must be assumed that the Old Man knows this secret; for he is the only figure who is always master of the circumstances; everything is dependent on his guidance and leadership. What then can the Snake say to the Old Man? He knows that the Snake must be offered up in sacrifice if the longed-for goal is to be attained. But this knowledge of his is not unconditional. He must wait until the snake from out of the depths of her nature is ripe to make the sacrifice. Within the compass of man's soul life is a power which bears the soul's development on to the condition of free personality. This power has its task on the way to the attainment of free personality. When this is achieved the task is over. This power brings the human soul into connection with the experiences of life. It transforms into inner wisdom all that science and life reveal, and makes the soul ever riper for the desired spiritual goal. This attained, it loses meaning, for it establishes man's relation to the outer world. At the goal, however, all external impulses are changed into inner impulses of the soul, and there this power must sacrifice itself, must suspend its functions; it must, without separate existence of its own, live on now in the transformed man as the ferment permeating the rest of soul life. Goethe's spiritual outlook was particularly concerned with this power in human life. He saw it working in the experiences of life and of science. He wanted to see its application without the outcome of preconceived ideas or theories of an abstract goal. This goal must be a result of the experiences themselves. When the experiences are mature they must themselves give birth to the goal. They must not be stunted by a predestined end. This soul-power is personified in the Green Snake. It devours the gold, — the wisdom derived from life and science, which must be so worked upon by the soul that wisdom and soul become one. This soul-power will be sacrificed at the right time; it will bring man to his goal, will make him a free personality. The Snake whispers to the Old Man that it will sacrifice itself. It confides to him a mystery that is revealed to him, but of which he can make no use so long as it is not fulfilled by the free resolve of the Snake. When this soul power in man speaks to him as the Snake speaks to the Old Man, "the time has come" for the soul to realise life experience as life wisdom; harmony between the material and the supersensible is re-established. The Young Man has had premature contact with the supersensible world, and has been paralysed,

deadened. Life revives in him and he marries the Lily when the Snake, — the soul experience, is offered up in sacrifice. Thus the longed for consummation is attained. The time has now also come when the soul is able to build a bridge between the nether and the further regions of the river. This bridge is built of the Snake's own substance. From now on, life experience has no separate existence; it is no longer directed merely to the outer sense world as before. It has become inner soul power which is not consciously exercised as such, but which only functions in the reciprocal illumination of the material and super-sensible life of man's inner being. This condition is brought about by the Snake. Yet the Snake by itself cannot impart to the Young Man the gifts whereby he is able to control the newly fathomed soul kingdom. These gifts are bestowed on him by the Three Kings. From the Brazen King he receives the sword with the command: "Take the sword in your left hand and keep the right hand free." The Silver King gives him the sceptre with the words: "Feed my sheep." The Golden King sets the Crown of Oak on his head, saying, "Acknowledge the Highest." The fourth King, who is formed of a mixture of the three metals, Copper, Silver and Gold, sinks lifelessly to the ground. In the man who is on the way to become a free personality there are three soul forces in alloy: — Will (Copper), Feeling (Silver), Knowledge (Gold). In the course of existence the revelations of life experience give all that the soul assimilates from the operation of these three forces. Power, through which virtue works is made manifest in Will: Beauty (beautiful appearance) reveals itself in Feeling; Wisdom, in Knowledge. Man is separated from the state of "free personality" through the fact that these three forces work in his soul in alloy; he will attain free personality to the degree in which he assimilates the gifts, each of the three in its specific nature, in full consciousness and unites them in free conscious activity in his own soul. Then the chaotic alloy of the gifts of Will, Feeling and Knowledge which has previously controlled him, falls asunder.

The Wisdom King is of Gold. Gold personifies Wisdom in some form. The operation of Wisdom in the life experience that is finally sacrificed has already been described. But the Will-o'-the-Wisps too, seize upon the Gold in their own way. In man there exists a soul quality, — (in many people it develops abnormally and seems to fill their whole being) — by which he is able to assimilate all the wisdom that life and science bestow. But this soul quality does not endeavour to unite wisdom wholly to the inner life. It remains one-sided know-ledge, as an instrument of dogma or criticism; it makes a man appear brilliant, or helps to give him a one-sided prominence in life. It makes no effort to bring about a balance through adjustment with

the yields of external experience. It becomes superstition as described by Goethe in the *Wonder Tales of the Emigrants*, because it does not try to harmonise itself to Nature. It becomes learning before it has become life in the inner being of the soul. It is that which false prophets and sophists like to bear through life. All endeavour to assimilate the Goethean life-axiom: "Man must surrender his existence if he would exist" is alien to it. The Snake, the selfless life-experience that has developed for love's sake to conscious wisdom, surrenders its existence in order to build the bridge between material and spiritual existence.

An irresistible desire presses the Young Man onward to the kingdom of the Beautiful Lily. What are the characteristics of this kingdom? Although men have the deepest longing for the world of the Lily, they can only reach it at certain times before the bridge is built. At noon the Snake, even before its sacrifice, builds a temporary bridge to the supersensible world. And evening and morning man can pass over the river that separates sense-existence from supersensible existence on the Giant's Shadows — the powers of imagination and of memory. Anyone who approaches the ruler of the supersensible world without the necessary inner qualification must do harm to his life like the Young Man. The Lily also desires the other region. The Ferryman who conveyed the Will-o'-the-Wisps over the river can bring anyone back from the supersensible world, but can take no one to it.

A man who desires contact with the supersensible world must first have developed his inner being in the direction of this world through life experience, for the supersensible world can only be grasped in free spiritual activity.

The Prose Aphorisms express Goethe's opinion of this goal: "Everything that sets our spirit free without giving us mastery over ourselves, is harmful." Another aphorism is: "Duty, when a man loves the commands he gives to himself." The kingdom of pure supersensible activity — Schiller's "Reason Impulse," is that of the Lily; the kingdom of pure sense-materiality — Schiller's "Sense Impulse" is the home of the Snake before its sacrifice. The Ferryman can bring anyone to the realm of sense but cannot convey them to the realm of spirit. All men have involuntarily descended from the supersensible world. But they can only re-establish a free union with this supersensible world when they have the will to pass over the bridge of sacrificed life-experience. It is a union independent of "Time," of all involuntary conditions of soul. Before this free union has taken place there exist two involuntary conditions of soul which enable man to attain to the

supersensible world — the kingdom of the free personality. One such condition is present in creative imagination or phantasy which is a reflection of supersensible experience. In Art man links sense existence to the supersensible. In Art he manifests also as free creative soul. This is depicted in the crossing which the Snake makes possible at noon. The Snake typifies life-experience not yet ready for supersensible existence. The other condition of soul sets in when the conscious soul of man — of the Giant in man who is an image of the macrocosm — is dimmed, when conscious cognition is obscured and blunted in such a way that it becomes superstition, hallucination, mediumistic trance. The soul power existing in this way in obscured consciousness is for Goethe one with that power that is prone by force and despotism to lead men to the state of freedom in a revolutionary sense. In revolutions the urge towards an ideal state lives obscurely; it is like the shadow of the Giant which lies over the river at twilight. What Schiller writes to Goethe on 16th October, 1794, is also evidence of the accuracy of this idea of the Giant. Goethe was on a journey which it was his intention to extend to Frankforton-the-Main. Schiller writes: "I am indeed glad to know that you are still far away from the commerce of the Main. The shadow of the Giant might well lay rough hands upon you." The result of caprice, the unregulated "laissez faire" of historical events, is personified in the Giant and his shadow, by the side of the obscured consciousness of man. The soul impulses leading to such happenings are certainly associated with the tendency towards superstition and chimerical ideology.

