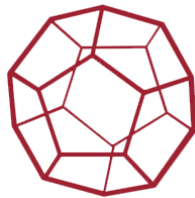


Goethe's Secret Revelation

GA 57



Goethe's Secret Revelation

GA 57

by

Rudolf Steiner

October 1908 & March 1909

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GOETHE'S SECRET REVELATION

AND

THE RIDDLE IN FAUST

BY

RUDOLF STEINER



Publisher's Preface

Trismegistus Press is pleased to re-publish this rare volume of Rudolf Steiner's early writings. Steiner was most influenced by Goethe, and especially by his greatest work, *Faust*. The Faust legend allegorically describes the development of Western civilization which fostered an insatiable thirst for knowledge and intellect at the expense of wisdom of the heart.

The theme of Goethe's Secret Revelation is that the process of initiation is followed by a loss of innocence and a struggle for survival in the pursuit of Truth. The trials and tribulations of everyday life are the proving ground for the Initiate. Eventually, we regain our innocence through consciousness of our Inner Self.

Steiner's message, like Goethe's *Faust*, is divided into two parts, the outer and the inner worlds, the exoteric and the esoteric. The first section deals with the fulfilment of worldly desires at the cost of the soul. The second part deals with Faust's redemption through understanding altruistic beauty, compassion and Love. The lesson Steiner brings to this work is that the inner side of life must balance the outer world for harmonious growth to take place.

In today's world, the technocratic, mechanistic, scientific approach to life may desensitize us to our inner soul consciousness. We re-release this book to illustrate what may occur when the power of knowledge is unleashed without the heart wisdom guiding it. Goethe's Secret Revelation also reawakens a vision of unlimited possibilities for a new world filled with the spirit of Love and Truth.



Trismegistus Press, 1980

Preface by Marie Steiner

The addresses published here do not belong in a narrow sense to those 'Private Papers' of Rudolf Steiner which have been published as urgently desired study-material for seekers after true humanity and a world-conception in accordance with spiritual values. Nevertheless what Rudolf Steiner himself says in his 'Lebensgang' concerning the printing of words which were taken down by his listeners, though intended by the lecturer himself to be only spoken, applies also to these:



Marie Steiner 1903

'Of my anthroposophical work there are now two results; first, my books which are open to all the world, and secondly a long series of Courses, which were intended to be looked upon as private publications, for sale only to the members of the Theosophical, later the Anthroposophical Society. These were versions, made with more or less accuracy at the lectures, which, owing to lack of time, could not be corrected by me. I should have preferred if the spoken word were to have remained so. But members wanted the printed edition of the Courses, and so it came into being. Had I had time to correct things, there would have been no need from the beginning for the limitation "Only for Members." Now it has been omitted for more than a year.

'Here in my "Lebensgang" it is above all necessary to say how the two things — my published books and private editions — fit into what I established as Anthroposophy.

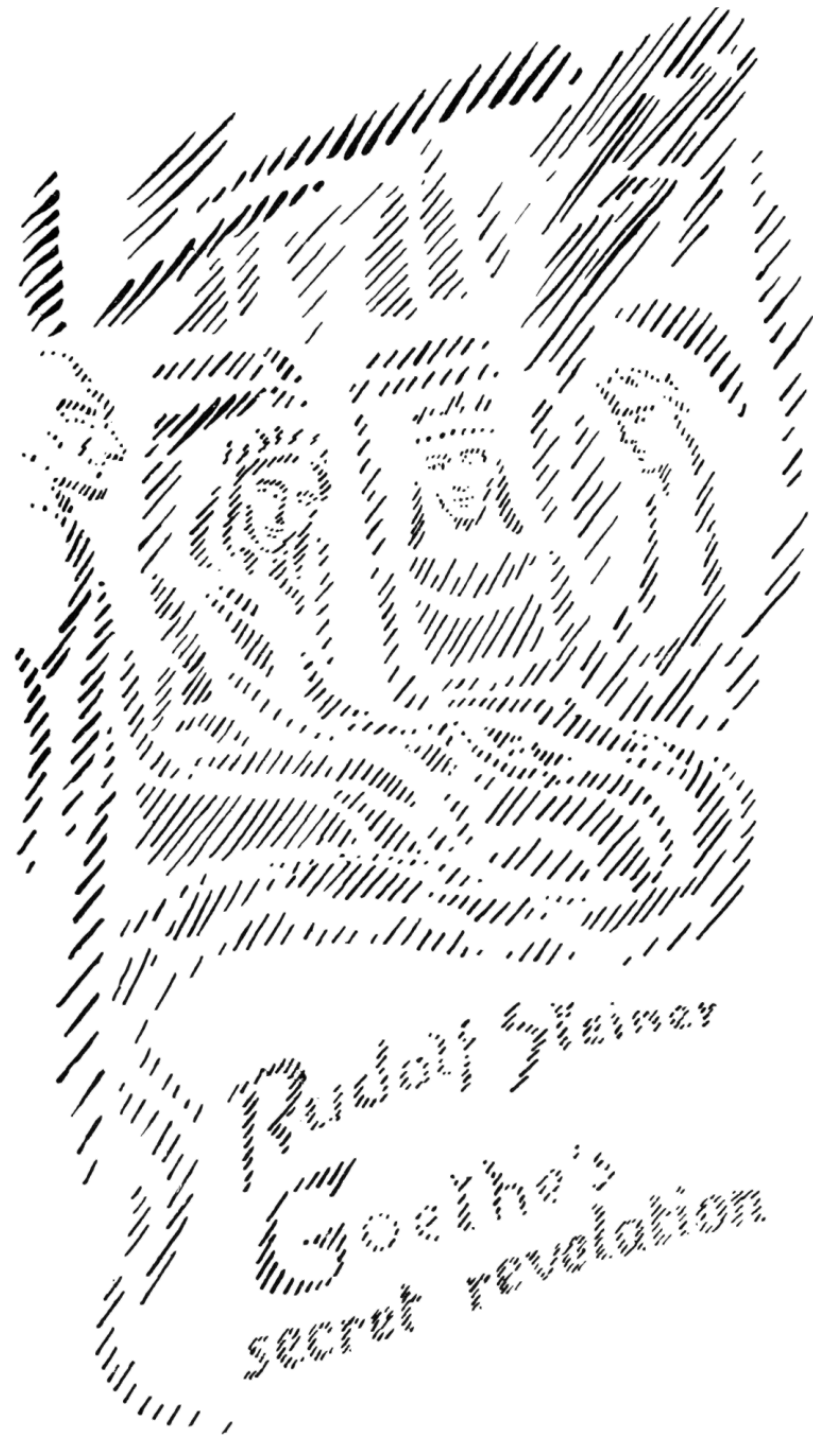
'Anyone who wishes to follow my inner struggle and work to bring Anthroposophy before the consciousness of the present age, must do so by means of the general published writings. In them I elaborate everything that exists at present in the way of the pursuit of knowledge. There is given what was revealed more and more to me in "spiritual vision," what became part of the building of Anthroposophy — although in many respects in an incomplete manner.

'Side by side with this demand to build up Anthroposophy, and by doing so to take the consequence of giving messages from the spirit-world to the general world of culture to-day, there was also the other demand, to meet fully the spiritual needs and desires of the members as they manifested themselves.'

Also the lectures given publicly in Berlin had, beside the casual listeners each time, an audience of people who came regularly, whose intelligence and capacity to understand were from time to time taken into consideration by the lecturer. And the stenographer had to adapt his gradually increasing skill to catching lectures of one and a half hour's duration. The two addresses published here cannot pretend to give again the pure style of the spoken word, which Rudolf Steiner so sharply differentiates from the style of the written Essay.

As there is such a strong demand for the spoken wisdom of Rudolf Steiner, that we can scarcely keep up in the issue of his addresses with the wishes of readers, our obligation increases to place simultaneously the written Essays of Rudolf Steiner by the side of these as a corrective. They are contributions to several papers, notably to the *Goetheanum*. Under the title 'Studies in Goethe, the Goetheanistic Thought Methods,' a series of these Essays is to appear shortly in book form. In them one will recognize the continuity of Rudolf Steiner's thought and the impersonality and timelessness of his style as a form of expression of those thoughts which are directed towards the eternal, and grasp 'all things transitory' with the most intimate sympathy and the acutest accuracy, as a link in the chain from earthly growth to divine existence.





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Goethe's Secret Revelation: Exoteric

22 October 1908, Berlin

Whoever follows the history of human development, not only in the usual documents and traditions, but goes rather deeper into things which though at first appearing only symptomatic of that development, really point the way to the inner and therefore true forces of evolution, will find renewed significance in a memorable scene at the end of the eighteenth century. An address based on the highest contemporary Science was given to the Natural Science Society at Jena by a very important Botanist of the day called Batsch. Two men, one some ten years older than the other, listened to this address, and it happened that they left the place together and fell into conversation. The younger said to the elder: 'When one considers such an address, it shows once again how the scientific method of observation picks things to pieces, sets one by the side of another, and scarcely takes into consideration the homogeneous spiritual bond existing in all the different units.' In other words it seemed wrong to the younger man that plant should be put side by side with plant without any reference to a higher something, which must also exist in the world, uniting the various plants.

The elder man replied: 'It might perhaps be possible to find a method of studying nature, which goes to work differently, and which in spite of being a study which must lead to knowledge, has, as its aim, the unifying element, namely that which is absent in external observation by the various senses.' The man took a pencil and a piece of paper from his pocket and at once drew a remarkable shape, a shape that resembled a plant, but no existing plant, to be seen or perceived by the outward physical senses, a shape which, as it were, exists nowhere and of which he said that it existed indeed in no individual plant, but was the 'plant-hood,' the proto-plant type which existed in all plants and represented the unifying element. The younger man looked at it and said: 'Yes, but what you have drawn there is not an experience, not observation, that is an idea' — having in mind that only the human spirit could form such ideas, and that such an idea had no significance for external, so-called objective nature.

The elder man was unable to understand this objection at all, for he replied: 'If that is an idea, then I see my ideas with my eyes!' He meant that just as an individual plant is visible to the external sense of sight, and is an experience, so his proto-plant, although invisible by means of an external sense, was objective, existent in the outer world, living in all plants, the archetype in all individual plants. You know that the younger of these two men was Schiller, the elder Goethe.

This conversation is a symptomatic, significant indication of modern spiritual science.

What really prompted that reply of Goethe's to Schiller? There spoke in him the consciousness that one does not only grasp an external objective truth with that representation given by the external sense, and furnished by a limited understanding from external sense-perceptions, but that the human being, when he sets in motion higher spiritual forces, which are not applied to separate sense-observations, arrives at truth and reality just as one does by means of external sense perceptions.

We may well say that Schiller, who at that moment was incapable of realizing what lay behind, when he believed that Goethe had made his drawing in terms of subjectivity, has left us the finest testimony of man's capacity to scale the heights as revealed to him by Goethe. From that moment we see Schiller's ever increasing comprehension of Goethe's ideas. A letter of his provides a psychological document of the first importance, where he says: 'For a long time, although from a distance, I have watched the progress of your spirit with ever renewed admiration, and noticed the path you have set yourself. You seek the necessity of nature, but on the most difficult road, from which indeed any weaker power would draw back. You take all nature as one in order to obtain light on each separate part, and you seek the explanation of the individual in the "all" of its phenomena. You ascend from the simple organism, step by step to the more complex, in order finally to erect genetically from the materials of all nature's structure the most complex of all, the human being. You seek to penetrate into his hidden technique, by re-creating him in the manner of nature. A great and truly heroic idea which sufficiently shows to what extent your spirit holds together the rich totality of its conceptions in a beautiful unity.'

Thus we may regard as a testimony to the objectivity of Goethe's idea-world that which in his consciousness brought forth such a reply, and which Schiller later confirmed in this letter.

It is remarkable that Heinroth, a psychologist who lived in the twenties of the nineteenth century and is to-day forgotten, uttered a very significant phrase about Goethe in his *Anthropology*, which is really a psychology — one of those phrases which are significant through their application, and throw great light on what they are meant to illumine. He used the phrase, speaking of Goethe's whole method of approach, 'objective thinking' and he enlarged upon the phrase by saying: Goethe's thinking is a quite peculiar thinking, really inseparable from the objectivity of things, resting quietly in objects, in which it is raised to ideas.

Now whoever is able to look into Goethe's whole spiritual organism — as we shall to-day and the day after to-morrow, when we shall try to penetrate still deeper into this question, when we shall consider more inwardly what we are to have presented to us to-day outwardly — will see that in this thought he adheres to facts without stopping merely at the surface of things and the experience of the senses, and finds within these facts the spiritual, the world of ideas. We see that for this reason Goethe's thought has become so important for a large part of our modern human development. We may say that there is something exceedingly remarkable in this effect of Goethe's spirit on the most diverse types of people, on the most varied views even on the different successive epochs.

Let us consider for a moment the point at issue and we shall see what unique results Goethe's spiritual standard has in fact produced. If we take three philosophers of German spiritual life, who are quite different from each other in their points of view, Fichte, Hegel and Schopenhauer, we find from a study of their mutual relationships and of their relationships to Goethe something quite remarkable about Goethe's influence on history. Fichte reveals himself as a thinker, wandering on remote heights, especially when he had finished his *Foundation of Science* at Jena in 1792. It is difficult to rise to an understanding of Fichte's peculiarity, it is difficult to penetrate to him, although everyone who has succeeded must admit that he has gained food for spiritual discipline from him to an extraordinary degree. But it is not for every man to ascend to such spheres of the purest concept. Fichte, who wandered on these heights of abstraction, particularly at that moment, sent his work to Goethe with the following significant words: 'I see and have always seen in you the purest representative at the present stage of humanity of the spirituality of feeling. To your feeling therefore, philosophy rightly turns. The spirituality of your feeling is the normal standard for philosophy.' Thus Fichte to Goethe.

Let us look now at another philosopher, at Schopenhauer, and let us see first how Schopenhauer stood to Fichte. They were, in truth, a hostile pair — at least Schopenhauer was very hostile to Fichte. Schopenhauer never wearied of abusing Fichte. To him he is a windbag, thinking and writing empty ideas. He repeatedly emphasizes how unreal and meaningless Fichte's philosophy is. In fact there could not be a greater contrast than these two. And Schopenhauer indeed went to Goethe to be taught. For a time he experimented together with Goethe in order to learn the fundamental physical concepts, and a good deal in his first work, and even in his chief work is derived from the impression Goethe made on him. If you know Schopenhauer, you know also with what homage he spoke of Goethe. Schopenhauer and Fichte — two great contrasts unite in Goethe, and he seems like the unifying force of each.

Let us take finally Hegel and Schopenhauer. Hegel is also difficult to reach with the understanding. He tries to create a fact-world of concepts in a comprehensive, systematic frame, and demands that man should lift himself to a stage where he grasps concept as fact, where he is capable of experiencing it directly. Schopenhauer finds in this something entirely worthless, merely a playing with abstract words. If we wish to know Hegel's relation to Goethe, we need mention only one instance and we shall see how they stand. There is a beautiful letter in which Hegel writes: 'Goethe seeks behind the sense-revelations the actual spiritual phenomena, which he calls the proto-phenomena, as he calls the proto-plant the proto-phenomenon of the vegetable world. While he speaks from the heights of the spiritual world as philosopher and shows us what we can think and comprehend, he works himself on the other hand up to the point where he comes into touch with spirit-created thoughts. Thus Goethe's proto-phenomenon is united with what the pure, thinking philosophy derives from above.'

Here also we see a harmony between Hegel and Goethe, as between Goethe and Schopenhauer. In Goethe they find themselves united. And when we proceed from these older times to our own, what do we find?

In Goethe's lifetime research in Natural Science was different. More than then the only right method of strict Science to-day is considered to be a research relying on external sense-observations and the formal working out by the mind of what is limited by the obscurity of the results thus obtained. But a Haeckel, as he shows in every book, is determined to stand on the firm ground of Goethean world-conception, and so we see a more materialistically coloured philosophy emphasizing the importance of relying

on Goetheanistic world-conception. You can find books to-day written on a basis for which the spirit is an absolute reality in the highest sense of the word, and in them you can trace the debt to Goethe. Spiritualistic and materialistic students can fight from opposite camps, but both believe they may look up to Goethe in the same way. He thus provides something which bridges the gulf between opponents.

These facts testify to the force of Goethe's world-conception, a force which has such an influence on others that though they do not understand each other, they find something in Goethe which they have themselves. Perhaps some of you know how widely apart Virchow and Haeckel stood from each other. But Virchow also, who saw eye to eye with Haeckel in so few things, has in an important address on Goethe equally found support in him. So in Goethe we see a power, which, in face of all the contradictions and struggles of world-conceptions, is able to show, that things are not what these representatives of science consider, and for which they so stubbornly fight.

It is just when you consider the relation of these important people to Goethe, that you realize that it is the same towards what is called knowledge as it is with different painters, sitting round a mountain, and painting it from different points of view. The resultant pictures must also of course be different, though it is the same mountain they paint. You will get a comprehensive idea of the mountain only by comparing the various representations with each other and compounding them into a whole. If you put yourself in the same position with regard to knowledge, you will see that Goethe does not select a single point of view, but rather scales the mountain and shows that it is possible to take up a position on the summit and there to find a comprehensive panorama, in which all views are revealed in their deeper consistency or interconnection.