The "Old Man's" lamp has the quality of only being able to give light where another light already is. One cannot but be reminded here of the saying of an old Mystic, quoted by Goethe: "If the eye were not of the nature of the light it could never see the sun; if God's own power were not within us, how could Divinity delight us?" Just as the lamp does not give light in the darkness, so the light of wisdom, of knowledge, does not shine in the man who does not bring to it the appropriate organ, the inner light. What the lamp denotes will become still more intelligible if we take heed of the fact that it can in its own way shed light upon what is developing as a resolution in the Snake, but that there must first be knowledge of the Snake's willingness to make this resolution. There is a kind of human knowledge which is at all times a concern of the highest endeavour of man. It has arisen from the inner experience of souls in the course of the historical life of mankind. But the goal of human endeavour to which it points can only be attained in concrete reality out of the sacrificed life-experience. All that the consideration of the historical past teaches man, all

that mystical and religious experience enables him to say about his connection with the supersensible world,-all this can find its ultimate consummation only by the sacrifice of life-experience. The Old Man can change everything by his lamp in such a way that it assumes a new life-serving form, but actual development is dependent upon the ripening of the life-experience.

The wife of the Old Man is she whose body is pledged to the river for the debt which she has come to owe it. This woman personifies the human powers of perception and conception as well as humanity's memory of its past. She is an associate of the Old Man. By her aid he has possession of the light that is able to illumine what is made evident already by external reality. But the powers of conception and of remembrance are not united in life with the concrete forces active in the evolution of the individual man and in the historical life of humanity. The power of conception and of remembrance cleaves to the past; it conserves the things of the past so that they make their claims upon all that is becoming and evolving in the present. The conditions — maintained by memory — in which the individual and the human race are always living, are the crystallisation of this power of the soul.

Schiller writes of them in the third of the *Aesthetic Letters*: "He (man) was introduced into this state by the power of circumstances, before he could freely select his own position. Before he could adjust it according to the Laws of Reason, necessity has done so according to Natural Laws." The river divides the two kingdoms, of free spiritual activity in supersensible existence and of necessity in material life. The unconscious soul powers, the Ferryman, transport man, whose origin is in the supersensible kingdom, into the material world. Here in the first place he finds himself in a realm wherein the powers of conception and remembrance have created conditions in which he has to live. But they separate him from the supersensible world; he feels himself beholden to them when he must approach the power (the Ferryman) that has brought him unconsciously out of the supersensible world into the material sense world. He can only break the power which these conditions have over him, and which is revealed in the deprivation of his freedom, when with the "Fruits of the Earth" that is to say, with self-created life wisdom, he frees himself from the obligation imposed upon him by the conditions, from coercion. If he cannot do this, these conditions — the water of the river — take his individual wisdom away from him. He is swallowed up into his soul being.

On the river stands the Temple in which the marriage of the Young Man with the Lily takes place. The "marriage" with the supersensible, the realisation of the free personality, is possible in a human soul whose forces have been brought into a state of regularity that in comparison with the usual state is a transformation. The life experience previously acquired by the soul is so far mature that the force directed to it is no longer exhausted in adapting man to the world of sense. This force becomes the content of what is able to stream into man's inner being from the supersensible world in such a way, that, acts in the material sense world become the fulfilment of supersensible impulses. In this condition of soul, those spiritual powers of man which previously flowed along mistaken or one-sided channels, assume their new significance in the character as a whole, — a significance adequate for a higher state of consciousness. The wisdom of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, for example, which has broken loose from the sense world and has wandered into superstition or chaotic thought, serves to open the door of the Palace, that is the personification of the soul condition wherein the chaotic alloy of Will, Feeling and Cognition holds man in chain within a constricted inner life shut off from the supersensible world.

In the wonder pictures of the composition Goethe approached the panoramic evolution of the human soul before his spiritual vision in that frame of mind which is conscious of estrangement in face of the supersensible until it attains those heights of consciousness where life in the sense world is permeated by the supersensible, spiritual world to such an extent that the two become one. This process of transformation was visible to Goethe's soul in delicately woven figures of phantasy. Through the *Conversations of German Emigrants* shines the problem of the relation of the physical world to a world of supersensible experience free of every element of sense with its consequences for the communal life of man. This problem finds a far-reaching solution at the end of the fairy tale in a panorama of poetic pictures. This Essay merely indicates the path leading to the realm where Goethe's imagination wove the fabric of the fairy tale. Living understanding of all the other details can be developed by those who realise the fairy tale to be a picture of man's soul life as it strives towards the supersensible world. Schiller realised this fully. He writes: "The fairy tale is full of colour and humour and I think that you have given most charming expression to the ideas of which you once spoke, namely, in reference to the reciprocal interplay of the powers and their reaction on each other." For even when it is objected that this reciprocal interaction of the powers refers to powers of different men, we can plead the well-known Goethean truth that although the soul powers from one point of view are

distributed among different human beings, they are nothing but the divergent rays of the collective human soul. And when different human natures work together in a common existence we have in this mutual action and reaction nothing more nor less than a picture of the multifarious forces and powers constituting in their reciprocal relationships the one collective individual being, Man.



4

Goethe's Fairy Tale – The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily

Tired out with the labours of the day, an old Ferryman lay asleep in his hut, on the bank of a wide river, in flood from heavy rains. In the middle of the night he was awakened by a loud cry, — he listened — it seemed the call of belated travellers wishing to be ferried over.

Opening the door, he was astonished to see two Will-o'-the-Wisps dancing round his boat, which was still secured to its moorings. With human voices, they declared they were in a great hurry, and must be taken instantly across the river. Without losing a moment, the old Ferryman pushed off and rowed across with his usual skill. During the passage the strangers whispered together in an unknown language, and several times burst into loud laughter, whilst they amused themselves with dancing upon the sides and seats of the boat, and cutting fantastic capers at the bottom.

"The boat reels," cried the old man; "if you are so restless, it may upset. Sit down, you Will-o'-the-Wisps."

They burst into laughter at this command, ridiculed the boatman, and became more troublesome than ever. But he bore their annoyance patiently, and they reached the opposite bank.

Here is something for your trouble," said the passengers, shaking themselves, and a number of glittering gold pieces fell into the boat. "What are you doing?" cried the old man, "bad luck if a single piece of gold falls into the water! The river hates gold, and would swallow both me and my boat. Who can say even what might happen to you? I pray you take back your gold.

We can take nothing back, which we have once shaken from us," answered one of them. "Then," replied the old boatman, "I must take it ashore and bury it," and he stooped and collected the gold in his cap.

The Will-o'-the-Wisps had in the meantime leaped out of the boat, and seeing this the old man cried, "Pay me my fare.

The man who refuses gold must work for nothing," answered the Will-o'-the-Wisps. "But you shall not go," replied the Ferryman defiantly, "until you have given me three cauliflowers, three artichokes, and three large onions.

The Will-o'-the-Wisps were in the act of running off with a laugh, when they felt themselves in some strange way fixed to the earth; they had never experienced such a sensation. They then promised to pay the demand without delay, upon which the Ferryman released them and instantly pushed off in his boat.

He had already gone some distance when they called after him, "Old man! listen, we have forgotten something important"; but he did not hear them and continued his course. When he had reached a point lower down, on the same side of the river, he came to some rocks inaccessible to the water, and proceeded to bury the dangerous gold. Into a deep cleft between two rocks, he threw the gold, and returned to his dwelling. This cleft was inhabited by a beautiful green snake, who was awakened from her sleep by the sound of the falling money. At the very first appearance of the glittering coins, she devoured them greedily, then searched about carefully in hopes of finding such other coins as might have fallen accidentally amongst the briers, or between the fissures of the rocks.

The Snake immediately experienced the most delightful sensations, and perceived with joy that she had become suddenly shining and transparent. She had long known that this change was possible, but wondering whether she would be bright for ever, curiosity drove her to leave her dwelling and find out, if possible, who had sent the beautiful gold. She found no one; but she became lost in admiration of herself, and of the brilliant light which illumined her path through the thick underwood, and shed its rays over the surrounding green. The leaves of the trees glittered like emeralds, and the flowers shone with wondrous hues. In vain did she penetrate the lonely wilderness, but hope dawned when she reached the plains, and saw, some way off, a light resembling her own. "Have I at last discovered my fellow?" she exclaimed, and hurried to the spot. Swamp and morass were no hindrance to her; for though the dry meadow and the high rock were her dearest habitations, and though she loved to feed upon juicy roots, and quench her thirst with the dew and with fresh water from the spring, yet for the sake of her beloved gold and of her glorious light, she would face any privation.

Wearied and exhausted, she finally reached the confines of a wide morass, where the two Will-o'-the-Wisps were amusing themselves in fantastic capers. She went towards them, and saluted them, expressing her delight at being able to claim relationship with such charming personages. The lights played around her, hopped from side to side, and laughed in their own peculiar fashion. "Dear lady!" they cried, "what does it matter, even though your form is horizontal; we are at least related through brilliancy. But see how a tall slender figure becomes us vertical gentry." And so saying the lights compressed their breadth and shot up into a thin and pointed line. "Do not take offence, dear friend," they continued, "but what family can boast of a privilege like ours! Ever since the first Will-o'-the-Wisp was created, none of our race have ever been obliged to sit down or take repose.

But all this time the feelings of the Snake in the presence of her relations were anything but pleasant; for, raise her head as high as she would, she was compelled to stoop to earth again, when she wanted to advance; and though she was proud of the brilliancy which she shed round her own dark abode, she felt her light gradually diminish in the presence of her relatives, and she began to be afraid that it might finally be extinguished.

In her perplexity she hastily enquired whether the gentlemen could inform her whence had come the shining gold, which had fallen into the cleft of the rocks, as it seemed to her, a bounteous shower from heaven. The Will-o'-the-Wisps shook themselves, laughing loudly, and a deluge of gold pieces at once fell around. The Snake devoured them greedily. "We hope you like them," cried the shining Will-o'-the-Wisps; "we can supply you with any quantity," and they shook themselves with such effect that the Snake found it difficult to swallow the bright morsels quickly enough. Her brilliancy increased as the gold disappeared, till at length she shone with inconceivable radiance, while in the same proportion the Will-o'-the-Wisps grew thin and tapering, without, however, losing any of their cheerful humour.

"I am under eternal obligation to you," said the Snake, pausing to breathe after her voracious meal; "ask of me what you like, I will give you anything you demand.

"A bargain!" cried the Will-o'-the-Wisps; "tell us where the beautiful Lily dwells, lead us to her palace and gardens without delay; we die of impatience to cast ourselves at her feet.

You ask a favour," sighed the Snake, "which is not in my power so quickly to bestow. The beautiful Lily lives, unfortunately, on the opposite bank of the river. We cannot cross over on such a stormy night as this.

Cruel river, which separates us from the object of our desires! But can we not call back the old Ferryman?

Your wish is vain," answered the Snake, "for even if you were to meet him on this bank, he would refuse to take you, because although he can convey passengers to this side of the river, he may carry no one back.

Bad news, indeed; but are there no other means of crossing the river?

There are, but not at this moment; I myself can take you over at mid-day.

That is an hour when we do not usually travel," replied the Will-o'-the-Wisps.

Then you had better postpone your intention till evening, when you may cross in the giant's shadow." "How is that done?" they asked.

The giant, who lives hard by," replied the Snake, "is powerless with his body; his hands cannot lift even a straw, his shoulders can bear no burden, but his shadow accomplishes all for him. Hence he is most powerful at sunrise and at sunset. At the hour of evening, the giant will approach the river softly, and if you place yourself upon his shadow, it will carry you over. Meet me at mid-day, at the corner of the wood, where the trees hang over the river, and I myself will take you across, and introduce you to the beautiful Lily. If, however, you shrink from the noonday heat, you must apply to the giant, when evening casts its shadows, and he will no doubt oblige you.

With a graceful salute the young gentlemen took their leave, and the Snake rejoiced at their departure, partly that she might indulge her feelings of pleasure in her own light, and partly that she might satisfy a curiosity which had long tormented her.

In the clefts of the rocks where she dwelt, she had lately made a wonderful discovery; for although she had been obliged to crawl through these chasms in darkness, she had learnt to distinguish every object by feeling. The productions of Nature, which she was accustomed to

encounter, were all of an irregular kind. At one time she wound her way amongst enormous crystals, at another she was temporarily obstructed by the veins of solid silver, and many were the precious stones which her light discovered to her. But, to her great astonishment, she had encountered in a rock, which was securely closed on all sides, objects which betrayed the plastic hand of man. Smooth walls, which she could not ascend, sharp, regular angles, tapering columns, and what was even more wonderful, human figures, round which she had often entwined herself, and which seemed to her to be formed of brass or of polished marble. She was now anxious to behold all these objects with her eyes, and to confirm, by her own observation, what she had hitherto only surmised. She thought herself capable now of illumining with her own light these wonderful subterranean caverns, and hoped to become thoroughly acquainted with these astonishing mysteries. She did not delay and quickly found the opening through which she was wont to penetrate into the sanctuary.

Having arrived at the place, she looked round with wonder, and though her brilliancy was unable to light the whole cavern, yet many of the objects were sufficiently distinct. With wonder and awe, she raised her eyes to an illumined niche, in which stood the statue of a venerable King, of pure gold. The size of the statue was colossal but the countenance was rather that of a little than of a great man. His shapely limbs were covered with a simple robe, and his head was encircled by an oaken garland.

Scarcely had the Snake beheld this venerable form, than the King found utterance, and said, "How comest thou hither?"

Through the cleft in which the gold abides," answered the Snake.

What is nobler than gold?" asked the King. "Light," replied the Snake.

And what is more vivid than light?" continued the King.

Speech," said the Snake.

During this conversation the Snake had looked stealthily around and observed another statue in an adjoining niche. A silver King was enthroned there, — a tall and slender figure; his limbs were enveloped in an embroidered mantle, his crown and sceptre were adorned with precious stones; his countenance was serene and dignified, and he seemed about to speak, when a dark vein, which ran through the marble of the wall, suddenly became brilliant, and cast a soft light through the whole temple.

This light discovered a third King, whose mighty form was cast in brass; he leaned upon a massive club, his head was crowned with laurel, and his proportions resembled a rock rather than a human being.

The Snake felt a desire to approach a fourth King, who stood before her some way off; but the wall suddenly opened, the illumined vein flashed like lightning, and was as suddenly extinguished.

A man of middle stature now approached. He was dressed in the garb of a peasant; in his hand he bore a lamp, whose flame was delightful to behold, and which lightened the entire dwelling, without leaving any trace of shadow. "Why dost thou come, since we have already light?" asked the Golden King.

You know that I can shed no ray on what is dark," replied the Old Man.

Will my kingdom end?" asked the Silver Monarch. "Late or never," answered the other.

The Brazen King then asked, in a voice of thunder, "When shall I arise?

Soon," was the reply.

With whom shall I be united?" continued the former.

With thine elder brother," answered the latter. "And what will become of the youngest?

He will rest.

I am not tired," interrupted the fourth King, with a deep, but quavering voice.

During this conversation the Snake had wound her way softly through the temple, surveyed everything which it contained, and approached the niche in which the fourth King stood. He leaned against a pillar, and his fair countenance bore traces of melancholy. It was difficult to distinguish the metal of which the statue was composed. It resembled a mixture of the three metals of which his brothers were formed; but it seemed as if the materials had not thoroughly blended, for the veins of gold and silver crossed each other irregularly through the brazen mass, and destroyed the effect of the whole.

The Golden King now asked, "How many secrets dost thou know?"

Three," came the reply.

And which is the most important?" inquired the Silver King. "The revealed," answered the Old Man.

Wilt thou explain it to us?" asked the Brazen King.

When I have learnt the fourth," was the answer.