It is this which makes Goethe's spirit so eminently modern, and if in plunging deep into Goethe we get the feeling that he appears to us a modern, it will be a sufficient justification if in our frequent studies here of spiritual science and a world-conception based on the spiritual, we consider what he did and wanted to do as a kind of invitation to penetrate deeper into his nature. If he is a stimulating spirit in so many respects, why should he not also be a stimulant for that spiritual tendency (Spiritual Stream) one of whose highest and most beautiful aims is a tolerant investigation into the different standpoints of world-conceptions, and which makes it a principle not to stand still on one fixed point, but, in order to find truth, to climb ever higher and higher by means of methods applied to inner

development and growth of inner organs of perception, because thus alone can one see the deeper spiritual foundations? We shall now consider how far Goethe coincides with the deepest feelings of modern mankind on a narrowly limited subject. As an example we shall choose a feeling many of you know, which can be described by saying that there are many people to-day who strive to throw overboard old traditions, and create feelings, thoughts and ideas which lead direct to the present time. You will see at once what I mean when I remind you of a picture which many to-day cherish. You can take what attitude you like to the picture, but it is an expression of the contemporary age. I refer to the picture: 'Komm, Herr Jesus, sei unser Gast' — 'Lord Jesus, come and be our Guest.' The picture lives not only in its creator, but also in those who would enjoy it; they feel the longing to see the figure of Jesus in their immediate presence, as is represented near the table. One might say that the picture has not only value for this age, but for all ages, that it is there eternally and cannot pass away and that every age has the right to put this figure into its own epoch. These few words alone will indicate the feeling which many have towards this picture.

Now one might believe that in these things Goethe belonged still to the ancients — a conclusion one would draw from his preference for the old art, with its old, sound, artistic traditions, and his preference for the Greeks; one might believe Goethe had no understanding of the emotion expressed in this picture — 'Lord Jesus, come and be our Guest.' In order to get a glance into Goethe's soul let us refer to a book by Bossi on Leonardo da Vinci's 'Last Supper.' Goethe wrote a criticism of this book, and in it there are significant words. Of this picture which is in the refectory of the Santa Maria delle Grazie cloister at Milan and in spite of recent restoration looks as if it would soon disappear, Goethe relates how he stood in front of it at a time when it still had a certain freshness. He describes the impression which he once got from this picture in his youth: 'Opposite the entrance in the narrower wall, in the body of the hall stood the Prior's table, on each side the monks' tables, all raised from the floor on a dais, and now when you had come in and turned round, you saw the fourth table painted on the fourth wall, above the fairly low doors; and at it Christ and His Disciples, just as if they belonged to the company.' — He, summoned by the Dominicans in their sense and in their place, with the emotional thought 'Lord Jesus, come and be our Guest.' The whole, says Goethe, made a unified picture. And not to leave any doubt as to his meaning he adds: 'It must have been a significant sight at meal-times, when the tables of the Prior and of Christ looked across at each other like

two opposite pictures and the monks found themselves in between. And therefore the painter in his wisdom had to take the monks' tables as his model. And it is certain the table-cloth with its creases, its striped pattern and its open corners, was taken from the linen-room of the Cloister, and the dishes, plates, mugs and other utensils were copied from those the monks used. There was thus no question of approximation to an uncertain, old-fashioned costume. It would have been extremely clumsy to have made the Holy Company lie on cushions. No, it had to resemble the present; Christ was to take his Evening Meal with the Dominicans of Milan.'

And now let us ask whether Goethe had this understanding which we must call a modern understanding. He had it in that comprehensive manner which is another proof of how universal his powers are as against the sometimes one-sided powers which mutually exclude and fight each other.

We must put ourselves into Goethe's soul in this way and then we shall understand why Goethe stands so close to us and why we look up to him whenever the current attitude to deeper spiritual questions is under discussion. It was his deep consciousness that it is possible for man to awake in himself spiritual organs in order to ascend to higher conceptions, and thereby to gain something which not merely lives in the human spirit, but at the same time lies deeper.

Were it possible to enter upon Goethe's scientific studies, as you will find them discussed in detail in my book, *Goethe's World-Conception*, we should be able to show the working of his whole method. But to-day we want to approach him from another side. Goethe has expressed things here and there which indicate the deep foundation of his philosophy. We shall have to speak of this in the last two addresses of this winter's cycle on 'Faust.' [See note on publications at end of book. {There is none! - e.Ed}] He once said to Eckermann concerning Faust, that he had drawn him in such a way that the reader who is content only with externals has some satisfaction in the colourful scenes, but that he can also find behind the words the secrets which lie there. Here Goethe is pointing out in Part II that we have to differentiate between the external and the inner essential secret meaning. In accordance with ancient custom we describe the external as the exoteric and the other as the esoteric.

Now we shall approach Goethe by considering to-day in an external, exoteric way a work in which he expressed his whole 'methodical thinking and willing;' and the day after to-morrow we shall consider it esoterically.

It is a comparatively unknown little work of Goethe's to which we must go if we want to look into his deepest secrets of knowledge — we merely describe them as such. It is the little piece at the end of the 'Conversations of German Emigrants,' under the title, 'Legends,' from which the reader, if he strives to get Goethe's world-conception, will get the feeling that Goethe wishes to say more in it than appears from the scenes. For the thoughtful student this 'Legend of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily' will provide riddle after riddle.

And now allow me to explain the chief features of this story, for I cannot talk about it unless we recall the important points, if we are to look more deeply into Goethe's philosophy. We shall therefore have to give a moment to the content of this little work; and after that we shall understand each other better in what we shall have to say. I have often had it said to me when I have lectured on this story, 'I never knew there was a "legend" in Goethe's works;' and so I repeat that it is contained in every edition of Goethe and constitutes the ending of the 'Conversations of German Emigrants.'

Now to the scenes. A Ferryman lives by a River and to him come remarkable forms — Will-o'-the-Wisps. They want to be put across to the other side by the Ferryman in his boat. The Ferryman agrees to take them across. On the way they behave in a curious manner; they are restless and fidgety, so that he is afraid they will upset the boat. But they arrive safely and then they propose to pay him in an odd way. They shake themselves and golden pieces fall from them, and they are the reward for his trouble in taking them over. The Ferryman is not enthusiastic about the golden pieces and says: 'It is a good thing that nothing has fallen into the river, for it would have surged up wildly. I cannot take this payment; I can be paid only with the fruits of nature.' And he demands three Onions, three Artichokes and three Cabbages. They had to pay with fruits of the earth. We shall soon see what deep significance every point and every fact has.

The Ferryman continues: 'Now you give me the extra trouble of taking down the river the golden pieces you've thrown about and I must bury them.' Wherefore he takes them actually a short way downstream and buries them in the crevices of the earth. When they have been thus buried, another remarkable being comes along to them — the Green Snake, who crawls in and on and about the earth and through its crevices. Suddenly she sees the pieces of gold falling down through the cracks of the earth and thinks at first they are falling from Heaven. She therefore devours them and becomes, by thus taking the golden pieces into her own body,

more and more luminous. As she comes to the surface she notices that she gives off a peculiar light in a marvellous manner and gleams like emerald and precious stones.

Now the Snake and the Will-o'-the-Wisps come together, the latter still shaking themselves and throwing away what they shake out, the Snake, having acquired a taste for gold, taking up and swallowing what the others throw about. The conversation between them is significant. The Snake calls herself a relative of the Will-o'-the-Wisps in a horizontal line, the Will-o'-the-Wisps call themselves relations of the Snake in a vertical line. They ask the Snake moreover if she could not inform them how to come to the Beautiful Lily. 'Oh,' says the Snake, 'the Beautiful Lily is on the other side of the River.' 'Well, then we've done a fine thing,' answer the Will-o'-the-Wisps, 'we've just had a lift across because we wanted to come to the Beautiful Lily. If we could only find a Ferryman who would ferry us back again!' And now follow very important words. 'You will not find the Ferryman again, and if you did, be certain that he may indeed take you across, but not back again. If you want to get to the other side of the River, there are only two ways. Either you try at noon, when the sun is at its highest, to find a bridge over my own body, in order to cross' — The Will-o'-the-Wisps say, 'We do not like journeying at midday' — 'Or you use the second way; for there is another possibility. At dusk you will find the huge Giant at a certain place. He has no strength in him, but when he stretches out his hand and its shadow falls across the river, you can cross over on the shadow. The shadow gives enough support to walk over on it. So if at midday you will not cross over me, you must find the Giant.'

The Will-o'-the-Wisps let themselves be told this, but the Snake has returned into the crevices, rejoicing in her increasing light-giving power through swallowing the gold.

And now the Snake notices something extremely odd. On descending again into the earth, she notices that where she had formerly found metals and so on, she now sees remarkable forms. Before, she had perceived them only through the sense of touch; now, being luminous, she can also see the things. She was able to feel pillars and also shapes like human beings, but till then she never really knew what there was in the underground caves. Now she enters again and her radiating light serves to illuminate everything.

On entering this large cavern under the earth, the Snake can at once perceive that there are four kingly figures standing in the four corners: a Golden King, a Silver King, a Brazen King, and in the fourth corner a Mixed King, put together in the gayest manner of all kinds of other metals.

The moment the Snake enters the cavern and lights up the figures, the Golden King puts the very significant question: 'Whence comest thou?'

'From the crevices, where the gold lives,' answers the Snake.

'What is more splendid than gold?' asks the Golden King.

'Light,' is the Snake's reply.

The King asks further: 'What is more comforting than Light?'

'Speech.'

No one will doubt that these words are not meant to give just pictures, but that they also have a significant content.

As the Snake enters the cavern a crack opens in the Temple where the four Kings live and there enters the Old Man with the Lamp. He is asked why he comes at that moment, whereupon he says the remarkable words: 'Do you not know that my lamp may illumine only what is already illumined? that I may not lighten the Darkness?' After the Snake has lit up the objects in the room he may also come in with his wonderworking Lamp.

Now a conversation takes place between the Kings and the Old Man with the Lamp. He is asked:

'How many secrets do you know?'

'Three,' he answers.

'Which is the most important?' asks the Silver King.

'The open one,' replies the Old Man.

'Will you open it also to us?' asks the Brazen King.

'As soon as I know the Fourth.'

And now come the most significant words of the whole story:

'I know the Fourth,' said the Snake, and whispers something into his ear; whereupon the Old Man with a great voice cries out:

'The time is at hand!'

There are a great number of attempts to solve the riddles of this story, and many people have tried to explain in one way or another what was felt to be a riddle even in Goethe's and Schiller's time. It is characteristic that Goethe and Schiller agreed about it and pronounced it explicitly in the words: the word that solves the story is in the story itself. So the solution has to be sought in the story itself, and in the course of my address it will be found to be so, though in a remarkable way. The Snake whispers something into the Old Man's ear, and what is whispered, but not spoken, is the solution of the riddle. The Old Man then says: 'The time is at hand!' So what we have to find out is what the Snake whispered to the Old Man in the subterranean Temple.

The Old Man now proceeds to the dwelling-place of his Wife. Through the power of the Lamp's light the most diverse materials are metamorphosed: stones into Gold, wood into Silver, dead animals into Precious Stones, but Metals are destroyed. He finds his Wife in an almost unconscious state. When he asks what has happened, she says: 'There were quite extraordinary people here. One might have taken them for Will-o'-the-Wisps. They behaved pretty badly.' 'Well,' says the Old Man: 'considering your age, no doubt they were decently polite.' Then she relates how the Will-o'-the-Wisps went for the Gold and licked it, so that they could shake it out again. 'If it had been no worse than that — but just look at the Pug-dog. He ate of the golden pieces, was changed into precious stone, and died. Now he's dead,' the Old Woman continues: 'Had I known this before, I should not have promised them to pay their debt to the Ferryman, namely, three Cabbages, three Onions and three Artichokes.'

'Well,' says the Old Man, 'take the Pug-dog and carry him to the Beautiful Lily, who has the quality of being able to change precious stone into life by touching it.' So she takes the three times three fruits, to pay off the debt she has undertaken to the Ferryman, and takes the Pug-dog as well.

Now we come to a very significant point in the story. As she carries the basket, it seems unusually heavy, although anything dead has no weight for her; the basket with the dead dog alone would be no heavier than if it were empty; the living things, the Cabbages, Onions and Artichokes alone weigh down the basket. On the road to the Ferryman, another singular thing happens to her. The Giant holds his arm so that its shadow falls across the River, seizes one Cabbage, one Artichoke and one Onion out of the basket and devours them, so that she has now only two of each kind left. She proposes therefore to pay off only a part of the debt to the Ferryman. But he says that it is absolutely necessary to bring the whole of it at one time.

After considerable argument the Ferryman says there is a possible way out, namely, if she goes bail for the production of the three missing fruits. She must therefore put her hand into the river, as security that she will keep her promise. This she does, but notices that her hand as far as it is immersed in the River has become black and smaller. 'Now it only looks like it,' said the Old Ferryman, 'but if you do not keep your word, it might become a fact. The hand will gradually dwindle and finally disappear, but without your losing the use of it. You will be able to do everything with it, but no one will see it.' She prefers, however, to have a visible hand, even if it is useless. If she brings the tribute at the agreed time, the Ferryman says everything will be all right.

On the way to the Beautiful Lily, she meets a handsome Youth, who, however, as he says, has lost all his former power and strength, and we learn from their conversation how this has happened. The Youth had conceived the active desire to reach the Beautiful Lily. She had become his Ideal. But her lovely eyes had such a baneful effect that they deprived him of all his strength, and still he was ever attracted to her.

At length the two come to the Beautiful Lily. Everything, indeed, that surrounds her is highly indicative, but we can now select only a few points. The Beautiful Lily is the image of most perfect Beauty, but her touch possesses the power of killing everything that lives, and restoring to life everything that has gone through life and died.

The Old Woman now presents her requests. The Youth has come to satisfy his longing for the Beautiful Lily, but we see that she also feels a longing: she feels herself cut off from all living fruitfulness; in her garden flourish flowers, but only to the point of bloom, not to that of fruit; beautiful she is, but far from all life. The Old Woman then says something

significant: she repeats what the Man in the subterranean Temple had said and that gives the Lily new hope. It was indeed the last moment in which she could receive any hope, for she had lost the last living thing, which had been a sort of link between her and the living. She had had a Canary in her neighbourhood, and had taken great care not to disturb it, since that would have killed it. But a Hawk had come near, the Canary fled from it and flew up against the Lily and was killed. And so the Beautiful Lily was reduced to complete spiritual loneliness and isolation from all that human beings have.

The Old Woman now gives the Pug to the Lily. The Lily touches him and thereby restores him to life. The Youth tries to calm his longing by embracing the Lily and thereby he is killed. Life is completely annihilated in him.

The Snake next forms a Magic Circle; and the Youth and the Canary are put inside it. By this means — and the Snake points this out significantly — what is hopeless is to be quickly altered, and in fact it is so. We learn that the Old Man with the Lamp now approaches and that through him a solution of the whole situation can be actually attempted. For there is still just time when he arrives; the bodies of the Canary and the Youth have not yet begun to decay.

The Old Man leads them towards the subterranean Temple, which the Snake had already reconnoitred. He says to the Will-o'-the-Wisps: 'You are also there to help us. When we come to the Gates of the Temple, you will have to be the ones to unlock them.' The Snake makes a bridge over the River and the whole company proceeds over it. Then we see, when they have arrived on the other side, that through the contact with the Snake, who now decides to sacrifice herself, the Youth becomes alive again, though not yet in possession of his spirit. And because the Snake is prepared to sacrifice herself, the Youth is translated into a remarkable state. He can see, but cannot understand what he sees. The Snake divides up into numerous wonderful precious stones, which the Old Man sinks in the River and thereby a bridge is formed over it. The procession moves on under the guidance of the Old Man into the subterranean Temple. As they enter we see that questions full of meaning are exchanged between the newcomers and the Kings. For instance: 'Whence come ye?' 'From the World.' 'Whither are ye going?' 'Into the World.' 'What do ye want with us?' 'You to accompany!' (i.e. the Kings.)

Now the group, with the Temple, begins to move. They go under the River and rise again, with the whole Temple, on the other side, and as when they have risen something that looks like woodwork falls into the Temple. It is the Ferryman's Hut. It changes and becomes a small Temple inside the large one. And now takes place a scene which is important for the Youth, who, you remember was until now alive, but not spiritualized.

We have seen that the first, the Golden King, represents Wisdom; the second or Silver one, Illusion, Semblance or Beauty; the third Brazen one, Strength or the Will. We now see a symbolic act taking place. The Youth is presented with three different gifts by the three Kings; the Brazen King with the Sword, accompanied by the significant words: 'The Sword on the left hand, the right free,' — Will-power. From the Silver King he receives the Sceptre, with the words, — 'Tend the Sheep.' We shall see that the Youth is filled with the feeling of the soul, which expresses itself in Beauty. The Golden King sets the Crown on his head, saying: 'Recognize, Realize the Highest.' And the power of imaginative thought enters the Youth. At this instant he is spiritualized, he gains his spirit and may be united with the Beautiful Lily. We are then also told that everything is made young.

What is still specially significant is the part played by the Giant, who has no strength in himself, but in his shadow. He staggers clumsily over the bridge and the King is indignant about it. But it turns out that the Giant's coming has a good meaning. Like the pointer of a great Sun-dial, he is held fast in the middle of the Temple Court. We see what strength we find in the Sun-dial, in the Giant pointing to and harmonizing Time, and we see how the bridge leading to the Temple across the River is made out of the Snake's body. We see also that not only pedestrians, but carts, horsemen and herds can cross to and fro. We are shown how the Youth, on being united with the Beautiful Lily, regains the strength of which her touch had deprived him, how he may now come near to her and embrace her and how happy and blessed they both are.

Who would not say, when he studies the scenes of the fairy tale: 'These are riddles!' For the moment we can get only a slight idea of what there is in this legend. But if we proceed historically, if we consider that it arose in the middle of the year 1800 at the beginning of his friendship with Schiller and what took place between Goethe and Schiller, we shall understand what Goethe set out to do in this story.

To this period belongs the production of a work, the fruit of a study of Goethe's world-conception, which became deeply important for the education and cultivation of German spiritual life; Schiller's letters on 'The *Æsthetic Education of Man.*' We can only outline Schiller's intentions in these letters.

He asks himself the question how man can succeed in developing his powers higher and higher, so that he can, in a free and perfectly human manner, penetrate the secrets of the world. This work is written in letter-form to the Duke of Augustenburg, and Schiller wrote this significant sentence in it: 'Every individual human being, one may say, carries in him according to inclination and his destiny, a pure, ideal person, to find agreement with whose unchangeable unity in all its variations is the great task of his existence.' And then Schiller tries to examine the means whereby man has to develop himself upwards to the higher stages of human existence.

There are two things that chain man and prevent a free view of the secrets of existence. One is the control by the senses, and the other is the insufficient development of the Reason. And Schiller explains these things thus: Take a person who is unaware of the compelling, logical part of concepts, or even the concept of duty, and follows only his inclinations and instincts. He cannot freely develop the powers of his nature, he is caught in the slavery of impulses, desires and instincts; he is unfree. But he also is not free who struggles with his desires, impulses and instincts, and follows only a purely conceptual and logical necessity of reason. Such a person becomes the slave either of the necessity of nature or the necessity of reason.

By what means can a man develop his inner powers? Schiller answers that he must develop his inner, divine states, strive to cleanse and purify them and make them correspond with what we call logic. When his impulses and instincts are purified so that he does willingly what he considers his duty, when the necessity of reason is no longer felt as compelling, then a man will act reasonably from force of habit, for then reason has led him down to the senses and the senses led him up again to reason.

Consider a man looking at a work of art. He sees something of the senses: but through every sense organ there is revealed to him something spiritual, for in the physical is expressed the spiritual which the artist has put into his work. Spirit and physical senses in the contemplation of beauty

— these become the intermediaries. So art, life in beauty, becomes for Schiller a great means of education, a means of aesthetic education, a freeing of nature, so that it can unfold its own powers.

How, therefore, does a man develop himself in Schiller's sense? He must guide his nature down so that it proves true in physical nature, and train the sense up, so that it prove true in rational nature. Goethe uttered wonderful words concerning these letters: 'Their effect on me is to show what I always lived or wished to live.'

It can be proved that Goethe was stimulated to write his fairy tale by Schiller's words in his aesthetic letters. Goethe expresses the same thing in it, in his own way. He did not wish to express the riddles of the soul in abstract ideas. For him they were too rich and too important to be grasped by natural necessity and in logic. Hence the need grew up in him to personify the different powers of the soul in the figures of his story. Goethe answers Schiller's question in this story and we shall see how wonderfully his psychology is revealed in it. We see in the presentation of the Will-o'-the-Wisps how the soul is always taking in and giving out, how certain powers are personified in the Snake, which works only on the ground like human research, human reason, and experience, which remain in the horizontal plane, while the idealist climbs to the heights. The power of the religious mood is characterized in the Old Man with the Lamp, and finally we see by means of the narrative events how Goethe shows the way in which each soul-power must work.

We shall see the day after to-morrow that Goethe shows how each soul-power must work together with the others, in order to formulate a complete picture of the soul, so that it can develop itself to human perfection, embracing all things. When man tries to grasp knowledge, but is immature, he is killed, like the Youth. There is such a thing as maturing towards knowledge. In the 'Fairy Tale' Goethe presents the evolution of the soul in a correct and pictorial way, by creating a parallel work to Schiller's 'Æsthetic Letters.' Goethe was aware that there is a goal for the development of the human soul, which in ancient times was called the 'initiation into higher secrets.' He knew such a thing is possible and that there are societies which develop the soul in secret places, in the Temples of Initiation. He shows also that humanity in the newer age must make it more and more possible to attain this Initiation, to develop the soul, and in larger spheres. He shows in the events that take place between the

separate people, the progress of initiation up to the highest stages, to the point where the soul is capable of grasping the highest secrets. This is viewed exoterically, and purely historically.

By living with Goethe, Schiller experienced what Goethe had done in one of the most important periods of his life. And if Schiller had some difficulty in understanding Goethe, we must admit that what one said in an abstract answer in the *Æsthetic Letters*, and what the other had to say in a much more comprehensive way, in a way which is attained only by expressing oneself in scenes and persons, is one and the same thing. The Fairy Tale is Goethe-psychology in the deepest sense. We see that Goethe has become so fruitful through this method of his aspiration, that we still gladly take him as guide to-day. He still seems to us a man of the present. We read him as a writer of our time. He is so fruitful, because he has so much that belongs to all time in his work and his whole method. Thus his influence is consistent with that truth which he himself considered the real one, and he once uttered significant words when he said: 'That which is fruitful alone is true.'

The meaning is that man must acquire such truths that when he enters upon life, they find confirmation by proving themselves fruitful. That was his criterion of truth: 'That which is fruitful alone is true.'

These addresses, which are meant to bring Goethe nearer, ought to show us that he tested this saying himself, and those who go deeper into him will feel this. You will feel that there is something of genuine truth in Goethe, for he is fruitful, and what is fruitful is true.



2

Goethe's Secret Revelation: Esoteric

24 October 1908, Berlin

The objection might easily be raised to an address such as this to-day that symbolic and allegoric meanings are forced out of something which a poet has created in the free play of his imaginative fancy. The day before yesterday we set ourselves the task to explore the deeper meaning of Goethe's 'Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily,' as it was then presented to our eyes. It will always happen that such an analysis or explanation of a work of fantasy will be turned down with the remark: 'Oh, all sorts of symbols and meanings with profound applications are looked for in the figures of the work.' Therefore I want to say at once that what I shall say to-day has nothing whatever to do with the symbolic and allegoric interpretations often made by Theosophists about legends or poetic works. And because I know that again and again the objection has been made to similar explanations which I have given: 'We are not going to be caught by such symbolic meanings of poetic figures,' I cannot stress the fact sufficiently that what is to be said here must be taken in no other sense than the following. We have before us a poetic work, a work of comprehensive imaginative power or fantasy, that goes to the depths of things: 'The Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily.' We may well be allowed the question, whether we may approach the work from any particular point of view, and attempt to find the basic idea, the true content of this so poetic a product.

We see the plant before us. Man goes to it and examines the laws, the inner regularity, by which the plant grows and flourishes, by which it unfolds its nature bit by bit. Has the botanist, or even someone who is no botanist, but arranges the growth of the plant in his imagination, the right to do it? Can one object: the plant knows nothing of the laws you are discovering, the laws of its growth and development! This objection against the botanist or the lyric poet who expresses the sensations derived from the plant in his poetry would have the same weight as the objection one could bring against such an explanation of Goethe's story. I do not want things to be taken as if I were to say to you: There we have a Snake, which means this or that, there we have a Golden, a Silver, and a Brazen King, who stand for this or that. I do not intend to expound the story in

this symbolic, allegoric sense, but more in such a way that as the plant grows according to laws of which it is itself unconscious, and as the botanist has the right to discover these laws of its growth, one must also say to oneself that it does not follow that the poet Goethe was consciously aware of the explanations which I shall give you. For it is as true that we must consider the inevitability, and the true ideal content of the story as it is that we discover the laws of the plant's growth; that the plant grows in accordance with the same inevitability which originated it, though it is itself unconscious of it.

So I ask you to take what I shall say as if it presented the sense and the spirit of Goethe's methods of thought and idea-conception and as if he who, as it were, feels himself called upon to put before you the ideal philosophy of Goethe, were justified — that you might find a way to it — in expounding the product of Goethe's invention, in emphasizing the figures, and in pointing out their correlation — just as the botanist demonstrates that the plant grows in accordance with laws he has discovered.

Goethe's psychology or soul-philosophy, namely, what he considers determinative for the nature of the soul, is illustrated in his beautiful Fairy Story of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily; and if we are to understand each other in what I have to say it will be a good thing if, in a preliminary study, we make the spirit of his soul-world clear. It has been already pointed out in the previous address that the world-conception represented here starts from the view that human knowledge is not to be looked upon as something stationary once for all. The view is widely held that man is as he is to-day, and being what he is he can give unequivocal judgment on all things; he observes the world with his sense-organs, takes in its phenomena, combines them with his reason, which is bound to his senses, and the result is an absolute knowledge of the world which must be valid for all. On the other side — but only in a certain way — stands the spiritual scientific world-conception which is represented here. This starts from the premise that what is to become our knowledge is continually dependent on our organs and our capacity for knowledge and that we ourselves are, as men, capable of development; that we can work on ourselves, and raise higher such capabilities as we have on a given level of existence. It holds that we can educate them, and they can be developed still further, even as man has developed himself from an imperfect state to his present position, and that we must come to a deeper penetration of things, and a more correct view of the world by rising to higher standards. To put it more clearly, if also more trivially: if we leave out altogether a development of humanity and look only at people as they are around us;

and then turn our eyes on those men whom one reckons as belonging to primitive races in the history of civilization, and if we ask ourselves what they can know of the laws of the world around us and compare it with what an average European with some ideas of science can know of the world, we shall see there is a great difference between the two. Take, for instance, an African negro's picture of the world and that, let us say, of an European monist, who has a sense of reality through having absorbed a number of the scientific ideas of the present age: the two are entirely dissimilar.

But on the other hand Spiritual Science is far from depreciating the world-picture of the man who takes his stand on pure materialism, and from declaring it invalid. It is more true to say that in these things it is considered that in every case a man's world-picture corresponds to a stage in human evolution, and that man is able to increase the capabilities in him and to discover by means of the increase other new things.

It lies thus in the purview of Spiritual Science that man reaches ever higher knowledge by developing himself, and what he experiences in the process is objective world-content, which he did not see before because he was not capable of seeing it. Spiritual Science is therefore different from other one-sided world-conceptions, whether spiritualistic, or materialistic, because it does not recognize an absolute, unchangeable truth, but only a wisdom and truth belonging to a given stage of evolution. Thus it adheres to Goethe's saying: 'Man has really always only his own truth, and it is always the same.' It is always the same because what we instil into ourselves through our power of learning, viz., the objective, is the same.

Now how does man succeed in developing the capabilities and powers that lie in him? One may say that Spiritual Science is as old as human thought. It always took the view that man has before him the ideal of a certain knowledge-perfection, the object of his aspiration. The principle contained in this was always called the 'principle of initiation.' This initiation means nothing other than increasing the powers of man to ever higher stages of knowledge, and thereby attaining deeper insight into the nature of the world around him. Goethe stood completely and all his life long, one may say, on this principle of development towards knowledge, this principle of initiation; which is shown us most particularly in his Fairy Tale.

We shall understand each other most easily if we proceed from the view which is held most often and most widely to-day, and which is to a certain extent in opposition to the initiation-principle.

To-day one can hear in the widest circles those people who think about such things and believe themselves to have an opinion on them representing, more or less consciously, the point of view that in what concerns truth and objective reality only physical observation, or objects of physical observation can be decisive in formulating ideas. You will constantly hear it: that alone can be Science which is based on the objective foundation of observation, and by this one understands so frequently is meant only the observation of the senses and the application of the human reason and capacity to formulate thoughts to these sense-observations. Every one of you knows that the capacity to formulate ideas and concepts is a capacity of the human soul among other capacities and every one of you also knows that these other capacities of the soul are our feeling and our will. Thus, even with this comparative superficial review, we may say: man is not merely an ideating, but also a feeling and willing being. Now those who think they must put forward the purely scientific point of view will always repeat: in science, only the power of thought may enter, never human feeling, never what we know as will-impulses, for otherwise that which is objective would become clouded, and that which the power of thought might achieve by being kept impersonal, would only be prejudiced.

It is correct enough that when a man introduces his feeling, his sympathy or antipathy, into the object of a scientific enquiry, he finds it repulsive or attractive, sympathetic or antipathetic. And where should we be if he were to consider his desire as a source of knowledge, so that he could say about a thing, I want it or I do not want it? Whether it displeases or pleases you, whether you desire it or not, is entirely the same to the thing. As true as it is that he who believes himself able to stand on the firm ground of science can confine himself only to externals, so true it is that the thing itself compels you to say it is red, and that the impression you get concerning the nature of a stone is the correct one. But it does not lie in the nature of the thing that it appears to you ugly or beautiful, that you desire it or not. That it appears to you red has an objective reason; that you do not desire it has no objective reason.

In a certain respect modern psychology has got beyond the point of view just described. It is not my task here to speak for or against that tendency of modern psychology which says: 'When we consider psychic phenomena and the soul-life, we must not confine ourselves only to intellectualism, we must regard man not merely in what concerns the power of conception, we must also consider the influences of the world of feeling and will.' Perhaps some of you know that this belongs to Wundt's system of philosophy,

which takes the will to be the origin of soul-activity. In a way that is in some respects fundamental, whether one agrees with it or not, the Russian psychologist Losski has pointed out the control of the will in human soul-life, in his last book called 'Intuitivism.' I could say much to you if I wanted to show how concerned the theory of the soul is to overcome the one-sidedness of intellectualism, and if further, I wanted to show you that the other powers also play a part in human soul-power.

If you carry the thought a step further, you will be able to say that this shows how impossible the demand is that the power of formulating ideas, limited as it is to observation, may lead to objective results in science. When science itself shows its impossibility, shows that everywhere Will plays a part, on what grounds would you then establish the purely objective observation of anything? Because you prefer to recognize only matter as objective, subject as you are to the tricks played by the will and your habits of thought, and because you have not the habit of thought and feeling to recognize also the spiritual element in things, therefore you omit the latter altogether in your theories. It is not a question, if we want to understand the world, of what kind of abstract ideals we set before us, but of what we can accomplish in our souls.

Goethe belongs to those people who reject the principle most categorically that knowledge is produced only through the thinking capacity, the one-sided capacity to form ideas. The prominent and significant principle expressed more or less clearly in Goethe's nature is that he considers that all the powers of the human soul must function if man is to unravel the riddles of the world.

Now we must not be one-sided and unjust. It is quite correct, when the objection is raised that feeling and will are qualities subjected to the personal characteristics of a man, and when it is asked where we should come to if not only what the eyes see and the microscope shows, but also what feeling and will dictate were considered as attributes of things! All the same that is just what we have to say in order to understand someone who, like Goethe, stands for the principle of initiation and development, namely, that, given the average feeling and will in man to-day, they cannot be applied to the acquirement of knowledge, that, in fact they would lead only to an absolute disharmony in their knowledge. One man wants this, the other that, according to the subjective needs of feeling and will. But the man who stands on the ground of initiation is also quite clear that of the powers of the human soul — thinking, representation, feeling, will — the capacity to construct thoughts and to think has advanced furthest, and

is most inclined and adapted to exclude the personal element and to attain objectivity. For that soul-power which is expressed in intellectualism is now so advanced that when men rely upon it, they quarrel least, and agree most in what they say. Feeling and will have not had the chance of being developed to this point. We can also justifiably find differences when we examine the region of ideas and their representation. There are regions of the idea-life which give us completely objective truths, which men have recognized as such, quite apart from external experience, and these truths are the same if a million people differ in their opinions about them. If you have experienced in yourself the reasons for it, you are able to assert the truth even if a million people think otherwise. For instance, everyone can find such truths confirmed as those dealing with numbers and space dimension. Everyone can understand that $3 \times 3 = 9$, and it is so, even if a million people contradict it. Why is this the case? Because regarding such truths such as mathematical truths, most people have succeeded in suppressing their preference and their aversion, their sympathy and their antipathy, in short, the personal factor, and letting the matter speak for itself. This exclusion of the personal in the case of thought and the capacity to formulate ideas has always been called the 'purification' of the human soul, and considered the first stage on the way to initiation, or, as one might also say, on the way to higher knowledge.

The man who is versed in these things says to himself: It is not only with regard to feeling and the will that people are not yet so far that nothing personal enters into it, and that they can verify objectivity, but also with regard to thought the majority are not yet so far as to be able to give themselves up purely to what the things, the ideas of the things themselves say to him, as everyone can in mathematics. But there are methods of purifying thought to such a point that we no longer think personally, but let the thoughts in us think, as we let mathematical thought do. Thus, when we have cleansed thought from the influences of personality, we speak of purification or catharsis, as it was called in the old Eleusinian mysteries. Hence man must reach the point of purifying his thinking, which then enables him to comprehend things with objective thought.

Now, just as this is possible, so is it also possible to eliminate all the personal factor from feeling, so that the appeal of things to the feelings has no longer any say, to the Personal, or to Sympathy and Antipathy; nothing but the nature of the thing is evoked, in so far as it cannot speak to mere concept capacity. Experiences in our souls which have their roots or origin in our feelings, and which therefore lead to inner knowledge, and

lead deeper into the nature of a thing, speaking however to other sides of the soul than mere intellectualism, can be purified of the personal element as well as thought, so that feeling can transmit the same objectivity as thought can. This cleansing or development of the feelings is called in all esoteric doctrine 'enlightenment.' Every man capable of development, and striving after it in no casual way, (that lies in intention of the personality) must take pains to be stirred only by what lies in the nature of the thing. When he has reached the point where the thing rouses in him neither sympathy nor antipathy, where he allows only the nature of things to speak, so that he says: whatever sympathies or antipathies I have are immaterial and are not to be taken into consideration, then it lies in the nature of the thing that the thought and action of the man assume this or that direction — then it is a declaration of the innermost nature of the thing. In esoteric doctrine this development of the will has been called 'consummation.'