I care not," murmured he of the strange compound. "I know the fourth," interrupted the Snake, approaching the Old Man, and whispering in his ear.

The time has come," cried the latter, in a loud voice. The sounds echoed through the temple; the statues rang again; and in the same moment the old man disappeared towards the west, and the Snake towards the east, and both pierced instantly through the impediments of the rock.

Every passage through which the old man passed became immediately filled with gold; for the lamp which he carried possessed the wonderful property of converting stones into gold, wood into silver, and dead animals into jewels. But in order to produce this effect, it was necessary that no other light should be near. In the presence of another light the lamp merely emitted a faint illumination, which, however, gave joy to every living thing. The old man returned to his hut on the brow of the hill, and found his wife in great sorrow. She was sitting by the fire, her eyes filled with tears, and she refused all consolation.

What a calamity," she cried, "that I allowed you to leave home today!

What has happened?" answered the Old Man, very quietly.

You were scarcely gone," she sobbed, "before two rude travellers came to the door; unfortunately I let them in as they seemed good, worthy people. They were attired like flames, and might have passed for Will-o'-the-Wisps; but they had scarcely come in before they started flattering and became so impertinent that I blush to think of their conduct.

The Old Man answered with a smile, "the gentlemen were only amusing themselves, and, at your age, you might have taken it as ordinary politeness.

My age!" retorted the old woman. "Will you for ever remind me of my age; how old am I then? And ordinary politeness! But I can tell you something; look round at the walls of our hut. You will now be able to see the old stones which have been concealed for more than a hundred years. These visitors extracted all the gold more quickly than I can tell you, and they assured me that it was of capital flavour. When they had completely cleared the walls they grew cheerful, and, in a few minutes, they became tall, broad; and shining. They again commenced their tricks, and repeated their flatteries, calling me a queen. They shook themselves, and immediately a deluge of gold pieces fell on all sides. You may see some of them still glittering on the floor; but bad luck soon came. Mops swallowed some of the pieces, and lies dead in the chimney-corner. Poor dog, his death troubles me sorely, I did not notice it until they had departed, otherwise I should not have promised to pay the Ferryman the debt they owed him.

How much do they owe him?" inquired the Old Man.

Three cauliflowers, three artichokes, and three onions. I have promised to take them to the river at daybreak," answered his wife. "You had better oblige them" said the Old Man, "and they may perhaps serve us in time of need.

I do not know if they will keep their word," said the woman, "but they promised and vowed to serve us.

The fire had, in the meantime, died down; but the old man covered the cinders with ashes, put away the shining gold pieces, and lighted his lamp anew. In the glorious illumination the walls became covered with gold, and Mops was transformed into a most beautiful onyx. The variety of colour which glittered through the costly gem produced a splendid effect.

Take your basket and place the onyx in it," said the Old Man. "Then collect the three cauliflowers, the three artichokes, and the three onions, lay them together, and carry them to the river. The Snake will bear you across at mid-day; then visit the beautiful Lily; her touch will give life to the onyx, as her touch gives death to every living thing; and it will be a loving friend to her. Tell her not to mourn; that her deliverance is nigh; that she must consider a great misfortune as her greatest blessing, for the time has come.

The old woman prepared her basket, and set forth at daybreak. The rising sun shone brightly on the river, which gleamed in the far distance. The old woman journeyed slowly on, for though the weight of the basket oppressed her, it did not arise from the onyx. Nothing lifeless proved a burden, for when the basket contained dead things it rose up and floated over her head. But a fresh vegetable, or the smallest living creature, made her tired. She had toiled for some distance, when she started and suddenly stood still; for she had nearly placed her foot upon the shadow of the giant, which was advancing towards her from the plain. She perceived his monstrous bulk; he had just bathed in the river, and was coming out of the water. She did not know how to avoid him. He saw her, saluted her jestingly, and thrust the hand of his shadow into her basket. With skill, he stole a cauliflower, an artichoke, and an onion, and raised them to his mouth. He then proceeded on his way up the stream, leaving the woman alone.

She considered whether it would not be better to return, and supply the missing vegetables from her own garden, and, lost in these reflections, she went on her way until she arrived at the bank of the river. She sat down, and waited for a long time the arrival of the Ferryman. At last he appeared, having in his boat a mysterious traveller. A handsome, noble youth stepped on shore.

"What have you brought with you?" said the old man.

"The vegetables which the Will-o'-the-Wisps owe you," replied the woman, pointing to the contents of her basket.

But when he found that there were only two of each kind, he became angry and refused to take them.

The woman implored him to relent, assuring him that she could not return home, as she had found her burden heavy, and she had still a long way to go. But he was obstinate, maintaining that the decision did not depend upon him.

"I am obliged to collect my gains for nine hours," he said, "and I keep nothing for myself, till I have paid a third part to the river."

At length, after a great deal of argument, he told her there was still a remedy.

If you give security to the river, and acknowledge your debt, I will take the six articles, though such a course is not without danger.

But if I keep my word, I incur no risk," she said.

Certainly not," he replied. "Put your hand into — the river, and promise that within four-and-twenty hours you will pay the debt.

The old woman complied, but shuddered as she observed that her hand, on drawing it out of the water, had become coal black. She scolded angrily, exclaiming that her hands had always been most beautiful, and that, notwithstanding her hard work, she had always kept them white and delicate. She gazed at her hand with the greatest alarm, and cried, "Worse and worse, — it has shrunk, and is already much smaller than the other.

It only appears so now," said the Ferryman, "but if you break your word, it will be so in reality. Your hand will in that case grow smaller, and finally disappear, though you will still preserve the use of it.

I would rather lose it altogether," she replied, "and that my misfortune should be concealed. But no matter, I will keep my word, to escape this dire disgrace, and avoid so much anxiety." Whereupon she took her basket, which rose aloft, and floated freely over her head. She hurried after the Young Man, who was walking thoughtfully along the bank. His noble figure and peculiar dress had made a deep impression upon her.

His breast was covered with a shining cuirass, whose transparency allowed the motions of his graceful form to be seen. A purple mantle hung from his shoulders and his auburn locks waved in beautiful curls round his uncovered head. His noble countenance and his shapely feet were exposed to the burning rays of the sun. Thus did he journey patiently over the hot sand, which, "true to one sorrow, he trod without feeling.

The garrulous old woman sought to engage him in conversation, but he took no notice; until, notwithstanding his beauty, she became weary, and took leave of him, saying, "You are too slow for me, sir, and I cannot lose my time, as I am anxious to cross the river, with the help of the Green Snake, and to present the beautiful Lily with my husband's handsome present." So saying she left him speedily, upon which the Young Man took heart and followed her.

You are going to the beautiful Lily," he exclaimed, "if so, our way lies together. What gift are you taking her?"

Sir," answered the woman, "it is not fair that you should so earnestly inquire after my secrets, when you paid so little attention to my questions. But if you will tell me your history, I will tell you all about my present.

They made the bargain; the woman told her story, including the account of the dog, and allowed him to look at the beautiful onyx.

He lifted the precious stone from the basket, and took Mops, who seemed to slumber softly, in his arms.

Lucky animal!" he cried, "you will be touched by her soft hands, and restored to life, instead of flying from her touch, like all other living things, to escape an evil doom. But, alas I what words are these? Is it not a sadder and more fearful fate to be annihilated by her presence, than to die by her hand? Behold me, thus young, what a melancholy destiny is mine! This armour, which I have borne with glory in the battle, this purple which I have earned by the wisdom of my government, have been converted by Fate, the one into an unceasing burden, the other into an empty honour. Crown, sceptre, and sword, are worthless. I am now as naked and destitute as every other son of clay. For such is the spell of her beautiful blue eyes, that they damp the vigour of every living creature; and those whom the touch of her hand does not destroy, are reduced to the condition of breathing shadows.

Thus he lamented long, but without satisfying the curiosity of the old woman, who wished to know of his mental no less than his bodily sufferings. She learnt neither the name of his father nor his kingdom. He stroked the rigid Mops, to whom the beams of the sun and his caresses had imparted warmth. He enquired earnestly about the man with the lamp, about the effect of the mysterious light, and seemed to expect a relief from his deep sorrow.

Thus discoursing, they saw at a distance the majestic arch of the bridge, which stretched from one bank of the river to the other, and shone in the rays of the sun. Both were amazed at the sight, for they had never before seen it so resplendent. "But," cried the Prince, "was it not sufficiently beautiful before, with its decorations of jasper and opal? Can we now dare to cross over it, constructed as it is of emerald and chrysolite of such varied beauty?"

Neither had any idea of the change which the Snake had undergone; for it was indeed the Snake, whose custom it was at mid-day to arch her form across the stream, and assume the appearance of a beautiful bridge, which travellers crossed in silent reverence.

Scarcely had they reached the opposite bank, when the bridge began to sway slowly from side to side, and sank gradually to the level of the water, when the Green Snake assumed her accustomed shape, and followed the travellers to the shore. The latter thanked her for her condescension in allowing them a passage across the stream, perceiving at the same time, that there were evidently more persons present than were actually visible. They heard a light whispering, which the Snake answered with a similar sound. Listening, they heard the following words: "We will first make our observations unperceived, in the park of the beautiful Lily, and look for you when the shadows of evening fall, to introduce us to such perfect beauty. You will find us on the bank of the great lake.

Agreed," answered the Snake, and her hissing voice dissolved in the distance.

The three travellers further considered in what order they should appear before the beautiful Lily; for however numerous her visitors might be, they must enter and depart singly if they wished to escape bitter suffering.

The woman, carrying the transformed dog in the basket, came first to the garden and sought an interview with her benefactress. She was easily found, as she was then singing to her harp. The sweet tones showed themselves first in the form of circles, upon the bosom of the calm lake, and then, like a soft breeze, they imparted motion to the grass and to the tremulous waves. She was seated in a quiet nook beneath the shade of trees, and at the very first glance she enchanted the eyes, the ear, and the heart of the old woman, who advanced towards her with delight, and stated that since their last meeting, she had become more beautiful than ever. While still at a distance she saluted the charming maiden with these words: "What joy it is to be in your presence! What a heaven surrounds you! What a spell proceeds from your lyre, which, encircled by your soft arms, and influenced by the pressure of your gentle bosom and slender fingers, utters such entrancing melody! Thrice happy the blessed youth who could claim so great a favour!

So saying, she came nearer. The beautiful Lily raised her eyes, let her hands drop, and said, "Do not distress me with your untimely praise; it makes me feel even more unhappy. And see, here is my beautiful canary which used to accompany my songs so sweetly dead at my feet; he was accustomed to sit upon my harp, and was carefully taught to avoid my touch. This morning, when, refreshed by sleep, I tuned a pleasing melody, the little warbler sang with increased harmony, when suddenly a hawk soared above us. My little bird sought refuge in my bosom, and at that instant I felt the last gasp of his expiring breath. It is true that the hawk meeting my glance, fell lifeless into the stream; but what avails this penalty to me? — my darling is dead, and his grave will only add to the number of the weeping willows in my garden.

Take courage, beautiful Lily," interrupted the old woman, while she wiped away a tear which the story of the sorrowful maiden had brought to her eyes "take courage, and learn from my experience to moderate your grief. Great misfortune is often the harbinger of intense joy. For the time approaches; but in truth the web of life is of a mingled yarn. See how black my hand has grown, and, in truth, it has become much smaller; I must be speedy, ere it be reduced to nothing. Why did I promise favours to the Will-o'-the-Wisps, or meet the giant, or dip my hand into the river? Can you oblige me with a cauliflower, an artichoke, or an onion? I shall take them to the river, and then my hand will become so white, that it will almost equal the lustre of your own.

Cauliflowers and onions abound, but artichokes cannot be procured. My gardens produce neither flowers nor fruit; but every twig which I plant upon the grave of anything I love, bursts into leaf at once, and grows into a fair tree. Thus, beneath my eye, alas! have grown these clustering trees and copses. These tall pines, these shadowy cypresses, these great oaks, these overhanging beeches, were once small twigs planted by my hand, as sad memorials in an uncongenial soil.

The old woman paid little heed to this speech, for she was employed in watching her hand, which in the presence of the beautiful Lily became every instant of darker hue, and grew gradually smaller. She was just going to take her basket and depart, when she felt that she had forgotten the most important of her duties. She took the transformed dog into her arms, and laid him upon the grass, not far from the beautiful Lily. "My husband sends you this present," she said. "You know that your touch can impart life to this precious stone. The good and faithful animal will be a joy to you, and my grief at losing him will be alleviated by the thought that he is

yours." The beautiful Lily looked at the pretty creature with delight, and joy beamed from her eyes. "Many things combine to inspire hope; but, alas! is it not a delusion of our nature, to expect that joy is near when grief is at the worst?"

*Of what avail these omens all so fair?
My sweet bird's death — my friend's hands blackly dyed,
A dog transformed into a jewel rare,
Sent by the Lamp our faltering steps to guide."*

*"Far from mankind and all the joys I prize,
To grief and sorrow I am still allied —
When from the river will the Temple rise,
Or the Bridge span it o'er from side to side?"*

The old woman waited with impatience for the conclusion of the song, which the beautiful Lily had accompanied with her harp, entrancing the ears of every listener. She was about to say farewell, when the arrival of the Snake compelled her to remain. She had heard the last words of the song, and on this account spoke words of encouragement to the beautiful Lily. "The prophecy of the bridge is fulfilled," she cried; "this good woman will bear witness of the splendour of the arch. Formerly of untransparent jasper, which only reflected the light upon the sides, it is now converted into precious jewels of transparent hue. No beryl is so bright, and no emerald so splendid.

I congratulate you," said the Lily, "but forgive me if I doubt whether the prediction is fulfilled. Only foot-passengers can as yet cross the arch of your bridge; and it has been foretold that horses and carriages, travellers of all descriptions, shall pass and repass in multitudes. Has prediction nothing to say with respect to the great pillars which are to ascend from the river?"

The old woman, whose eyes were fixed immovably upon her hand, interrupted this speech, and bade farewell.

Wait one moment," said the beautiful Lily, "and take my poor canary-bird with you. Implore the Lamp to convert him into a topaz, and I will then revivify him with my touch, and he and your good Mops will then be my

greatest consolation. But make what speed you can, for with sunset decay will have set in, marring the beauty of its delicate form.

The old woman covered the little corpse with some soft young leaves, placed it in the basket, and hastened from the spot.

Whatever you may say," continued the Snake, resuming the interrupted conversation, "the temple is built.

But it does not yet stand upon the river," replied the beautiful Lily.

It still rests in the bowels of the earth," continued the Snake. "I have seen the Kings, and spoken to them.

And when will they awake?" inquired the Lily.

The Snake answered, "I heard the mighty voice resound through the temple, announcing that the hour was come.

A ray of joy beamed from the face of the beautiful Lily as she exclaimed, "Do I hear those words for the second time to-day? When will the hour arrive in which I shall hear them for the third time?" She rose, and immediately a beautiful maiden came from the wood and relieved her of her harp. She was followed by another, who took the ivory chair upon which the beautiful Lily had been seated, folded it together, and carried it away, together with the silvertissued cushion. The third maiden, who bore in her hand a fan inlaid with pearls, approached to offer her services if they should be needed. These three maidens were lovely beyond all telling, though they were compelled to acknowledge that their charms fell far short of those of their beautiful mistress.