If a man takes his stand on the ground of spiritual science, he says to himself: 'If I have a thing in front of me, there is in it a spiritual element, and I can so stimulate my mode of conception, that the essence of the thing is represented objectively through my concepts and ideas. Hence there is present in me the same thing that works externally, and I have recognized the essence of the thing through my mode of conception. But what I have recognized is only a part of the essence.' There exists in things something which can speak not to thought at all, but only to feeling, and indeed only to purified feeling or to feeling which has become objective. The man who has not yet developed in himself by this cultivation of the feelings such a part of the essence, cannot recognize the essence along these lines. But for the man who says to himself that feeling as well as the capacity to think can provide a basis of knowledge (not the feeling as it is, but as it can become by means of well-founded methods of the teaching of cognition) for such a man it becomes gradually clear that there are things deeper than thought possibilities, things which speak to one's soul and the feelings. There are also things which reach even down to the will.

Now Goethe was particularly convinced that this really is the case, and that man really has in him these possibilities of development. He stood firmly on the ground of the principle of initiation, and he has shown us the initiation of man through the development of his soul and the development of the three powers of will, feeling and thought by representing them in his Fairy Tale.

The Golden King represents the initiation for the thought-capacity, the Silver King represents the initiation with knowledge capacity of objective feeling, and the Brazen King the initiation for knowledge capacity of the will. Goethe has emphasized that man must overcome certain things if he wishes to receive these three gifts. The Youth in the story represents man in his struggle for the highest. As Schiller in his *Æsthetic Letters* depicts man's aspiration towards complete humanity, so Goethe depicts in the Youth man's aspiration for the highest, wanting straight away to reach the Beautiful Lily, and attaining then inner human perfection, given him by the three Kings.

How that happens is pointed out in the course of the story. You remember that in the subterranean Temple, into which the Snake looks because of the earth's power of crystallization, one King was in each of the four corners. In the first was the Golden, in the second the Silver, in the third the Brazen King. In the fourth was the King who was a mixture of the other three metals, in whom, therefore, the three composite parts were so welded that one could not distinguish them. In this fourth King, Goethe depicts for us the representative of that stage of human development in which will, thought and feeling are mixed together. In other words he stands for that human soul which is governed by will, thought and feeling, because it is itself not master of these three capacities. On the other hand in the Youth, after he receives the three gifts from the three Kings separately, so that they are no longer chaotically mixed, that stage of knowledge is represented which does not allow itself to be ruled by thought, feeling and will, but which, on the contrary, rules over them. Man is ruled by them as long as they flow chaotically and intermingled in him, as long as they are not pure and independent in his soul. Until man has reached this separation, he is not capable of being effective through his three knowledge-capacities. When he has reached this point, however, he is no longer the subject of Chaos, but on the contrary himself controls his thought, his feeling and his will, when each is as pure and unalloyed as the metal of the respective Kings: his mode of Conception, pure as the Golden King (for nothing is mixed in him); his mode of Feeling, where nothing is added or mixed, but pure as the Silver King; and so too the Will, pure as the brass of the Brazen King; Concepts and Feelings no longer govern him, for he stands, in his nature, free; he is capable, in a word, of comprehension by means of thought, of feeling and will as required, making use of each separately. He can grasp according to necessity and the nature of things either by means of thinking, feeling or willing. Then he has advanced so far that the whole pure knowledge-capacity which we see

in thought, feeling and will, leads him to a deeper insight, and he really steps himself in the current of events, in the inner nature of things. Of course only experience can teach that this is possible.

Now it will not be difficult to agree, after what I said just now, that if Goethe makes the Youth represent striving mankind, we may see in the Beautiful Lily another soul-condition, namely, that soul-condition which man attains when the beings lying in things spring forth in the soul, and he thereby raises his existence by blending the things in himself with the nature of things in the external world. What man experiences in his soul by growing out of himself, by becoming master of the powers of the soul, victor over the chaos in his soul; what man then experiences, that inner blessedness, that unity with things; their awakening in him, is shown us by Goethe in his representation of the union with the Beautiful Lily. Beauty here is not merely aesthetic beauty, but a quality of man brought to a certain stage of perfection. So that we shall also now find it easy to understand why Goethe makes the Youth proceed in his effort to reach the Beautiful Lily, in such a way that all his powers at first disappear. Why is this?

We understand Goethe's presentation of such a scene if we hold fast to a thought he once expressed: 'Everything which gives us mastery over ourselves without liberating us, leads us into error.' Man must first be free, he must reach the point of being master of his inner soul-powers, and then he can attain union with the highest soul-condition, with the Beautiful Lily. But if he sets out to attain it unprepared, with still immature powers, they are lost and his soul is shrivelled. Hence Goethe points out that the Youth seeks this liberation which will make him captain of his soul. The moment his soul-powers are no longer chaotic, but are purified, cleansed and ordered, he is ready to reach that condition of soul which is symbolized by his union with the Beautiful Lily.

So we see that Goethe constructs these figures in free creative fantasy, and if we look upon them as representing soul-powers, we see that they permeate and work in his whole soul. If we look upon them like this, if we are as sensitive to these figures as in a way Goethe was — Goethe who unlike a second-rate didactic poet was not content to say what this or that soul-quality meant, but used it to express what he felt himself, then we shall realize what is expressed in these poetic figures. And therefore the various figures stand in the same personal relationship to each other as the soul-powers of a man stand to each other.

It cannot be clearly enough insisted upon that there is no question of the characters meaning this or that. That is certainly not the case. Rather is it that Goethe felt this or that in this or that soul-activity and transformed his feelings in connection with one or the other soul-activity into one or the other figures.

Thus he created the sequence of the story's events, which is still more important than the figures themselves. We see the Will-o'-the-Wisps and the Green Snake, and that the former cross over from the other side of the river and reveal quite peculiar qualities. They absorb the gold greedily, even lick it from the walls of the Old Man's room, and then throw it about prodigally. The same gold which in the Will-o'-the-Wisps is a sign of worthlessness, as we are also shown by the fact that the Ferryman has to refuse it — otherwise the river would surge up (and the waves rear up like horses — *aufbäumen*. Ed.) — the Ferryman may take only fruits in payment — this gold — what effect does it have in the body of the Green Snake? The Snake, after taking it, becomes internally luminous! And the plants and other things round her are also lit up because she takes into herself what in the case of the Will-o'-the-Wisps is a symbol of worthlessness.

But a certain importance is ascribed even to them. You know that the Old Man at the critical moment calls upon the Will-o'-the-Wisps to open the Temple gates, so that the whole train can enter in. Precisely the same thing which happens here in the case of the Green Snake, is to be found in the human soul, a thing we came across particularly clearly two days ago in the conversation between Goethe and Schiller. We saw that Schiller, as he spoke with Goethe about the way in which nature should be regarded, was still of the opinion that the drawing with a few strokes by Goethe of the proto-plant was an idea, an abstraction, which one receives when one omits the differentiating features and puts together the common ones. And we saw that Goethe thereupon said that if that was an idea, then he saw his ideas with his eyes. At this moment there were two quite different realities in opposition. Schiller trained himself completely to take Goethe's way of looking at things; so that it shows no lack of honour to Schiller if he is taken as an example of that human soul which moves in abstractions, and preferably in those ideas of things which are comprehended by the mere reason. That is a particular inclination of the soul, which, if a man wishes to attain a higher development, can, in certain circumstances, play a very dangerous part.

There are people whose inclination lies in the direction of the abstract. Now when they combine this abstraction with something they come across as soul-power, this is, as a rule, the concept of unproductivity. These people are sometimes very acute, they can draw fine distinctions, and connect this or that concept wonderfully. But you also often find with such a soul-condition, that the spiritual influences, inspirations, are excluded. This soul-condition, characterized by unproductivity and abstraction, is represented to us in the Will-o'-the-Wisps. They take up the gold wherever they find it; they lack any inventive faculty, are unproductive and can grasp no 'ideas.' These ideas are alien to them. They have not the will unselfishly to yield themselves up to things, or to stick to facts or to use concepts only as far as they are interpreters of facts. All they care about is to stuff their reasons full of concepts, and then scatter them about prodigally. They are like a man who goes to libraries, collects wisdom there, and takes it in and then gives it out again correspondingly. These Will-o'-the-Wisps are typical of that soul-capacity which is never able to grasp a single literary thought, or feeling, but which can nevertheless grasp in beautiful forms what creative spirits have produced in literature. I do not mean to say anything against this kind of soul. If a man did not have it nor cultivated it when he was insufficiently endowed with it, he would lack something which must be present when it comes to the real capacity for knowledge. In his picture of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, in the whole circumstances in which they appear and act, Goethe shows the manner in which such a soul-type functions, in relation to other soul-types, how it harms and benefits. In truth, if someone wanted to climb to higher stages of knowledge and had not this faculty of soul, there would not be the means to open the Temple for him. Goethe shows the advantages equally with the drawbacks of this soul-condition. What he gives us in the Will-o'-the-Wisps represents a soul-element. The moment it wants to lead an independent life in one direction or another, it becomes harmful. This abstraction leads to a critical faculty which makes men learn everything indeed, but incapable of further development, because the productive element is missing in them. But Goethe also clearly shows how far there is value in what the Will-o'-the-Wisps represent. What they contain can become something valuable; in the Snake the Will-o'-the-Wisps' gold turns to something valuable in so far as she illumines the objects round about her.

What lives in the Will-o'-the-Wisps, when worked out in another way, will become extremely fruitful in the human soul. When man strives so to regard his experiences of concepts and ideas and ideal creations not as something abstract in themselves, but as capable of leading to and

interpreting the realities round him, so that he thinks as selflessly and willingly of his observations as of the abstract quality of the concepts, then he is as regards this soul-power in the same position as the Green Snake: then he can produce light and wisdom out of the purely abstract concepts. Then he is not brought to be in the vertical line which loses all connection and relation to the horizontal plane. The Will-o'-the-Wisps are the Snake's relatives, but of the vertical line. The gold-pieces fall through the rocks, are absorbed by the Snake which thereby becomes inwardly luminous. He who approaches the things themselves with these concepts absorbs wisdom.

Goethe gives us also an example of how one is to work on the conceptions (*Begriffe*). He has the conception of the proto-plant. Primarily it is an abstract conception, which, were it worked out in the abstract, would become an empty picture, killing all life, as the gold, thrown down by the Will-o'-the-Wisps, killed the Pug-dog. But just think what Goethe does with the conception of the proto-plant. If we follow him on his Italian journey, we see that this conception is only the 'leit-motif' going from plant to plant, from being to being. He takes the conception, goes from it over to the plant, and sees how this is made in one or another shape, taking on quite different shapes, in lower or higher places, and so on. Now he follows from step to step how the spiritual reality or form creeps into every physical form. He himself creeps about like the Snake in the crevices of the earth. Thus for Goethe the conception-world is nothing else but that which can be spun into objective reality. The Snake for him is the representative of that soul-power which does not struggle upward selfishly to higher regions of existence in an attempt to raise itself above everything, but which continually and patiently lets the conception be verified by observation, patiently goes from experience to experience. When man not merely theorizes, not merely lives in the conceptions, but applies them to life and experience, then he is as far as this soul-power is concerned, in the position of the Snake. This is so in a very wide sense. He who takes philosophy not as a theory, but as what it is meant to be, he who regards the conceptions of spiritual science as exercises for life, knows that just such conceptions, even the highest, are meant to be applied in such a way that they merge into life and are verified by daily experience. The man who has learnt a few conceptions but is incapable of applying them to life is like a man who has learned a cooking-book by heart, but cannot cook. As the gold is a means to throw light on things, so Goethe illuminates the things round him by means of his ideas.

This is the instructive and grand thing about Goethe's attitude to Science, and his every effort, that his ideas and conceptions have reality and have the effect of lighting up all objects round him. The day before yesterday special importance was laid on the universality in Goethe which gives the reason why we never have the feeling: that is Goethe's 'meaning.' He stands there, and when we see him, we find only that we understand things better which before were not so clear. For this reason he was capable of becoming the point of agreement between two hostile brethren, as we saw the day before yesterday.

If we wanted to discuss every feature in this fairy tale and characterize every figure in it, I should have to speak not for three hours but for three weeks on it. So I can give you only the deeper principles contained in the story. But every feature shows us something of Goethe's method of thought and his opinion of the world.

Those soul-powers which are represented in the Will-o'-the-Wisps, in the Green Snake and in the Kings, are on one side of the River. On the other side lives the Beautiful Lily, the ideal of perfect knowledge and perfect life and work. We heard from the Ferryman that he can bring the people (*gestalten*, forms) from the other side to this, but can take no one back again. Let us apply this to our whole soul-mood or soul-condition and our improvement.

We find ourselves on earth as beings with souls. These or the other soul-capacities work upon us as talents, as more or less developed soul-powers. They are in us; but we have also something else in us. In us human beings if we take ourselves properly there is the feeling, the knowledge that the powers of our soul, which finally interpret the nature of things to us, are closely related to the elemental spirits (*grundgeister*) of the world, with the Creative, Spiritual forces. The longing for these creative forces is the longing for the Beautiful Lily. Thus we know that everything derived on one hand from the Beautiful Lily, strives on the other to return to her. Unknown forces unmastered by us have brought us from the world on the other side over the river-boundary to this side. But these forces, characterized by the Ferryman, and working in the depths of unconscious nature, cannot take us back again, for otherwise man would return, without his work and co-operation, to the kingdom of the divine, precisely as he came over. The forces which as unconscious nature-forces have brought us over into the kingdom of struggling humanity, may not lead us back again. For this other forces are required; and Goethe is aware of it. But he wants to show also how man must set about being able to re-unite with the Beautiful Lily.

There are two ways. One leads over the Green Snake; we can cross by it and gradually find the kingdom of the spirit. The other way goes across the Giant's shadow. We are shown that the Giant, otherwise without strength, stretches out his hand at dusk, and its shadow falls across the River. The second road leads over this shadow. Whoever wishes therefore to cross by clear daylight to the kingdom of the spirit must use the way provided by the Snake; and whoever wishes to cross at dusk can use the way leading across the Giant's shadow. Those are the two ways to reach a spiritual picture of the world. The man who aspires to the spiritual world — not with human concepts and ideas, not with those forces which are symbolized by the worthless gold (as spirits of bare sophistry) and the Will-o'-the-Wisps — but by proceeding patiently and selflessly from experience to experience, succeeds in reaching the other bank in full sunlight.

Goethe knows that real research does not stop at material things, but must lead over beyond the boundary; beyond the river which separates us from the spiritual. But there is another way, a way for undeveloped people, who do not want to take the road of knowledge, but a way represented by the Giant. He himself is powerless, only his shadow has a certain strength. Now what is powerless in a true sense? Take all the conditions possible to man when his consciousness is reduced, as in hypnotism, somnambulism and even dream-conditions; everything by which the clear consciousness of day is subdued, whereby man is subject to lower soul-power than in clear consciousness, belongs to this second way. Here the soul, by surrendering its ordinary daily functional power of the soul, is led into the real kingdom of the spirit. The soul, however, does not itself become capable of crossing into the spiritual kingdom, but remains unconscious and is carried across like the Shadow into the kingdom of spirit. Goethe includes in the forces represented by the Giant's shadow everything which functions unconsciously and from habit, without the soul-powers which are active during clear consciousness taking part. Schiller, who was initiated into Goethe's meaning, once, at the time of the great upheavals in Western Europe, wrote to Goethe: 'I rejoice that you have not been roughly caught in the shadow of the giant.' What did he mean? He meant that had Goethe travelled further West, he would have been caught in the revolutionary forces of the West.

Then we see that the objects of man's quest, the height of knowledge, is represented in the 'Temple.' The Temple represents a higher stage of man's evolution. Goethe nowadays would say that if the Temple is something hidden, it is under the narrow crevices of the earth. Such an aspiring soul-force as is represented in the Snake can feel the shape of the Temple only

dimly. By absorbing the ideal, the gold, she can illumine this shape, but fundamentally the Temple can be there to-day only as a subterranean secret. But though Goethe leaves the Temple as something subterranean for external culture, he points out that to a further-developed man this secret must be unlocked. In this he indicates the current of Spiritual Science which to-day has already caught up wide masses of people, which in a comprehensive sense seeks to make popular the content of Spiritual Science, of the principle of initiation, and of the Temple's secret. The Youth is therefore to be regarded in this truly free Goethean sense as the representative of aspiring mankind. Therefore the Temple is to rise beyond the River, so that not only a few individuals who seek illumination can cross and re-cross, but so that all people can cross the River by the bridge. Goethe, in the Temple of Initiation above the earth puts before us a future state, which will have arrived when man can go from the kingdom of the senses into the kingdom of the spiritual, and from the kingdom of the spiritual into the kingdom of the senses.

How is this attained in the Fairy Tale? Because the real secret of it is fulfilled. The solution of the story is to be found in the story itself, says Schiller, but he has also pointed out that the word that solves it is inserted in a very remarkable way. You remember the Old Man with the Lamp, which illuminates only where there is already light? Now, who is this Old Man, and what is the Lamp? What is its curious light? The Old Man stands above the situation. His lamp has the peculiar quality of changing things, wood into silver, stone into gold. It has also the quality of shining only where there is already a receptivity, a definite kind of light. As the Old Man enters the subterranean Temple he is asked how many secrets he knows. 'Three,' he replies. To the Silver King's question, 'Which is the most important,' he answers: 'The open one.' And when the Brazen King asks whether he would tell it them also, he says: 'As soon as I know the fourth.' Whereupon the Snake whispers something in his ear and he says at once:

'The Time is at Hand.'

The solution of the riddle is what the Snake whispered in the Old Man's ear, and we have to find out what that is. It would lead us too far to say at length what the three secrets mean. I shall only hint at it. There are three Kingdoms which in evolution are so to speak stationary: the mineral, the vegetable and the animal Kingdoms, which are completed, as compared

with progressive man, who is still developing. The inner development of man is so vehement and important that it cannot be confused with the development of the other three nature kingdoms. What the secret of the Old Man contains is the fact that one Kingdom of nature has arrived at the present point of a full-stop, and this is what explains the laws of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. But now comes the fourth kingdom, that of man, the secret which is to be revealed in the human soul. The secret which the Old Man must first discover, is of this kind. And how must he discover it? He knows of what it consists, but the Snake has to tell him first. This indicates to us that man has still to go through something special, if he wants to attain the goal of evolution as the three other kingdoms have done. What this is the Snake whispers to the Old Man. She tells how a certain soul-power must be developed, if a higher stage is to be reached; she says that she has the will to sacrifice herself for this, and she does in fact sacrifice herself. Hitherto she has made a bridge when here and there someone wished to cross; but now she will become a permanent bridge, by falling in pieces, so that man will have a lasting connection between this side and that, between the spiritual and the physical. That the Snake has the will to sacrifice herself must be taken as the condition of revealing the fourth secret. The moment the Old Man hears that the Snake will sacrifice herself, he can even say: 'The time is at hand!' It is that soul-power which adheres to the external. And the way to be trodden is not to make this soul-force and inner science the ultimate end but self-surrender. That really is a secret, even if it is called an 'open secret,' that is, when any who will can know it. What is regarded in a wide circle as end in itself — everything we can learn in natural science, in political science of civilization, in history, in mathematics and all other sciences can never be an absolute end. We can never come to a true insight into the depths of the world, if we consider them as ends in themselves. Only if we are at all times ready to absorb them and regard them as means, which we offer as a bridge to let us cross over, do we come to real knowledge. We bar ourselves off from the higher, true knowledge unless we are also ready to sacrifice ourselves. Man will get an idea of what initiation is only when he ceases to carve for himself a world-conception out of external-physical concepts. He must be all feeling, with all-attuned soul, such a soul as Goethe describes in his 'Westöstlichen Divan' as the highest acquisition of man:

'And so long thou hast not this, Death and Birth!

Thou art but a sorry guest, on this dark Earth.'

Death and Birth! Learn to know what life can offer, go through with it, but surpass, transcend yourself. Let it become a bridge for you, and you will wake up in a higher life and be one with the essence of things, when you no longer live in the illusion that, cut off from the higher ego, you can exhaust the essence of things. When Goethe speaks of the sacrifice of the idea and the soul-material, in order to acquire new life in higher spheres, and of the deepest inner love, he likes to think of the words of the mystic Jacob Böhme, who knows from experience this self-surrender of the Snake. Perhaps Jacob Böhme has pointed out just this to him and made it so clear to him that a man can live, even in the physical body, in a world which otherwise he would tread only after death, in the world of the eternal, the spiritual. Jacob Böhme knew also that it depends on the man, whether he can, in the higher sense, slide over into the spiritual world. He shows it in the saying: 'Who dies not before he dies, is ruined when he dies.' A significant saying! Man, who does not die before he dies, that is, who does not develop in himself the eternal, the inner kernel of being, will not be in a position, when he dies, to find again the spiritual kernel in himself. The eternal is in us. We must develop it in the body, so that we may find it outside the body. 'Who dies not before he dies, is ruined when he dies.' So it is also with the other sentence: 'And so death is the root of all life.'

Thus we see that the things of the soul can only illumine a place where light already is: the Lamp of the Old Man can only shine where there is already light. Once more our attention is directed to those special soul-powers, of devotion and religious self-surrender, which for hundreds and thousands of years have brought the message of spiritual worlds to those who could not seek the light by way of Science or otherwise. The light of the different religious revelations is represented in the Old Man, who has this light. But to him who does not bring an inner light to meet the sense of religion, the Lamp of Religion gives no light. It can shine only where light already is and meets it. It is the Lamp which has transfigured man, which has led all mortality across to a life of soul.

And then we see that the two Kingdoms are united through the Snake's sacrifice. After it goes, so to say, through incidents symbolic of what man has to go through in his higher development in an esoteric sense, we see how the Temple of Knowledge is brought by means of all the three human soul-powers across the river, how it rises and each soul-power performs its

service. This is meant to show that the soul-powers must be in harmony, since we are told: the single personality can achieve nothing; but when all work together at a favourable moment, when the strong and the weak cooperate in the right relationship, then the soul can acquire the ability to reach the highest state, the union with the Beautiful Lily. Then the Temple moves out of the hidden crevices up to the surface for all who strive in truth after knowledge and wisdom. The Youth is endowed with the knowledge-powers of thought by the Golden King: 'Know and recognize the highest.' He is endowed with the knowledge-powers of feeling by the Silver King, which Goethe expresses beautifully with the words: 'Tend the sheep!'

In feeling are rooted art and religion, and for Goethe both were a unity — already at the time when he wrote on his Italian journey concerning Italy's works of art: 'There is necessity, there is God!'

But there is also the doing — when man does not apply it to the struggle for existence, but when he makes it into a weapon for gaining beauty and wisdom. This is contained in the words spoken by the Brazen King to the Youth: 'The Sword in the left hand, the right free!' There is a whole world in these words. The right hand free to work the self out of human nature.

And what happens with the Fourth King, in whom all three elements are mingled together? This mixed King melts into a grotesque figure. The Will-o'-the-Wisps come and lick what gold there is off him: man's soul-powers here still want to examine what sort of stages of human development, now overcome, there once were.

Let us take yet another feature: namely, when the Giant comes staggering in and then stands there like a statue, pointing to the hours: when man has brought his life into harmony, then the subordinate has a meaning for what is intended to be methodical order. It ought to express itself like a habit. The unconscious itself will then receive a valuable meaning. Hence the Giant is depicted like a clock.

The Old Man with the Lamp is married to the Old Woman. This Old Woman represents to us nothing else but the healthy, understanding human soul-power, which does not penetrate into high regions of spiritual abstractions, but which handles everything healthily and practically, as, for instance, in religion, represented by the Old Man with the Lamp. She is the one to bring the Ferryman his pay: three heads of cabbage, three onions and three artichokes. Such a stage of development has not passed beyond

the contemporary. That she is so treated by the Will-o'-the-Wisps is no doubt a reflected picture of how abstract minds look down with a certain amount of scorn on people who take things in directly by instinct or intuition.

Every point, every turn of this story is of deep significance, and if we enter into one more explanation, it must be of an esoteric kind, and you will find that one can really only give the method of explanation. Bury yourselves in the story, and you will discover that a whole world is to be found there, very much more than it has been possible to indicate to-day.

I should like to show you in two examples how much Goethe's spiritual world-view runs through his whole life, how in things of spiritual knowledge he stands in agreement in extreme old age with what he had written earlier.

While Goethe wrote 'Faust' he adopted a certain attitude which harks back to a symbol of a deeper evolution-path of nature. When Faust speaks of his father, who was an alchemist, and had taken over the old doctrines credulously, but had misunderstood them, he says that his father also made

'... a Lion red, a wooer daring, Within the Lily's tepid bath espoused.'

Faust I, Scene II, p. 32.

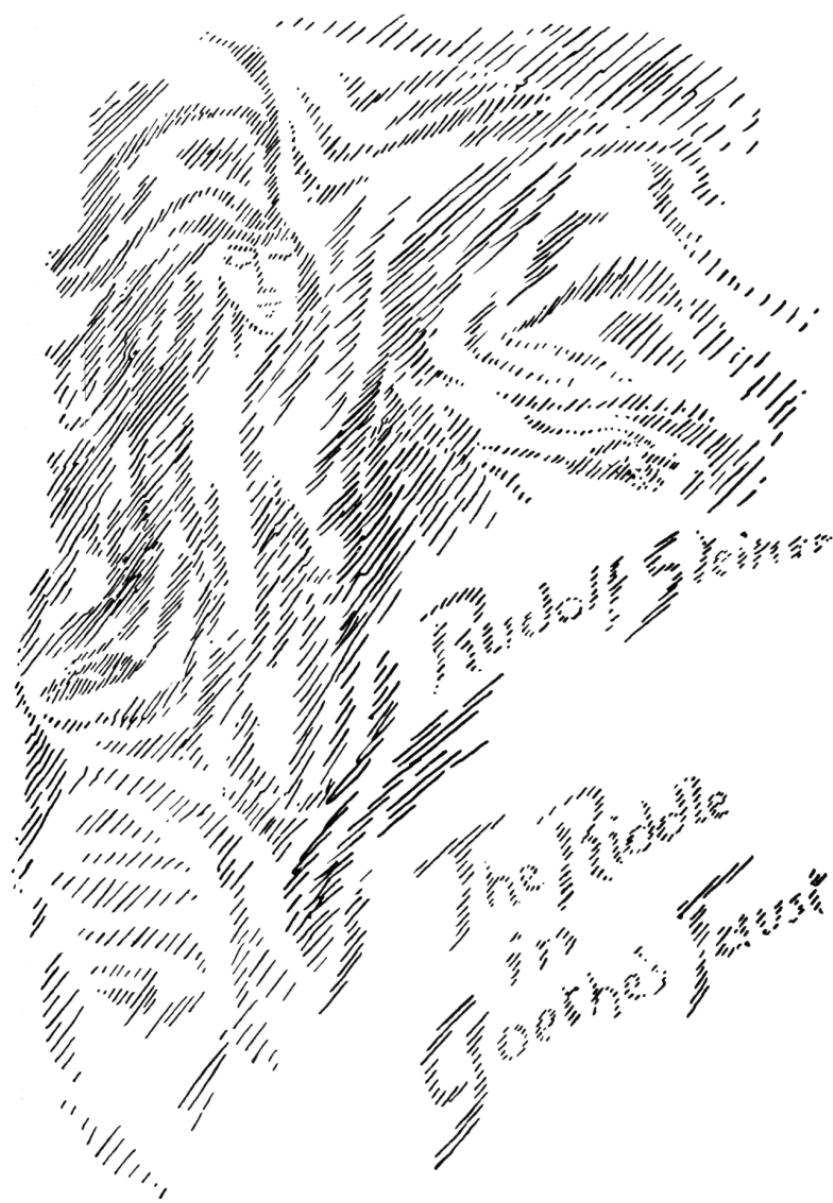
That is what Faust says, without knowing its significance. But such a saying can become a ladder leading to high stages of development. In the Fairy Tale Goethe shows in the Youth the human being striving for the highest bride, and that with which he is to be united he calls the Beautiful Lily. You notice this Lily is to be found already in the first parts of 'Faust.'

And, again, the very nerve of Goethe's philosophy which found expression in his Fairy Tale, is to be found also in 'Faust:' in Part II, in the Mystic Chorus, where Faust confronts the entry into the spiritual world, where Goethe sets down his avowal of a spiritual world-conception in monumental words. He shows there how the ascent on the road of knowledge follows in three successive stages, namely, the purification of

the thought, the illumination of feeling and the working out of will. What man attains through the purification of the thought leads him to recognize the spiritual behind everything. The physical becomes a symbol of the spiritual. He goes deeper still, in order to grasp what is unattainable to thought. He then reaches a state at which he no longer regards things by means of thought, but is directed into the thing itself, where the essence of it, and what one cannot describe become accomplished fact. And that which one cannot describe, that which, as you will hear in the course of the winter addresses, must be thought of in another way, that whereby one must advance to the secrets of the will, he labels simply 'the indescribable.' When man has completed the threefold road through thought, feeling and will, he is united with what is called 'eternal womanhood' in the Chorus Mysticus, the goal of the human soul's development, the 'Beautiful Lily' of the Fairy Tale.

Thus we see that Goethe utters his deepest conviction, his secret revelation there also, where he brings his great confessional poem to an end, after rising up through thought and feeling and will to union with the Beautiful Lily, up to that state which finds its expression in the passage of the Chorus Mysticus, which expresses the same thing as Goethe's philosophy and spiritual science, as well as the Fairy Tale:

*'All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to Event:
The Indescribable,
Here it is done:
The Woman-Soul leadeth us
Upward and on!'*



Handwritten text, possibly a name or signature, written in a cursive style. The text is tilted and partially obscured by the shading of the drawing.

Handwritten text, possibly a name or signature, written in a cursive style. The text is tilted and partially obscured by the shading of the drawing.

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The Riddle in Faust: Exoteric

11 March 1909, Berlin

It was in August, 1831, that Goethe sealed up a packet and handed it to his faithful secretary Eckermann and prepared his testamentary directions for the editing of this sealed-up treasure. This packet contained in a comprehensive way the whole striving of Goethe's life. It contained the second part of Goethe's Faust; which was not to be published until after Goethe's death. Goethe was aware that in this work he had given the contents of his rich, many-sided, far-reaching and deeply-penetrating life to human existence, and the importance of this moment for him may be gathered from the words he uttered at the time, 'I am now finished my life's true work, anything I do further and whether I do it or not, is all the same!' If we permit a fact such as this to work on the soul we can say: It would not be easy for a human life to become fruitful for the rest of humanity in a more beautiful, harmonious way, or indeed to become fruitful in a more conscious manner. There is something deeply affecting in the thought of Goethe's life at this point of time — for he lived barely one year longer — in that he should have visited Ilmenau once more and there re-read the beautiful verse he had written on the 7th of September, 1783, when he was still a comparatively young man.

*'Above all heights
Is rest,
In the tree tops
Thou feelest
Scarce a breath,
The birds are silent in the woods,
Only wait, soon
Thou too shalt rest.'*

One may well ask whether these lines may not have signified at that time a frame of mind regulating Goethe's ideas in a new way as he re-read them in the evening of his life with affecting tears.

Goethe's Faust is truly a testament of the very first order when considered with reference to its literary and intellectual standpoint.

In 1831 Goethe finished the work which had occupied him from his earliest youth, having worked energetically from the year 1824 at the second part of Faust. We find that Goethe knew from the beginning of 1770 that he had what may be called the Faust disposition and that he began in 1774 to write down the first part of Faust, returning again and again to this poem in the most important moments of his life.

Notably he took the first part of Faust with him when he went to Weimar and owing to his position there entered the great world. Certainly it was not produced there. But because one of the Weimar Court ladies, Fräulein von Göchhausen, preserved a copy of the Faust which Goethe took with him to Weimar, we to-day possess the form in which it was when he took it there. We therefore know the form in which Faust was printed for the first time and published in 1790, and further we know the setting in which the whole of Goethe's works appeared in 1808 in the first edition. All that we have of Faust, including that very important document which Goethe left as his testament, shows us the different stages of Goethe's growth. It is endlessly interesting to observe how these four stages of Goethe's Faust-creation appear to us in different ways, according to its inner nature, and how they represent a crescendo in the whole of Goethe's life-endeavour. What Goethe took with him to Weimar is a literary work of a quite personal character into which he had poured the feelings, the degrees of knowledge and also the despair of knowledge, as they went with him through the Frankfort time into the Strassburg time and also into the first Weimar period. It is the work of a man hotly striving after knowledge, striving to feel himself into life, experiencing every despair that an upright honourable man can go through, and all this he had poured into this work. All this is in the first part of Faust. But when Faust appeared in 1790 as a fragment, it was recognized that Goethe had worked at it and transformed it out of a longing lying deep in his soul and inner life which had become enlightened through his contemplation of Italian nature and of Italian works of Art. Out of this personal work of one who had been tossed to and fro in life's storms there emerged the work of one, who to a certain degree, had become unshackled and who had a very clear view of life before his soul.

Then came the time of Goethe's friendship with Schiller. The time when in his inner being he learned to know and experience a world which had long become rooted within him. A world of which one can say that he who experiences it has had his spiritual eyes opened, so that he can see into

the surrounding spiritual world. And now Faust's personality becomes a being placed between two worlds, between the spiritual world to which man can raise himself through purification, through the ennobling of himself and that world which drags him down. Faust becomes a being placed between the world of good and the world of evil. And while previously we saw in Faust the life of the single striving personality, now we see before us a great conflict carried on between the good and evil powers around man. Man is thus placed in the centre as the worthiest object for which the good and evil beings fight in the world. Though in the very beginning Faust is seen as a man doubting all knowledge, he now comes before us as one placed between heaven and hell. Thus the poem reaches an essentially higher stage and a higher existence.

In the form in which Faust appears in 1808 it seems as if thousands of years of human development resound. We are reminded of the great dramatic representation of man's life produced in ancient times in the Book of Job, where the evil spirit went among men and stood up before God, and God said to him: 'Thou hast been to and fro on the earth, hast thou considered my servant Job?' What is here said we find in the poem, 'The Prologue in Heaven' where God speaks with Mephistopheles, the messenger of the evil spirituality:

The Lord: Know'st Faust?

Mephistopheles: The Doctor Faust?

The Lord: My servant, he —

So out of what Goethe wrote in order that his Faust Mystery should appear in its right light there sounds an echo of the Book of Job, 'Dost thou know my servant Job?'

Then Goethe's fine, full life continued further, going ever deeper into the human existence of which the world to-day knows so little. And having brought to expression in many different ways what he had experienced in his soul, in 1824 he looked back on his whole life, and once more sat down and described Faust's passage through the great world, but in such a way that the second part is a complete character picture of the inner human development of the soul.

Looking back to the first part we can see how completely true to life and to the reality of life is this description of a striving soul. Everything that meets us in the first part, especially in the beginning, is full of deep truths regarding nature, but much in it resembles a kind of theory of art — as if someone spoke of things that his soul had not yet fully experienced.