The beautiful Lily had, in the meantime, gazed on the wonderful Mops with a look of pleasure. She leaned over and touched him. He instantly leaped up, looked around joyously, bounded with delight, hastened to his benefactress, and caressed her tenderly. She took him in her arms, and pressed him to her bosom. "Cold though thou art," she said, "and imbued with only half a life, yet thou art welcome to me. I will love thee, play with thee, kiss thee, and press thee to my heart." She let him go a little from her, called him back, chased him away again, and played with him so joyously and innocently, that no one could help sympathising in her delight and taking part in her pleasure, as they had before shared her sorrow and her woe.

But this happiness and this pleasant pastime were interrupted by the arrival of the melancholy Young Man. His walk and appearance were as we have described; but he seemed to be overcome by the heat of the day, and the presence of his beloved had rendered him perceptibly paler. He bore the hawk upon his wrist, where it sat with drooping wing as tranquil as a dove. "It is not well," cried the Lily, "that you should vex my eyes with that odious bird, which has only this day murdered my little favourite.

Do not blame the unfortunate bird," exclaimed the youth; "rather condemn yourself and fate; and let me find an associate in this companion of my grief.

Mops, in the meantime, was incessant in his caresses; and the Lily responded to his affection with the most gentle tokens of love. She clapped her hands to drive him away, and then pursued him to win him back. She caught him in her arms as he tried to escape, and chased him from her when he sought to nestle in her lap. The youth looked on silent and sorrowful; but when at length she took the dog in her arms, and pressed it to her snowy breast, and kissed it with her heavenly lips, he lost all patience, and exclaimed, in the depth of his despair, "And must I, then, whom sad destiny compels to live in your presence, and yet be separated from you, perhaps for ever, — must I, who have forfeited everything, even my own being for you, — must I look on and behold this 'defect of nature' gain your notice, win your love, and enjoy the paradise of your embrace? Must I continue to wander my lonely way along the banks of the stream? Not a spark of my former spirit still burns within my bosom. Oh! that it would mount into a glorious flame. If stones may repose within your bosom, then let me be converted to a stone; and if your touch can kill, I am content to receive my death at your hands.

He grew violently excited; the hawk flew from his wrist; he rushed towards the beautiful Lily; she extended her arms to forbid his approach, and touched him involuntarily. His consciousness immediately forsook him, and with dismay she felt the beautiful burden lean for support upon her breast. She started back with a scream, and the fair youth sank lifeless from her arms to the earth.

The deed was done. The sweet Lily stood motionless, and gazed on the breathless corpse. Her heart stopped beating and her eyes were bedewed with tears. In vain did Mops seek to win her attention; the whole world had died with her lost friend. Her dumb despair sought no help, for help was now in vain.

But the Snake became immediately more active. Her mind seemed occupied with thoughts of rescue; and, in truth, her mysterious movements prevented the immediate consequence of this dire misfortune. She wound her serpentine form in a wide circle round the spot where the body lay, seized the end of her tail between her teeth, and remained motionless.

In a few moments one of the servants of the beautiful Lily approached, carrying the ivory chair, and entreated her mistress to be seated. Then came a second, bearing a flame-coloured veil, with which she adorned the head of the Lily. A third maiden offered her the harp, and scarcely had she struck the chords, and awakened their sweet tones than the first maiden returned, having in her hands a circular mirror of lustrous brightness. She placed herself opposite the Lily, intercepted her looks, and reflected the most charming countenance which nature could fashion. Her sorrow added lustre to her beauty, her veil heightened her charms, the harp lent her a new grace, and though it was impossible not to hope that her sad fate might soon undergo a change, one could almost wish that that lovely and enchanting vision might last for ever.

Silently gazing upon the mirror, she drew melting tones of music from her harp; but her sorrow appeared to increase, and the chords responded to her melancholy mood. Once or twice she opened her lips to sing, but her voice refused utterance; whereupon her grief found refuge in tears. Her two attendants supported her in their arms, and her harp fell from her hands. The watchful attention of her handmaid however caught it and laid it aside.

"Who will fetch the man with the lamp?" whispered the Snake in a low but audible voice. The maidens looked at each other, and the Lily's tears fell faster.

At this instant the old woman with the basket returned breathless with agitation. "I am lost and crippled for life," she cried. "Look! my hand is nearly withered. Neither the Ferryman nor the Giant would bear me across the river, because I am indebted to the stream. In vain did I tempt them with a hundred cauliflowers and a hundred onions; they insist upon the three, and not an artichoke can be found in this neighbourhood.

"Forget your distress," said the Snake, "and give your assistance here; perhaps you will be relieved at the same time. Hasten, and find out the Will-o'-the-Wisps, for though you cannot see them by daylight, you may

perhaps hear their laughter and their antics. If you make good speed the Giant may yet carry you across the river, and you may find the Man with the Lamp and send him hither.

The old woman made as much haste as possible, and the Snake as well as the Lily showed impatience for her return. But sad to say, the golden rays of the setting sun were shedding their last beams upon the tops of the trees, and lengthening the mountain shadows over lake and meadow. The movements of the Snake showed increased impatience, and the Lily was dissolved in tears.

In this moment of distress, the Snake looked anxiously around; she feared every instant that the sun would set, and that decay would penetrate within the magic circle, and exert its influence upon the corpse of the beautiful youth. She looked into the heavens and caught sight of the purple wings and breast of the hawk, which were illumined by the last rays of the sun. Her restlessness betrayed her joy at the good omen, and she was not deceived, for instantly afterwards she saw the Man with the Lamp gliding across the lake as if on skates.

The Snake did not change her position, but the Lily rising from her seat, exclaimed, "What good Spirit has sent you thus opportunely when you are so much longed for and needed?"

"The Spirit of my Lamp impels me," replied the Old Man, "and the hawk conducts me hither. The former flickers when I am needed, and I immediately look to the heavens for a sign, when some bird or meteor points the way which I should go. Be tranquil, beautiful maiden. I know not if I can help you. One alone can do but little, but he can avail who in the proper hour unites his strength with others. We must wait and hope." Then turning to the Snake, he said, "Keep your circle closed," and seating himself upon a hillock at his side, he shed a light upon the corpse of the youth. "Now bring the little canary-bird," he continued, "and lay it also within the circle.

The maiden took the little creature from the basket and followed the directions of the Old Man.

In the meantime the sun had set, and as the shades of evening closed around, not only the Snake and the Lamp cast their light, but the veil of the Lily was illumined with a soft radiance, and caused her pale cheeks and

her white robe to beam like the dawn, and clothed her with inexpressible grace. Her appearance gave birth to various emotions; anxiety and sorrow were softened by hope of approaching happiness.

To the delight of all, the old woman appeared with the lively Will-o'-the-Wisps, who looked as if they had led a prodigal life of late, for they looked very thin. Nevertheless, they behaved politely to the princess and to the other young maidens. With an air of confidence, and much force of expression, they discoursed upon ordinary topics; and they were much struck by the charm which the shining veil shed over the beautiful Lily and her companions. The young maidens cast down their eyes with modest looks, and their beauty was heightened by the flattery which they heard. Everyone was happy and contented, not excepting even the old woman. Notwithstanding the assurance of her husband that her hand would not continue to wither whilst the Lamp shone upon it, she went on asserting that if things went on like this it would disappear entirely before midnight.

The Old Man with the Lamp had listened attentively to the speech of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, and was charmed to observe that the beautiful Lily was pleased and flattered with their compliments. Midnight came before they were aware. The Old Man looked up to the stars, saying: "We are met at a fortunate hour: let each fulfil his office, let each discharge his duty, and a general happiness will alleviate one individual trouble, as universal sorrow lessens particular joys.

After these observations, a mysterious murmur arose; for every one present spoke for himself, and mentioned what he had to do: the three maidens alone were silent. One had fallen asleep near the harp, the other beside the fan, and the third leaning against the ivory chair; and no one could blame them, for, indeed, it was late. The Will-o'-the-Wisps, after paying some trivial compliments to the other maidens, including even the attendants, attached themselves finally to the Lily, whose beauty attracted them.

"Take the mirror," said the old man to the hawk, "and illumine the fair sleepers with the first beam of the sun, and rouse them from their slumbers by the light reflected from heaven.