And the second part: Here everything is the inward experience of his own soul. Here are the highest experiences of a spiritual kind by means of which man climbs the stages of existence, passes through the physical world and penetrates to the place where the human soul is united with the spirituality of the world, dissolves together with it and knows wherein it finds peace and at the same time that which gives freedom, dignity and self-dependence. All this is given in the second part of Faust as his own inner experience. The time will come when Goethe's Faust will be understood in quite another way from what it is to-day, when people will understand what Goethe wished to say when he said to Eckermann on 29th Jan., 1827: 'All in Faust is of the senses, material, thought out in terms of the theatre to please everyone and I wished for nothing more than that. If the crowd of onlookers takes pleasure in its appearance, the higher meaning will not escape the observation of the initiated.'

Though the first part in many ways appears to be theoretical and not worked down into life, the second part is one of the most realistic of those pieces of world literature which go most deeply into reality; for everything in the second part of Faust is experienced, though not with the physical eye, because to have such experiences, spiritual eyes and spiritual ears are necessary. It is for that reason that the second part of Faust has been so little understood. People merely saw symbols and allegories in what is for the spiritual inquirer, who can experience it in the spiritual worlds, something far more true and real than anything that can be seen with the outer physical eyes or heard with the outer physical ears. From such a work we can promise ourselves much, and the task of the lectures to-day and to-morrow will be to consider something of what lies in it. To-day we will consider the matter more from the outer side, but to-morrow we will show how Goethe's Faust poem, in the true meaning of the word, is a picture of an inner esoteric life and intuitive vision of the world. Step by step we will endeavour to penetrate into that which is within and to look behind the curtain where the deepest secrets of Goethe's life lie hidden.

The Faust mood was in Goethe even when he was a student at Leipzig, and we know that at that time he had a very serious illness, bringing him very near death. Much that a man's soul can grasp at such a time passed

before Goethe, but many other things had already preceded this. He had learnt to know the way in which outer science looked at life. Certainly he had troubled himself very little about his own profession at Leipzig, but had occupied himself with many other sciences, more particularly with natural science. A strong faith never left Goethe that it would be possible to look into the deeper secrets of life through natural science; but at Leipzig at that time he stood full of despair before all that an outer knowledge could give him, in many ways a mere jumble of ideas and disconnected observations of nature. Nowhere could he find what he had already looked for as a boy, when at the age of seven he took a writing desk, placed on it some minerals and other geological products and plants, a wax taper and a burning glass. Then waiting for the morning, as the first rays of the sun came in, he took the burning glass, let the sun rays fall through it on to the wax taper and in this way lighted a fire on the altar which he had erected to the 'great God' of Nature, a fire which should have come from the foundation and source of life itself. But how far away were these sources of life from what Goethe met in the different branches of knowledge of the High School (*Hoch-Schule*), how far these 'sources of life' were removed from all such striving!

Goethe then went to Frankfort and came into touch with thoughtful, sensible men who possessed above all things through their developed soul life, something of the flowing together of the human inner life with the spiritual weaving and living in the world; men who in the fullest meaning of the word, felt in themselves what Goethe expresses in the words: 'The self in them expands to a spiritual universe.' At that time at Frankfort he had the feeling, 'Away from the mere striving after ideas! Away from the merely perceptive sense observation! There must be a path to the sources of existence!' and he came into touch with what one can call alchemistic, mystical and theosophical literature. He himself attempted the practice of alchemy. He relates how he came to know of a work through which many sought for similar knowledge at that time, Welling's 'Opus Mago-Cabalisticum et Theosophicum.' This book was much thought of then as giving a knowledge of the sources of existence. Goethe studied by degrees Paracelsus, Valentinus and above all a work which from its whole method must have produced a deep impression on all those who strove after such knowledge, 'Aurea Catena Homeri.' This was a representation of nature the Mystics in the Middle Ages believed to see. The study of these mystical, alchemistic, theosophical books must have had a similar effect on Goethe to that which a man striving to-day after the same things would experience if he took up the books of Eliphas Levy or any other thinker on the same

lines. Indeed at that time these things must have had an even more bewildering effect upon Goethe because these different writers no longer really understood the magic, theosophy, etc., of which they wrote. It was impossible to speak in direct way of the real grandeur and meaning of these things, proceeding from an ancient wisdom which had lived in human souls, for the meaning was hidden under an outer garb which included all kinds of physical and chemical forms. For those who merely saw what appeared outwardly in these books it was the greatest nonsense, and at that time it was most difficult to penetrate behind these secrets and arrive at the real meaning. But we must not forget that Goethe from his deep striving for knowledge had developed an intuitive mind. He must have been greatly pleased when on opening the 'Aurea Catena Homeri' he saw on the first page a symbol which had a deep effect on his soul; two triangles interlaced; in the corners the signs of the planets, drawn in a wonderful way, a flying dragon wound round in a circle, beneath which another dragon had fixed stiffening itself, and when he read the words on the first page, saying that the flying dragon symbolizes the stream which sends those forces which stream down from out of the Cosmos to the stiffened dragon, showing how heaven and earth hang together, or as it is expressed there: 'How the spiritual forces of heaven pour into the earth's centre.'

These mysterious signs and words must have made a great impression upon Goethe. For instance, those which depict the whole growth of the earth: 'From chaos to that which is called the universal quintessence' — a remarkable sentence, curiously mixed up with signs of a chaotic nature, still undifferentiated right through the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, right up to man and to that perspective to which man is developing in ever greater refinement. But it was not easy to find a way of penetrating to the deeper meaning. So Goethe left Frankfort in a frame of mind which can be described in the following words: I have found nothing. These seekers into nature can only give me dry, empty ideas; anything that can be squeezed out of them is but life's water. I have busied myself with much that has come down to us from the past from those who declare that they saw into the secrets of life. But the way, the way drives one to despair!

This was sometimes the mood in Goethe's soul. He was not to be bewitched by easy speculations or philosophizing, or by confused symbols and explanations from those old books, which worked so wonderfully and forebodingly on him. They looked at him with their mysteries as something to which he could find no way. But anyone who knew Goethe's soul, knew

the seed was already sown in his soul which was to germinate later. But he felt himself as one who was rejected and unworthy to unravel the secrets of life. Then he went to Strassburg.

There he met people who must have interested him in one way or the other. He got to know Jung-Stilling with his deeply mystical soul, who owing to the development of peculiar forces generally found sleeping in men, had looked deeply into the hidden side of existence. He met Herder at Strassburg, who had gone through similar moods and who in times of desperation had often been at the point of a denial of future life. In Herder he learnt to know a man who suffered from a surfeit of life and who said, I have studied much, discerning sundry things connected with men's works and men's strivings on the earth. But he was unable to say to himself, I have had one moment when my longing after the sources of life has been satisfied. This was when he was ill and inclined to deny everything with bitter irony. Yet it was Herder who pointed out many depths in the riddles of life, and Goethe found in him a truly human Faust. But that side of negation which is not the outcome of mockery and scorn Goethe learnt to know later through his friend Merck. Goethe's mother who disliked criticism of people and all moralizing said of Merck, he can never leave Mephistopheles at home, in him we are quite used to it. In Merck Goethe found a disclaimer of much that is worth striving for in life. Over against all these impressions which Goethe received from the Strassburg people, it was through Nature and his observation of Nature that many of life's puzzles were cleared up for him.

At the same time we must think of Goethe as a man possessed of a sharp, penetrating mind; he was not an unpractical man. He was an advocate, but only practised for a short time. Those who knew Goethe's work as an advocate and later as a Minister, were acquainted with his eminently practical mind. As advocate he knew little more than what he had learnt by heart from law books. But he was a man able to decide very quickly on any point laid before him; such a man can also map out clearly life's course.

So Goethe comes before us with, on the one side, faculty for the clearest thinking with relation to the world; and on the other, for feeling in the deepest way the sorrow attached to an unsatisfied pursuit of knowledge, seeking for the deepest things and yet defeated by them.

And then there came something else. Goethe had learnt to know that frame of mind which we can only characterize as the feeling of guilt! He felt guilty in respect of the simple country girl, Friederike at Sesenheim, in whose soul he had awakened so many hopes and desires and whom he had all the same to forsake later. All this was mixed up in Goethe's soul in the most remarkable way and out of these feelings there grew within him a poetic figure, which had its rise in the perception of a form which at that time followed him step by step. This was the figure of Faust, that remarkable character who had lived in the first half of the sixteenth century. This Faust had been the object of innumerable folk-plays and pantomimes and through Christopher Marlowe had reached a literary significance and had become a living problem for poets, especially for Lessing and Goethe. How did it happen that Goethe connected his own sorrow and his own feelings with this figure of Faust?

It is related that Faust lived in the first half of the sixteenth century, at a time when for history much had been decided. If we compare this time with the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when studious lives were led, we find a great difference. In the twelfth century it was possible for those minds to unite the knowledge of what the times offered them with what they could find in their own souls. When they raised their spiritual vision to the creative power of the world, enthroned in the heights, and out of it formed their ideas, they were able to unite them with what they had learnt to know through external Natural Science. What they learnt was like a natural process. On the lowest step they studied what they called physical knowledge, on the next step they learnt to know what was taught of the higher mysteries of life, the hidden mysteries of existence, which could be reached through the spiritual eye and the spiritual ear; and on the highest step they reached to the recognition of the sublime, through ideas which were fine and transparent as crystal, but full of life, and working powerfully on the soul. These were the steps to the divine knowledge and were all connected with each other. Man may shrug his shoulders and look down on the minds of that time, but their way was one which never suffered intermission. If for instance we take up the 'Way of Knowledge' by Albertus Magnus, we find it begins with a description of the lowest part of nature and ends in a vision of God. You find here no dry, empty ideas, but ideas which enlighten the heart and warm the soul. When Faust lived this time had passed. Ideas then became dry and empty; though they had the stamp of the theologian, they were abstract or drawn from thought. They were ideas which could be studied by men and into which the reasoning of the understanding could sink, but no connection could be found by reason

between these ideas and the living existence lying around us, or any possibility of enlightening the soul or bringing warmth to the heart. And then it came to this, that the science of that time — a mysticism, a magic, a theosophy, treating of things which are only to be perceived through spiritual eyes and spiritual ears — was caught in a complete decline, chiefly because much that was previously hidden in handwriting, was now published in print, and thus read by minds understanding nothing of it and who merely copied it. Humbug and nonsense of all kinds went on in the laboratories. What should have been experienced in a spiritual manner, was understood merely according to the words appearing in the books, although they were really only an outer form, but possessing a very deep meaning. Through formulae and retorts all kinds of stuff was made, with the result that what at that time was called theosophy, magic and the occult, came very near to being what we should now look upon as swindling and imposture. In a certain sense the way to the spiritual is connected with danger. Those whose striving has not been honest, whose understanding and reason has not been purified, who are unable to arrive in thought at ideas freed from the physical, may easily stumble and easily fall into the abyss. Therefore it was possible for those who still knew something or who studied the writings of the mystics with great pains, to miss the way and being unable to find it to be deceived by the swindling and charlatanism then prevalent. But it could also happen that the opposite view was taken by many people. This striving for higher things was denounced as witchcraft, and men such as Sponheim, Agrippa von Nettesheim and many others who sought honourably and blamelessly for the spiritual forces in nature, were branded as black magicians and swindlers, as men who had quitted the right path given them through religion. Faust lived during this time in the sixteenth century, a time when many saw the setting of an old spiritual movement as a rosy evening which at the same time became the rosy dawn of a new time bringing out such stars as Giordano Bruno, Galileo, Copernicus and others. Such times are called periods of transition. But of all these periods, none deserves the name so much as the time of Faust.

From what we know of Faust he appears as one who felt very deeply the insufficiency of the knowledge of that time concerning the spiritual world. Theology he had studied and had turned away from it. He sought for the sources of existence from the mediaeval remnants of magic and similar things from the Middle Ages; and because Faust was a brilliant figure oscillating between an honourable striving after knowledge and those limits which passed over into charlatanism, it is better to consider him in this way

and not attempt to understand him with sharper outlines. As he really was, the spiritual tendency at that time failed to understand him, and the general popular striving of the time was regarded as the outer garment of this Faust-figure in the sixteenth century. So he meets us as a legendary figure or dramatically as a man fallen away from the old traditions of religion and theology, who had given himself up to an endeavour, which owing to the narrow-minded ideas of that time could not possibly lead to any good in life. The opinion of the world between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries is expressed in the words from a popular book of that time on Faust: 'He has for a time put the Holy Scriptures behind the door, and laid them under the bench, and wishes to hear no more of Theology, as he has become a man of the world and calls himself a D. Medicinæ.'

What was felt and thought about Faust was expressed in such words. It was felt that he sought in his own breast for the source leading to the depths of life and his own origin, and that he wished to free himself in his own way from the old traditions. Anything in the old folk-plays or pantomimes referring to this figure of Faust was little adapted to give more than his outward appearance. But all that had remained as the tradition of Faust influenced Goethe, and he entrusted to this character his life's striving and his urgent desire for knowledge. So we find him in his 70th year beginning to see himself in the character of Faust. In this character he expressed all the dissatisfaction, and all the sorrow proceeding from the desire for knowledge which remained unsatisfied. And when we look at the first monologue in 'Faust' we see clearly what was described at the beginning of to-day's lecture. We see a man who having occupied himself deeply in outer science had reached a state of despair which threatened to shatter his life completely. We see how he seizes on the old book — Goethe called it the Book of Nostradamus, but anyone acquainted with the literature of magic also known to Goethe, will clearly recognize the book to which he referred — in which Faust perceived the sign of (lie macrocosm and of which he says:

*'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.'*

Faust, Scene I.

and then added to these words a description of feeling, a kind of rapture that passed through him at the sight of this page.

Through all this we see what at that time worked on Goethe. It was possible for such moods and ideas to flow into Goethe's soul, that he could truthfully describe them. When he stood before the remarkable sign of the two interlaced triangles and the two dragons — the upper one representing the spiritual and the lower one the physical — with the signs of the planets in the corners of the interlaced triangles, such forces penetrated through them that he really had the shining planets before him as the golden urns, with the forces flowing between them and filling the All with harmony unceasing.

When we consider Goethe's soul with its deep and honest striving for knowledge, we begin to doubt whether it is possible to have clear ideas or to speculate much about it. We can only try to place the fact before our souls so that any feeling for such things may be satisfied. But anyone understanding life and the way in which it develops through age, knows that in spite of such battles, Goethe was a man in whose soul a germ had been laid which would ripen and bear fruit very much later, in years to come. We see too how the germs which developed later so wonderfully in Faust were really there, and much can be gained from the study of this life by those who have a distinct leaning to spiritual science.

To-day unfortunately such striving is very superficial. We see many people taking it up in a hurry, but they drop it again after having acquired a few ideas. The riddles that exist are only known to one who can look back to a time twenty or thirty years previously when a fluid was poured into his soul and then stored over by the events of the following years and by many experiences, so that only thirty years later he is able to give an approximate answer respecting what was poured in his soul so long before. From this point of view we cannot look too deeply into Goethe's life. We see the echo of his feeling in relation to the 'Aurea Catena Homeri' or 'The Golden Chain of Homer.' We see it expressed when Faust breaks forth into the words, 'What a show!' Yes, a very powerful show, when the soul sinks deeply into these pictures, without even a guess of what they will become in the future. It is a show. But does it stop at mere guessing?

Then these words necessarily follow:

... but only a show! ...

At that time Goethe did not understand the deep meaning of these words, but a shade of that feeling already lived in his soul, for 'All that is transient is but a semblance!' and having these remarkable pictures before him, he could say as if in pain, 'However artistically these characters are drawn, they are but outer symbols!'

*'How grand a show! But, ah! a show alone.
Thee, boundless Nature, now make thee, my own.'*

Each line is deeply felt: — only a show, something which copies the great world. But Goethe had studied the many problems of natural science and had learnt the deep experience given to man, when he has to say to himself: 'Thou art guilty!' Having experienced this, he could hope for more depth of feeling on perceiving other signs closely connected with man's life. This feeling is expressed by Faust: — The book is turned over and in place of the sign of the great world, there appears the sign of the little world, the pentagon, and its surroundings. Then the magic word, which if rightly applied can awake certain slumbering forces, appears before Goethe's soul. Goethe certainly had a premonition that there is something, characterized here as slumbering forces in man, and that through gazing at certain symbols and images these forces could be awakened, so as to make it possible for him to look into the spiritual world. He could believe that he came into contact with that which stands very near to man's soul and expresses itself in the signs of the microcosm, the little world. He expresses this through his 'Faust' when he says that if man gives himself up to deeper inner meditation certain inner experiences develop and the 'earth spirit' appears, that spirit which quickens the earth and which sees to it, that out of the general life and stream of the world man comes to be and increases. Goethe understood in a marvellous way how to compress into a few words what are the secrets of the earth spirit, and in what way he belongs to the whole earth — just as each human soul and human spirit is related to the physical body of man — who is, we might say, the ruler of all the natural development, increase and historical growth of man. This

ruler has no visible form, but can appear to a man whose spiritual eyes are opened, so that he can perceive and know that there is such a spirit of the earth. Goethe has characterized Him in a wonderful way:

Spirit:
'In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth, the Grave,
An eternal sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all-glowing.'

'Thus at Time's loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of Life that the Deity wears!'

If we could penetrate every word of this formula we should find that what is described by Goethe, can be really experienced by anyone whose development has brought his soul to the requisite stage of existence. But all know what comes to pass: Faust does not feel himself and cannot feel himself as developed to what thus presents itself. He has not found the way to the secret depths of life. What 'flows in life and lives and weaves in action's storm' exists for him as a 'terrible face.' He turns away and hears the words:

Spirit:
'Thou'rt like the spirit thou comprehendest, Not me!'