The Snake now began to move: she broke up the circle, and retreated with strange twistings to the river. The Will-o'-the-Wisps followed her in solemn procession, and one might have taken them to be the most serious of figures. The old woman and her husband took up the basket, the soft

light from which had been hitherto scarcely visible; but it now became clearer and more brilliant. They laid the body of the Young Man within it, with the canary-bird reposing upon his breast, and the basket raised itself into the air and floated over the head of the old woman, and she followed the steps of the Will-o'-the-Wisps. The beautiful Lily, taking Mops in her arms, walked after the old woman, and the Man with the Lamp closed the procession.

The whole neighbourhood was brilliantly illuminated with all these lights. They all observed with amazement, on approaching the river, that it was spanned by a majestic arch, by which means the benevolent Snake had prepared them a lustrous passage across. The transparent jewels of which the bridge was composed were objects of no less astonishment by day than was their wondrous brilliancy by night. The clear arch cut sharply against the dark heaven, whilst vivid rays of light beneath shone against the key-stone, revealing the firm pliability of the structure. The procession moved slowly across, and the Ferryman, who witnessed the proceeding from his hut, looked at the brilliant arch and the wondrous lights as they journeyed across it with awe.

As soon as they had reached the opposite bank, the bridge began to contract as usual, and sink to the surface of the water. The Snake made her way to the shore, and the basket dropped to the ground. The Snake now once more assumed a circular shape, and the Old Man, bowing before her, asked what she had determined to do.

To sacrifice myself before I am made a sacrifice; only promise me that you will leave no stone on the land.

The Old Man promised, and then addressed the beautiful Lily: "Touch the Snake with your left hand, and your lover with your right.

The beautiful Lily knelt down and laid her hands upon the Snake and the corpse. In an instant, the latter became imbued with life: he moved, and then sat upright. The Lily wished to embrace him, but the old man held her back, and assisted the youth whilst he led him beyond the limits of the circle.

The Young Man stood erect; the little canary fluttered upon his shoulder, but his mind was not yet restored. His eyes were open, but he saw, at least he seemed to look on everything with indifference. Scarcely was the wonder at this circumstance appeased, than the change which the Snake

had undergone excited attention. Her beautiful and slender form was changed into myriads of precious stones. The old woman, in the effort to seize her basket, had unintentionally struck against the snake, after which nothing more was seen of the latter. Nothing but a heap of jewels lay in the grass. The old man immediately set to work to collect them into a basket, a task in which he was assisted by his wife; they then carried the basket to an elevated spot on the bank, and he cast the entire contents into the stream, not however without the opposition of his wife and the beautiful Lily, who would like to have appropriated a portion of the treasure to themselves. The jewels gleamed in the rippling waters like brilliant stars, and were carried away by the stream, and none can say whether they disappeared in the distance or sank to the bottom.

Young gentlemen," said the Old Man, respectfully, to the Will-o'-the-Wisps, "I will now point out your path and lead the way, and you will render us the greatest service by opening the doors of the temple through which we enter, and which you alone can unlock.

The Will-o'-the-Wisps bowed politely, and then took their post in the rear. The Man with the Lamp advanced first into the rocks, which opened of their own accord; the Young Man followed with apparent indifference; the beautiful Lily lingered with silent uncertainty behind; the old woman, unwilling to be left alone, followed her, stretching out her hand that it might receive the rays of her husband's lamp; the procession was closed by the Will-o'-the-Wisps, and their bright flames nodded and blended with each other as if they were engaged in animated conversation. They had not gone far before they came to a large brazen gate which was fastened by a golden lock. The old man thereupon sought the assistance of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, who did not want to be entreated, but at once introduced their pointed flames into the lock, which yielded to their influence. The brass resounded as the doors flew wide asunder, and displayed the venerable statues of the kings illuminated by the advancing lights. Each individual in turn bowed to the Kings with respect, and the Will-o'-the-Wisps were full of salutations.

After a short pause, the Golden King asked, "Whence do you come?"

From the world," answered the Old Man.

And whither are you going?" inquired the Silver King.

Back to the world," was the answer.

And what do you wish with us?" asked the Brazen King.

To accompany you," responded the Old Man.

The fourth King was about to speak, when the golden statue said to the Will-o'-the-Wisps who had advanced towards him, "Depart from me, my gold is not for you.

They then turned towards the Silver King, and his apparel assumed the golden hue of their yellow flames. "You are welcome," he said, "but I cannot feed you; satisfy yourselves elsewhere, and then bring me your light.

They departed, and stealing unobserved past the Brazen King, attached themselves to the King composed of various metals.

Who will rule the world?" inquired the latter in inarticulate tones.

He who stands erect," answered the Old Man. "That is I," replied the King.

Then it will be revealed," said the Old Man, "for the time is come.

The beautiful Lily fell upon his neck and kissed him tenderly. "Kind father," she said, "I thank you for allowing me to hear this comforting word for the third time," and so saying, she felt compelled to grasp the Old Man's arm, for the earth began to tremble beneath them; the old woman and the Young Man clung to each other, whilst the pliant Will-o'-the-Wisps felt not the slightest inconvenience.

It was evident that the whole temple was in motion, and like a ship which pursues its quiet way from the harbour when the anchor is raised, the depths of the earth seemed to open before it, whilst it clove its way through. It encountered no obstacle — no rock opposed its progress. Presently a very fine rain penetrated through the cupola. The Old Man continued to support the beautiful Lily, and whispered, "We are now under the river, and shall soon reach the goal." Presently they thought the motion ceased, but they were deceived, for the temple still moved onwards. A strange sound was now heard above them; beams and broken rafters burst in disjointed fragments through the opening of the cupola. The Lily and the old woman retreated in alarm; the Man with the Lamp stood by the Young

Man and encouraged him to remain. The Ferryman's little hut had been ploughed from the ground by the advance of the temple, and, as it fell, had buried the youth and the Old Man.

The women screamed in alarm, and the temple shook like a ship which strikes upon a submerged rock. Anxiously the women wandered round the hut in darkness; the doors were closed, and no one answered to their knocking. They continued to knock more loudly, when at last the wood began to ring with sounds; the magic power of the lamp, which was enclosed within the hut, changed it into silver, and presently its very form was altered, for the noble metal refused to assume the form of planks, posts, and rafters, was converted into the a glorious building of artistic workmanship; it seemed as if a smaller temple had grown up within the large one, or at least an altar worthy of its beauty.

The noble youth ascended a staircase in the interior, whilst the Man with the Lamp shed light upon his way, and support was given him by another man, clad in a short white garment, and holding in his hand a silver rudder; it was easy to recognise the Ferryman, the former inhabitant of the transformed hut.

The beautiful Lily ascended the outward steps, leading from the temple to the altar, but was compelled to remain separated from her lover. The old woman, whose hand continued to grow smaller, whilst the light of the lamp was obscured, exclaimed, "Am I still destined to be unfortunate amid so many miracles; will no miracle restore my hand?"

Her husband pointed to the open door, exclaiming, "See, the day dawns; hasten and bathe in the river.

What advice!" she answered; "shall I not become wholly black, and dissolve into nothing, for I have not yet discharged my debt?"

Be silent," said the Old Man, "and follow me; all debts are wiped away.

The old woman obeyed, and in the same instant the light of the rising sun shone upon the circle of the cupola. Then the old man, advancing between the youth and the maiden, exclaimed with a loud voice, "Three things have sway upon the earth, — Wisdom, Appearance, and Power.

At the sound of the first word the Golden King arose; at the sound of the second, the Silver King; and the Brazen King had arisen at the sound of the third, when the fourth suddenly sunk awkwardly to the earth. The Will-o'-the-Wisps, who had been busily employed upon him till this moment, now retreated; though paled by the light of the morning, they seemed in good condition, and sufficiently brilliant, for they had with much skill extracted the gold from the veins of the colossal statue with their sharp-pointed tongues. The irregular spaces which were thus displayed remained for some time exposed, and the figure preserved its previous form; but when at length the most secret veins of gold had been extracted, the statue suddenly fell with a crash, and formed a mass of shapeless ruins.