Out of the old traditions he gained the belief that he was the exact image of the Divinity, and now he had to say to himself, 'Not even thee!'

'Thou resemblest the mind thou canst grasp.' If only people could once feel this sentence! That it was felt by Goethe can be seen from the whole situation in the first part of 'Faust.' Man can understand nothing beyond that point to which he has developed himself.

On another occasion Goethe said, 'As one is, so is one's God,' and this resembles a confession on Goethe's part, that he had not, up to that time, found the way to the source of life. A confession which he here connects with Faust. When we consider Faust in this first form, we see what difficulties Goethe had to contend with in order to connect his world with the spiritual world towards which he was striving. We find in this first 'Faust' immediately afterwards, and without any real transition, the meeting of Mephistopheles with the student.

What is Mephistopheles? Anyone who knows the way into the spiritual world, knows that there really is a Mephistopheles, that he is one of the two tempters who meet man when he desires to enter the road to the spiritual land, when he seeks the way to the spiritual world. There are two potencies or powers whom man meets. One power we call Lucifer. He lays hold of man in a more inward way, in the centre of his soul, seeking to drag him down through his passions, desires, lusts, etc., into the lower scale of the personal and ignoble. All that works on man himself is Luciferic, and because man was once caught in his earthly life by this Luciferic principle, he was delivered up to another principle. If man had never been seized by this Luciferic principle, the outer world would never have appeared to him in its merely material outward form, but would have presented itself in such a way that man could have said from the beginning that all outward things were physiognomic expression of the Spirit. Man would have seen the Spirit behind all physical material things. But because matter became condensed through the influence of the Luciferic power that which was false became mingled with (lie outer appearance, so that its outward form seemed Maya or illusion, as if it were not the outer physiognomic expression of the spirit. This power presenting the outer world to the view of a man in an untrue form was first recognized in its complete depth by Zarathustra. Under the name of Ahriman, Zarathustra first presented this being as the opponent of the God of Light. In everything connected with the teaching of Zarathustra, Ahriman was the deceitful being, who hid everything in mist and smoke which otherwise would have been visible to man as a transparent, spiritual splendour. To express it plainly, this being who caused the ruin of man, because he forced him into the fetters of matter, and also deceived him about its true form, was called Mephistopheles. This figure was called in Hebrew, Mephiz, the spoiler, and Topel, the liar. This being passed over into the West in the Middle Ages in the form of Mephistopheles. In the books on Faust, we see as opposed to Faust this Power, also called the 'old serpent.'

Goethe learnt to know this Mephistopheles. The later traditions of Faust no longer distinguished properly between the forms of Lucifer and of Mephistopheles. In the age following the sixteenth century there was no longer a clear idea of these forms. Men no longer knew how to distinguish between Lucifer and Ahriman, and they united them in the form of the Devil or Satan; and because nothing was known of the spiritual world, no particular difference was made. But to Goethe, all that he received through the outer senses, and through the human understanding, with its physical instrument the brain, by which he gained perception of the outer world, appeared to him as Mephistopheles. The man appealing to these qualities of the ordinary understanding, was the same to him as one who through the ego strove to enter the spiritual world. So that for Goethe — as also for Merck or Herder — all that appealed merely to the understanding is represented in a wonderful way in the figure of Mephistopheles, who does not believe in a world of the good, or consider it significant or important. In Goethe himself was this second ego, which could be brought to a state of doubt concerning the spiritual world, and sometimes he felt in himself the discord caused by what we may call the Mephistophelian power. He felt himself placed in conflict between this evil power raging in his soul and the truly honourable striving of his soul for the heights. Goethe felt both these forces in his soul. But in what position to place himself with regard to the spiritual world Goethe at that time did not know. He was a long way from that experience which we find in the second part of 'Faust' in such a magnificent way. In the scene 'The way to the Mothers' we see the man striving inwardly for the spiritual heights but detained by a deceptive picture and captivated by reason of what Mephistopheles has placed before him through trickery. Mephistopheles represents all that can be found in outer physical science which is bound up with the understanding. He stands there with the keys — this knowledge is certainly good, for it leads to the door of the spiritual world. — But within Mephistopheles cannot go. Therefore he describes that into which Faust must go as a 'nothing,' And we hear from the words of Mephistopheles, spoken in a classic, grandiose manner, what is thrown by the materialistic minds of men in the face of those who are striving to discover the foundations of life out of spiritual science. He says: 'Thou art a dreamer and a fantastic. We are not going to be taken in by what such dreamers tell us about the spiritual foundations of things. We care nothing for that!' And the spiritual enquirer can reply as did Faust to Mephistopheles, 'In thy nothing I hope to find the all!'

But Goethe was experiencing that boisterous youth out of which he had just brought Faust and was far from possessing at that time such clarity of soul. He did not know then how to bring Mephistopheles into touch with Faust, for Mephistopheles is there in the original Faust as Goethe had experienced him as the power that drags man down, and represented him as a mocker in the 'student scene.' Only later did Goethe find the means for Mephistopheles by degrees to approach Faust through his changing forms.

We find next that Faust is drawn by Mephistopheles and falls into the abyss of sensuality in the scene in 'Auerbach's wine cellar' and the road begins down which Faust is led to evil. The end of the 'prison scene' is not given in the fragment which appeared in 1790; Goethe kept it back, but this terribly affecting scene was in the first fragment. It was in what we may call the tragedy of Gretchen that Goethe placed that side of his life which can be expressed by the words 'I am guilty.' What Goethe expresses in the first part of 'Faust' is the word 'Personality.'

It was in that Goethe, who travelled to Italy, that a part of the seed sown in his soul first began to develop. He found a wonderful road during his Italian journey; it can be followed step by step. He said when he wrote at last to his friends at Weimar, 'So much is certain, the old artists had quite as great a knowledge of nature and just as good an idea of that which we see and the manner in which it should be seen, as Homer had. Unfortunately the number of works of art of the first order is much too small. But anyone able to see them, need wish for nothing further than the right to recognize them and then go in peace. These great works of art were produced according to true and natural laws; the arbitrary, the fanciful collapses; here is necessity; here is God!' — 'I have an idea that the creators of these works of art acted according to those laws which guide nature, and on whose tracks I am.' He is no longer the same Goethe who was full of an abstract longing, but is filled with self-denial and resignation, ready to investigate existence step by step along the road by which he hopes to discover the problems of life revealed.

It is not surprising if nothing is discovered of the great spiritual aim of mankind, if it is only sought in an abstract way, but which if sought for in the right way leads directly to the highest problems of life. Those who have no inclination to compare one plant with another, one animal with another, one bone with another, or to consider life, step by step, as they go through the world in order to find the spirit in each single being, in such people an abstract longing will lead to nothing.

Let us consider Goethe when during his Italian journey, he gradually arrived at the discovery of the primeval plant, he collected stones, prepared himself diligently to take up the work of research, and did not seek to know immediately 'how one thing strives to enter another' but said to himself: 'If you would gain a premonition' of 'how one thing works and lives in another' as heavenly powers rise and fall, offering each the 'golden urn,' examine the vertebrae of the spinal column and the way in which one bone is connected with the next; and how one faculty helps another. Seek in the smallest thing the picture of the greatest.

Goethe became a very diligent student during his travels in Italy, examining everything. He formed the opinion that if an artist acted 'according to the laws which are followed by nature herself' and understood by the Greeks, the divine will be present in his works even as it is in the works of creation. For Goethe, art is a 'manifestation of the secret laws of nature.' The creations of the artists are works of nature on a higher stage of perfection. Art is man's continuation and conclusion of nature. 'For since man is the head of nature so he regards himself as a complete nature, but also as one which can call forth a further rise. He strives for this through the acquisition of all accomplishments and virtues which call for choice, order, harmony, and meaning, and at last rises to the production of the work of art.'

We can say that during the Italian journey everything that came before Goethe took on definite forms and through inner soul experiences appeared clearly before him. So once again he took up 'Faust,' and we perceive how he endeavoured to bring the separate parts into union. But we also perceive how he interested himself in an objective manner in what Faust could become for the people of the North. In Italy he became particularly conscious of the great difference between people who had been brought up amid classical surroundings and those who had not. He found it strange that so little should be heard in Rome of ghost stories such as were common in the North. In the Villa Borghese he wrote at this time the 'Witches Kitchen' scene, as one who had lost touch with all such things, but also as one who recalled to memory the spirit of the earth. When he had previously written about the earth spirit, he represented it in such a way that Faust turned away from it, as from a 'hideous worm.' But the fact of turning away from it, even without understanding why, remains in the soul and works on further, as it did in Goethe. But those who become impatient and refuse to wait until after long years the seed grows, are

unable to see the way clearly. And when in Italy Goethe knew that a turning away from the terrible countenance would have its effect upon his soul, and now these words arise:

*'Sublime Spirit, thou gavest me, gavest me all
For which I begged. It was not without reason
That thou didst turn thy face in fire to me
And for a kingdom gavest me the glorious nature
With strength to feel it and to enjoy it. Not
A coldly astonished gaze didst thou grant to me
But didst permit me to look into her profound bosom
As into that of a friend.
Past me didst thou lead the ranks of the living
And didst teach me to know, in the quiet bushes,
In air, and in water, my brother.
And when the storm roared and rattled in the woods
And there fell the neighbouring branches of the giant fir
Squashing the undergrowth and in their fall
Sounding like thunder in the hollow of the hills,
Thou didst lead me to a safe Grotto, where
Thou didst show me myself and opened my heart
To deep and secret wonders.'*

Before Goethe, there stands the possibility of the human soul, through its own development expanding to a spiritual universe. Through a patient sacrificial resigned search, the fruits stand before his soul which as germs were planted when he came into touch with the earth spirit. We can see through this monologue in 'Wald und Höhle' (wood and grotto) what a forward jerk this was towards the ripening of the fruits in his soul, for it shows us that the seed already sown was not sown in vain. And as a warning to have patience, to wait until such seeds had ripened in his soul, that fragment of 'Faust' meets us which appeared with this setting in 1790. And now we see how Goethe finds the way step by step after being led to his 'safe grotto where the secret deep wonders of his own heart were opened to him,' he obtains that comprehensive survey which bids him no longer abide with his own sorrow, but teaches him to rise above his sorrow, to send his foreseeing spirit out into the Macrocosmos, watch the fighting of the good and evil spirits and see men on their battle ground. And in 'Faust' in 1808 he sent out beforehand the 'Prologue in Heaven:'

*Raphael:
'The sun-orb sings, in emulation,
'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:
His path predestined through Creation
He ends with step of thunder-sound.'*

We next see how the macrocosmic Might's oppose the forces of the great world. We see too from out the experiences of Goethe's soul, what a remarkable light falls on the two dragons with which at one time in his youth he came in touch.

'Faust' is such a universal poem because it contains so many warnings. It also gives us that golden saying: 'Wait in confidence for the development of thy inner forces, even if that means waiting a very long time!' These words also sound as a warning which stand as an attribute before Faust, when Goethe looks back to those 'fluctuating figures which in early days had once shown a troubled countenance' but which now are flooded with light. Now he had waited so long that the friends who had taken such a vivid interest in Faust as he had appeared to them in the first form, had died, and those who had not died were very far away. Goethe had been obliged to wait for the development of the seed already sown in him.

Now these striking words meet us:

*'My sorrow speaks to an unknown crowd,
Their applause e'en makes my heart feel heavy,
And those who once delighted in my song
If they still live, in other lands are scattered.'*

No longer did it matter to those who in youth had felt with him. He had had to wait, as the last lines of this dedication so beautifully express it — 'What was once a reality to me, has gone into the unreal: but what has remained for me and appears to outer vision as unreal, that to me is now true, and it is only now that I can give it as truth.' So we see how this poem, even if only looked at in such an external manner as we have today, leads us into the depths of the human soul.

'Faust' was begun in a desultory manner, some parts being pushed in between others, and therefore Goethe was unable to show in a continuous way what he had experienced in his soul. But something else led to the fact that Goethe expressed his deepest experiences in 'Faust.'

The 'Helena scene' also belongs to the first part of 'Faust' written by Goethe. But we find it was not included even in the 'Faust' of 1808. Why not? Because the manner in which Goethe had finished 'Faust' at that time would not allow it. What Goethe wished to say through the Helena scene was the expression of such a deep premonition of the deepest riddle of existence, that the first part was not sufficiently prepared to allow of this. Only when Goethe had reached an advanced age, was he able to give a true form to what really was the inner work of his life.

We see how his mind had expanded so that he was able to grasp the worlds of the macrocosm, as expressed in the 'Prologue in Heaven.' We shall also see the way in which Goethe represents the stages of the soul's experience, leading men from the first stage up to that of imaginative vision, where the soul penetrating ever deeper and deeper, bursts at last the doors of the spiritual world, which Mephistopheles would close. Goethe also represents these inner experiences. For he places in the second part of 'Faust' the experiences of a soul through secret scientific study, and we see here one of the deepest riddles of existence, which if recognized, would be found to be an announcement of Western spiritual science given in imposing language. One is tempted to place such a poem as the 'Bhagavad Gita' and the second part of 'Faust' side by side. For great and powerful wisdom speaks out of such Eastern writings. It seems as if the gods themselves desired in them to speak with men to express the wisdom out of which the world was formed. Indeed it is so.

Now let us look at the second part of 'Faust.' Here we see a striving human soul which has raised itself to spiritual vision from outer physical perception; we see how it has worked its way up to true clairvoyance when Faust enters the spiritual world and finds the spiritual choir around him ...

*'Hearken! Hark! — The Hours careering
Sounding loud to spirit-hearing.
See the new-born day appearing!
Rocky portals jarring shatter,
PhSbus' wheels in rolling clatter,
With a crash the Light draws near!*

*Peeling rays and trumpet-blazes —
Eye is blinded, ear amazes:
The Unheard can no one hear!*

Faust II, Act I.

to that passage where Faust is outwardly dazzled, so that the outer world is lost to his perception and he says to himself: 'Only within shines clear light! ...' up to that passage in which the soul works itself up to the spheres of world existence, where the spiritual worlds are to be seen in all their purity, and the riddle of the world discloses itself to the soul. This is a way which we must designate as an esoteric one.

The way in which we can penetrate from the outer to the inner life of Goethe's world enigma, we shall see to-morrow, and we shall also see from out of what depths Goethe spoke the word which at last gave him the certainty he needed with reference to all the longings, all the sorrows, pains and strivings for knowledge in his life.

*'Whoever zealously strives
We can redeem him;
And if love from above
Feels an interest in him,
The blest choir will be there
With a friendly greeting.'*

We shall consider to-morrow how Goethe solved this riddle of existence, and how that which lives in the soul can rise up to its true home. It will give us the answer to what Goethe placed as the riddle of his existence and about which he gives us such a hopeful answer at the end of the second part of 'Faust:'

*'For the spiritual world,
That noble member,
Is saved from evil.
Whoever strives zealously*

We can redeem him! ...'

This tells us Faust can be saved and those spirits will not conquer who by bringing men into the material bring them also to destruction.



4 The Riddle in Faust: Esoteric

12 March 1909, Berlin

One idea Goethe had for his 'Faust' was that at the end of Part II, Act 3, Mephistopheles, who in this Act had worn the mask of Phorkyas, should step in front of the curtain, take off the mask, descend from the Kothurni and deliver a kind of Epilogue. The idea, as the now meaningless stage instruction tells us, was that this Epilogue was to indicate the manner in which the final figure of Faust was to be taken. The words Mephistopheles was to speak as Commentator are not in 'Faust,' but they have been preserved on a single sheet among Goethe's literary remains. Through the mouth of Mephistopheles Goethe seeks to tell the public in a not unhumorous way what attitude to adopt towards his Faust. These words are worthy of notice, and in a certain respect to-day's study is to be conducted in their spirit. They refer to Euphorion who was born in some spirit fashion, and jumps and hops about immediately after his birth and utters 'a tender word.' In *this* way these words refer to him:

*'Enough, ye see him, though it is much worse
Than on the British stage, where a small child
Grows step by step to take heroic shape.
Here it is madder still: for, scarce conceived,
He's also born:
He leaps and dances, speaks a tender word.
If many criticize,
There are who think this is not to be taken
So straight and crudely, that there's more behind.
One scents the Mysteries, perhaps withal
Mystifications, Indian and may be
Egyptian; for the man is right who knows
How to squeeze all together, brew it well
And twist and turn in etymology.*

*We say it also, and the true disciple
Of the newer symbolism will agree.'*

Thus all such explanations as rest on a basis of old traditions are to be straightway excluded. On the contrary, an explanation is demanded drawn from the depths of spirit-life. Therefore also Mephistopheles says: 'We say it also, and the true disciple of the newer symbolism will agree.' If you read carefully Part II of 'Faust,' you will know that Goethe is rich in word-construction in this poem, and that we must not therefore cavil at what appears to be ungrammatical. Here in this sentence is clearly expressed that the man who understands Faust rightly in Goethe's sense, also sees that deeper things lie behind. But everything that rests on study or might lead to a merely symbolic explanation is discouraged. The demand is that the explanation of Faust is to depend on the faithful discipleship which is aware of the spiritual experience which we may call 'experience in the sense of the new Spiritual Science.' 'The true disciple of the newer symbolism' is the commentator of Faust in Goethe's sense. Thus it is to be done by drawing direct from spirit-life; and Goethe no doubt here betrays that he has put something into it which made it possible for him to get away from old symbols and to coin new and independent symbols out of direct spirit-life. If we want to compare the presentation of the spiritual world in the two parts of 'Faust,' we might say that Part I presents to a large extent the fruits of knowledge — the outer influences on one who has dim ideas of the spiritual world, and who tries to enter it through reading all kinds of things and conducting all kinds of experiments. Part I contains this studied view of the supernatural world.