The Man with the Lamp led the youth, whose eye was still fixed upon vacancy, from the altar towards the Brazen King. At the foot of the mighty monarch lay a sword in a brazen sheath. The youth bound it to his side. "Take the weapon in your left hand, and keep the right hand free," commanded the King.

They then advanced to the Silver Monarch, who bent his sceptre towards the youth; the latter seized it with his left hand, and the King addressed him in soft accents, "Feed my sheep.

When they reached the statue of the Golden King, the latter with paternal benediction pressed the oaken garland on the head of the youth, and said, "Acknowledge the highest.

The Old Man had, during this proceeding, watched the youth attentively. After he had girded on the sword his breast heaved, his arm was firmer, and his step more erect; and after he had touched the sceptre, his sense of power appeared to soften, and at the same time, by an inexpressible charm, to become more mighty; but when his waving locks were adorned with the oaken garland, his countenance became animated, his soul beamed from his eye, and the first word he uttered was "Lily!

Lily," he cried, as he hastened to ascend the silver stairs, for she had observed his progress from the altar where she stood — "dear Lily, what can man desire more blessed than the innocence and the sweet affection which your love brings me? Oh, my friend!" he continued, turning to the Old Man, and pointing to the three sacred statues, "secure and glorious is the kingdom of our fathers, but you have forgotten to enumerate that fourth power, which exercises an earlier, more universal, and certain rule over the world — the power of love.

With these words he flung his arms round the neck of the beautiful maiden; she cast aside her veil, and her cheeks were tinged with a blush of the sweetest and most inexpressible beauty.

The Old Man now observed, with a smile, "Love does not rule, but directs, and that is better.

During all this delight and enchantment, no one had observed that the sun was now high in heaven, and through the open gates of the temple most unexpected objects were perceived. A large empty space was surrounded by pillars, and terminated by a long and splendid bridge, whose many arches stretched across the river. On each side was a footpath, wide and convenient for passengers, of whom many thousands were busily employed in crossing; the wide road in the centre was crowded with flocks and herds, and horsemen and carriages, and all streamed over without hindering each other's progress. All were in rapture at the mixture of convenience and beauty; and the new King and his spouse found as much delight in the animation and activity of this great concourse, as they had in their own love.

"Honour the Snake," said the Man with the Lamp; "to her you are indebted for life, and your people for the bridge whereby these neighbouring shores are animated and connected. Those shining precious stones which still float by, are the remains of her self-sacrifice, and form the foundation-stones of this glorious bridge, which she has erected herself to exist forever.

The approach of four beautiful maidens, who advanced to the door of the temple, prevented any inquiry into this wonderful mystery. Three of them were recognised as the attendants of the beautiful Lily, by the harp, the fan, and the ivory chair; but the fourth, though more beautiful than the other three, was a stranger; she, however, played with the others, ran with them through the temple, and ascended the silver stairs.

"Thou dearest of creatures!" said the Man with the Lamp, addressing the beautiful Lily, "you will surely believe me for the future. Happy for thee, and every other creature who shall bathe this morning in the waters of the river!

The old woman, who had been transformed into a beautiful young girl, and of whose former appearance no trace remained, embraced the Man with the Lamp tenderly, and he returned her affection.

If I am too old for you," he said, with a smile, "you may to-day select another bridegroom, for no tie can henceforth be considered binding which is not this day renewed.

But are you not aware that you also have become young?" she asked.

I am delighted to hear it," he replied, "If I appear to you to be a gallant youth, I take your hand anew, and hope for a thousand years of happiness to come.

The Queen welcomed her new friend, and advanced with her and the rest of her companions to the altar, whilst the King, supported by the two men, pointed to the bridge, and surveyed with wonder the crowd of passengers; but his joy was soon overshadowed by observing an object which gave him pain. The Giant, who had just awakened from his morning sleep, stumbled over the bridge, and gave rise to the greatest confusion. He was, as usual, but half awake, and had risen with the intention of bathing in the neighbouring cove, but he stumbled instead upon firm land, and found himself feeling his way upon the broad highway of the bridge. And whilst he went clumsily along in the midst of men and animals, his presence, though a matter of astonishment to all, was felt by none; but when the sun shone in his eyes, and he raised his hand to shade them, the shadow of his enormous fist fell amongst the crowd with such careless violence, that both men and animals huddled together in promiscuous confusion, and either sustained personal injury, or ran the risk of being driven into the water.

The King, seeing this catastrophe, with an involuntary movement placed his hand upon his sword; but, upon reflection, turned his eyes upon his sceptre, and then upon the lamp and the rudder of his companions.

I guess your thought," said the Man with the Lamp, "but we are powerless against this monster; be tranquil; he injures for the last time, and happily his shadow is turned from us.

In the meantime the Giant had approached, and over-powered with astonishment at what he saw, his hands sunk down, became powerless for injury, and gazing with surprise, he entered the courtyard.

In imagination he was ascending toward heaven, when he felt himself suddenly fast bound to the earth. He stood like a colossal pillar constructed of red shining stones, and his shadow indicated the hours which were marked in a circle on the ground, not however in figures, but in noble and

significant effigies. The King was not a little delighted to see the shadow of the monster rendered harmless; and the Queen was not less astonished, as she advanced from the altar with her maidens, all magnificently adorned, to observe the strange wonder which almost covered the whole view from the temple to the bridge.

In the meantime the people had crowded after the Giant, and surrounding him as he stood still, had observed his transformation with the utmost awe. They then bent their steps towards the temple, of the existence of which they now seemed to be for the first time aware, and thronged the doorways.

The hawk was now seen aloft, towering over the building, and carrying the mirror, with which he caught the light of the sun, and turned the rays upon the group round the altar. The King, the Queen, and their attendants, illumined by the beam from heaven, appeared beneath the dim arches of the temple; their subjects fell prostrate before them. When they had recovered, and had risen again, the King and his attendants had descended to the altar, in order to reach the palace by a less obstructed path, and the people dispersed through the temple to satisfy their curiosity. They beheld with amazement the three Kings, who stood erect, and they were very anxious to know what could be concealed behind the curtain in the fourth niche, for whatever kindness might have prompted the deed, a thoughtful discretion had placed over the ruins of the fallen King a costly covering, which no eye cared to penetrate, and no profane hand dared to uplift.

There was no end to the astonishment and wonder of the people; and the dense throng would have been crushed in the temple if their attention had not been attracted once more to the court without.

To their great surprise, a shower of gold pieces fell as if from the air, resounding upon the marble pavement, and caused a commotion amongst the passers-by. Several times this wonder was repeated in different places, at some distance from each other. It is not difficult to infer that this feat was the work of the retreating Will-o'-the-Wisps, who having extracted the gold from the limbs of the mutilated King, dispersed it abroad in this joyous manner. The covetous crowd continued their quarrelling for some time longer, pressing hither and thither, and inflicting wounds upon each other, till the shower of gold pieces ceased to fall. The multitude at length dispersed gradually, each one pursuing his own course; and the bridge, to this day, continues to swarm with travellers, and the temple is the most frequented in the world.



Notes

1. [△](#) This chapter was written and published in the original German for the first time in the year 1902.
2. [△](#) The author of this essay is in agreement with the opinion of Ad. Rudolf expressed in his Archives of Modern Languages LXX., 1883, that the writing of the word Ereignis" (event) is only due to an auditory mistake of Goethe's stenographer, and that the correct word is Erreichnis," attainment.
3. [△](#) This essay is an elaboration of my article Goethe's Secret Revelation which appeared in the Literary Magazine in 1899, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Goethe's birthday.



Read & Write



kennethmdouglass.com