Part II contains experience, living experience, and if you understand rightly, you know that it can derive only from a personality which has learnt to know the reality of the spiritual, supernatural worlds behind the physical world. Truly, Goethe was consistent in his presentation, although some things in Part II are so dissimilar from Part I. What he had learnt in Part I, he experienced in Part II, he has seen it. He was in the spiritual, supernatural world: he indicates this, too, clearly enough, where in Part I he makes Faust say:

*'What says the Sage, now first I recognize:
"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!"'*

Scene I, p. 15.

Goethe can point — from personal knowledge — to what he sees who 'bathes his breast in morning-red,' in order to await the rising of the spiritual sun. We find in the whole of Part I — no doubt you realize it from yesterday's discourse — an energetic upward-striving of Faust the student, to this dawn, but we also find clearly indicated that the path is nowhere traversed in a satisfactory way. Now how does Part II begin? Is the advice of the wise man, 'to bathe the breast in morning-red,' carried out in one respect?

We find Faust 'bedded on flowery turf, fatigued, restless, endeavouring to sleep,' surrounded by spiritual beings. We find him withdrawn from all physical vision, veiled in sleep. Beings from the spiritual world are busy with his spirit, which is withdrawn from the physical world. Marvellously and forcefully we are told what direction Faust's soul takes in order to grow into the spiritual world. Then we are shown how his soul really does grow into that world which is described as the spiritual world in the 'Prologue in Heaven,' in Part I. Goethe says from deep experience what was always told the pupil in the School of Pythagoras, that he who enters the spiritual world is met by the secret music of the universe:

*'The sun-orb sings, in emulation,
'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:
His path predestined through Creation
He ends with step of thunder-sound.'*

This must be the music from the worlds of the spiritual life, if they are to be depicted as they are. What is said here of the 'music of the spheres' is not a poetic image, nor a metaphor, but a truth, and Goethe remains consistent to it, in that Faust, withdrawn from the physical world, now proceeds to grow, like an initiate, into that world from which this music comes. Therefore, in the scene where at the beginning of Part II Faust is withdrawn into the spiritual world, it is written again:

*'Hearken! Hark! — The Hours careering
Sounding loud to spirit-hearing.
See the new-born day appearing!
Rocky portals jarring shatter,
PhSbus' wheels in rolling clatter,*

*With a crash the Light draws near!
Peeling rays and trumpet-blazes —
Eye is blinded, ear amazes:
The Unheard can no one hear!*

Faust II, Act I.

Would that those people who think that they can understand a poem only if they can say 'Such things must be taken as the poet's images, created by right of poetic licence' — would that they would cease to call these things realistic. The physical sun makes no sound! It is the spiritual sun behind the physical which sounds in the ears of him who is entering the spiritual life. They are spiritual, not physical sounds. In this passage, again, we hear the sounds of thousands of years harmonizing. Unconsciously he who can follow the course of the human spirit through thousands of years will be reminded in this passage of some great words spoken thousands of years ago; words spoken by one who through his initiation knew that what appears to us as the physical sun is the expression of the sun-spirit and the sun-soul, as the physical human body is the expression of the human spirit and the human soul. He looked up to the spiritual sun and called it 'Ahura Mazdao,' 'The great sun-aura.' We are reminded of Zarathustra, who, looking thus at the sun, and feeling the world full of spirit, spoke the great and powerful words:

'I want to speak! Listen to me, all ye who from far or near, desire to listen: Mark well, for He will be revealed. No more shall the False Teacher destroy the world — he who has professed evil faiths with his tongue. I shall speak of what is the highest in the world, what He, the Great, Ahura Mazdao, has taught me. Whosoever will not hear His Words, as I speak them, will suffer misery when the Earth-Cycle is fulfilled!'

Before the spiritual sun rises in the soul, the learner must bathe in the dawn which precedes it. Hence the words of the Wise Man: 'Disciple, up! untiring hasten to bathe thy breast in morning-red!' Does Faust, the disciple, do this?

After the spiritual beings which surrounded him had been busy with him while his soul was for a time withdrawn from his body, he awakes as a changed man. The soul has entered the body, so that he has a dim idea, or he bathes in the morning-red, of the rising sun of the spirit:

*'Life's pulses now with fresher force awoken
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 see the highest life for which I'm panting. —
The world unfolded lies in twilight glimmer,
A thousand voices in the grove are chanting;
Vale in, vale out, the misty streaks grow dimmer;
The deeps with heavenly light are penetrated;
The boughs, refreshed, lift up their leafy shimmer
From gulfs of air where sleepily they waited;
Colour on colour from the background cleareth,
Where flower and leaf with trembling pearls are freighted,
And all around a Paradise appeareth.'*

Faust II, Act I.

Faust now feels also that he has awakened in that world, into which he has been translated during his unconsciousness, and he bathes his earthly breast in the morning-red. But it is only the beginning of the journey. He feels that he is at the gate of initiation, and thereupon he cannot yet bear the direct vision of the spiritual sun:

*'But if there burst from those eternal spaces
A flood of flame, we stand confounded ever;
For Life's pure torch we sought the shining traces,
And seas of fire — and what a fire! — surprise us.'*

Wherefore he sees at first the world of the spiritual — but still, as we shall see in a moment, as a symbol.

*'Behind me, therefore, let the sun be glowing!
The cataract, between the crags deep-riven,
I thus behold with rapture ever-growing.'*

*From plunge to plunge in thousand streams't is given,
And yet a thousand, to the valleys shaded
While foam and spray in air are whirled and driven.
Yet how superb, across the tumult braided,
The painted rainbow's changeful life is bending,
Now clearly drawn, dissolving now and faded,
And evermore the showers of dew descending!
Of human striving there's no symbol fuller:
Consider, and 't is easy comprehending —
Life is not light, but the refracted colour.'*

Faust II, Act I.

This is Faust bathing his earthly breast in the morning-red, in order to prepare himself to look straight at the spiritual sun, which rises at initiation.

Now Faust is to go into the great world with the gifts he has received as one approaching illumination. It might be thought remarkable that Faust is now transplanted to the Imperial Court, when he is in the midst of all kinds of masques and revels. All the same, these masques and pranks contain deep truths and are everywhere significant. It is not possible to enter upon this significance to-day. It will be in any case the task of this study to bring out only a few moments from the whole content of Part II of 'Faust' Many lectures would have to be given, if we wanted to throw light on everything. We shall say only this about the general idea of these Masque scenes: For a man who surveys human life with an enlightened eye, certain words will have a different meaning from what they have in ordinary external life. Such a man, steeping himself in the whole great course of human evolution, knows that such words as 'Folk spirit' (*Volksggeist*), 'Time-spirit' (*Zeitgeist*), are not mere abstractions. He sees in the spiritual world the true and real beings corresponding to what one ordinarily calls abstractly 'Folk spirit and Time-spirit.' (See Cycle XIII, *Mission of the Folk-Souls*, by R. Steiner.) Thus, since he has the vision, it is made clear to Faust as he enters the great world where decisions affecting the world are made from a Court, that in all these happenings there are supernatural powers at work. Outside in the physical world one can observe only individual people and the laws they have. In the spiritual world there are beings behind all that. Whereas people are under the impression that what they do is prompted by their own souls, and that they make their own resolutions,

human acts and human thoughts are really pervaded and permeated by beings from the supernatural world — national spirits, time-spirits, and so on. People think they are free to make resolves, to think and to form ideas, but they are guided by spiritual beings behind the physical world. What men call their understanding, by which they believe they can control the course of time, is the expression of spiritual beings behind. Thus, the whole Masque, which is to have some meaning, becomes for Faust the expression of the fact that one can realize how in the course of world-events a part is played by powers originating in those beings which Faust met already in Part I, originating, in short, in Mephistopheles. Man is surrounded by such spiritual beings, towering above him. Thus Mephistopheles appears at the turn of the modern age as that being which prompts the human intellect to the discovery of paper money. And Goethe presents the whole affair with a certain humour: how the same spirit, the same intellect which in man is bound to the physical instrument of the brain, when inspired by the related spirit which lets nothing count but the physical, gives rise to such phenomena as can control the world — phenomena however which have an importance only for the physical world. In this way the deeper sense of development is indicated precisely in this Masque and mummery. But we are soon led out of the world which lies before us, where we are shown the part played by supernatural powers, and into the really spiritual world.

After it has been made rich, the Court wishes to be amused by the presentation of figures from ancient history. Paris and Helena are to be conjured up from the past. Mephistopheles, who belongs to those powers of the spiritual world which inspired the discovery of paper money, cannot penetrate to the worlds which give rise to the whole deeper development of men. Faust carries in him the soul and spirit which can penetrate these spiritual worlds. For he is the disciple who has bathed the earthly breast in the morning-red, and we are shown how Faust has already experienced something which can be looked upon as the first stage of clairvoyance — the stage completed by the clairvoyant when he has put his soul through the appropriate exercises. There are certain exercises which the student has to perform, in meditation, concentration, and so on, which are set him in occult-scientific symbols, in which he steeps himself, whereby the soul, withdrawing from the physical and etheric body, is transfigured in the night, as it at first becomes clairvoyant in the spiritual world. What is it that the student experiences here, when he has received the effect of those exercises?

The first stage of clairvoyance is something which can bring people to a condition of great confusion. We shall see best why this is if we look at what are sometimes called the 'dangers of initiation.'

Living in the physical world of the senses, one sees the objects round one in sharp contours, outlined in space, and the human soul makes halt at or attaches itself to these firm outlines, which one finds everywhere, filling the soul when it gives itself to sense-phenomena. Now just imagine for a moment all these objects round you becoming misty, losing their contours, merging into each other, becoming like cloud-pictures. It is something like this in the world into which the clairvoyant enters after the first exercises have taken effect. For he arrives at what is behind the whole sense-world, what lies behind all matter, what gives rise to the sense-world. He arrives at the stage where the spiritual world first approaches him. If you think how, in the mountains, crystals form themselves out of their mother-substances into their shapes and lines, so is it, roughly, when the clairvoyant human being comes into the spiritual world. At first it all appears confusing if the student is not sufficiently prepared. But the figures of the physical world grow out of this chaotic world, like the crystal shapes out of their mother-substance. At first the spiritual world is experienced like the mother-substances of the physical world. Into this realm man enters by the gates of death. The images, indeed, will take on other, fixed shapes, when the clairvoyant is further developed, shapes which are interwoven with those outlines which exist in the spiritual world, and which resound with what we have called in the spiritual sense, the music of the spheres. The clairvoyant experiences this after a time, but at first it is all confusing. Still, into this realm enters man.

Now if the images of Helena and Paris are to be brought up, it must be from this world. Faust alone, who has bathed the earthly breast in the morning-red, and found the entrance to the spiritual world, can step into this world, Mephistopheles cannot. He can achieve only what the world of reason can achieve. He can go as far as the key that opens the spiritual realm. But Faust has the confidence and certainty that he will find there what he seeks: the everlasting, the permanent residue when the physical form of man is dissolved at death into its elements.

Now it is wonderful how we are told the way in which Faust is to descend into the spiritual realm. The introduction already shows us that the man who depicts it is well acquainted with the facts — as well as with the perceptions and feeling which come over anyone who really knows these

things and does not merely play at them. It all stood in grand manner before Goethe's soul — all that exists of this world of feeling when the seed for initiation, described yesterday, was opened by a particular event.

He read a passage in Plutarch, where is described how the city of Engyium seeks an alliance with Carthage. Nicias, the friend of the Romans, is to be arrested. But he poses as a man possessed. The pro-Carthaginians want to seize him, but they hear these words from his mouth: 'The Mothers, the Mothers press hard on me!' That was a cry which in old times one heard only from a man who was in a condition of clairvoyance and withdrawn from the physical world. Nicias could be regarded either as a fool, as one possessed, or as a clairvoyant. But how could this be known? Because he said what those who had some knowledge of the spiritual world recognized. At the utterance of: 'It is the Mothers who press hard on me!' the citizens realize that he is not possessed, but inspired; that he can say something as a real witness which can be learnt in the spiritual world — and so he remains unmolested.

On reading this scene, there is released in Goethe's soul something which had been sown as the kernel of initiation already during his Frankfort period. He knew what it meant to penetrate into the spiritual world. Hence also the words put into the mouth of Faust, when Mephistopheles speaks of the 'Mothers,' Faust shudders. He knows what it means — that lie touches on a holy but forbidden kingdom, forbidden, that is, for him who is not sufficiently prepared. Mephistopheles, indeed knows also of this realm, that he may not enter it unprepared. Hence the words: 'Unwilling I reveal a loftier mystery.' Still, Faust must descend into this kingdom in order to bring to pass what has to be brought to pass — into this kingdom where one sees what is otherwise firm and solid in transfigurations of eternal being. Here the spiritual sense catches sight behind the physical forms of the sense-world of what penetrates into this sense-world to maintain in it its sharp outlines. And then Mephistopheles says, describing this realm as it appears to all who step into it:

*'Escape from the Created
To shapeless forms in liberated spaces!
Enjoy what long ere this was dissipated!
There whirls the press like clouds on clouds unfolding.'*

One cannot depict more vividly a real experience of a man truly initiated. The things 'long ere this dissipated' will be found in this world, when it is presented thus. 'To shapeless forms of liberated spheres,' i.e., into that realm where the forms of the sense-world are no more, where they do not exist, which is 'liberated' from them — there where 'what long ere this was dissipated' does exist — into this realm Faust is to betake himself. And when one reads 'There whirls the press, like clouds on clouds unfolding,' one recognizes again something which is characteristic in the highest degree. Let us think of the entry into the supernatural world as a gate. Before one enters, the soul has to be prepared by means of worthy symbols. One of these is taken from the appearance of the rising sun, and completes the image of bathing the earthly breast in the morning-red: the sun making a particular triangle round itself. The soul goes through this symbol and experiences its after-effects when it has passed through the gate, when it is within, in the spiritual world. Hence these effects: 'There whirls the press, like clouds on clouds unfolding.' Every word would be a living proof of what this scene is meant to be: Faust's penetration to the first stages of the supernatural world, which you find called the 'imaginative world.' When Goethe presented this, he was not obliged to compound a picture of the spiritual world from old Indian or Egyptian descriptions; he was able to put down quite realistically what he himself had experienced; and this he did.

Now Faust brings up the 'glowing tripod,' round which the Mothers sit, the sources of existence in the spiritual world. With its help Faust is able to conjure up Paris and Helena before men, and to present pictures from the spiritual world. It would lead too far to explain in detail the important symbol of the glowing tripod. We are concerned to show how a kind of initiation is really depicted in Part II of 'Faust.' But we see how carefully and correctly Goethe proceeds by the fact that he shows us the way into the spiritual world which he only who is worthy can tread slowly and with resignation. He shows us that Faust is not even yet worthy enough. Only he is worthy to enter the spiritual world who has put off everything that is connected with narrow personality so that no wishes or desires, arising from it, any longer exist. This is apparently to say little, but in truth it is saying a great deal. For usually between what is sought and what is to be achieved by the cancellation of all personal wishes and desires, there lies not only one human life, but many. Goethe shows with the certainty of knowledge that Faust is not yet worthy. Desire awakes in him; he wants to embrace Helena from a personal desire. Whereupon the whole thing collapses — it vanishes. He has committed a sin against the spiritual world.

He cannot hold her. He must penetrate further into the spiritual world. And so we see him in the course of Part II going further on his way. We see him after being 'paralysed by Helena' again in another state of consciousness, withdrawn from the physical body and fallen into sleep; and how something happens around him which as it were clambers from the sense-world into the supersense-world. What this is shows us nothing other than that Faust, once again withdrawn from the physical world, experiences something which can only with full consciousness be experienced in the supersense-world. What he has now to go through is the complete growth of man. He must go through those mighty events which take place behind the scenes of the stage of the physical world, so that he really can behold what he wants to behold. Helena must be brought back again into the physical world, she must be reincarnated into a new body. When he brings back the merely imaginative image from the spiritual world the whole thing breaks down. He must go deeper. We see him now overcoming a second stage. In this state in which he is put we now see how the consciousness gradually lives upward from the sense-world into the supersense-world. This is done in a poetically masterly way. It is not a case of marvelling at the reality of it, for that is explained simply by the fact that Goethe depicts Part II of 'Faust' from his own experience. But the way is masterly in which Goethe represents the secret of Helena's becoming mortal, it is also poetic.

Whoever is acquainted with the elementary truths of Spiritual Science, knows that man, in assuming life on our earth, brings with him an eternal, spiritual part from quite other realms, that this spiritual part is combined below with the physical hereditary line, taken from the physical-sense-world and bequeathed finally by father and mother. On the whole — taking the various parts of man altogether without entering more precisely upon human nature — we may say that in man are combined something eternal and something earthly. The eternal part, going on from life to life, which descends from the spiritual world to be embodied in a physical form — this we call 'spirit.' And in order that this spirit can combine with physical matter, there must be an intermediate part, and this in terms of Spiritual Science is the soul. Thus spirit, soul and body are combined in the formation of a human being.

Now Faust with his increased consciousness is to experience how these parts of human nature combine. The spirit descends from spiritual spheres, gradually surrounds itself with the soul which is derived from the psychic world, and then draws the physical covering round itself in accordance with the laws of the physical world. If one knows the principle which attaches

itself as 'soul' around the spirit, and often called by us the 'astral body,' if one knows what is between spirit and body, one has that intermediate member, which as it were binds together spirit and body.

The spirit Faust finds in the realm of the Mothers. He knows already where to look for it, whence it comes, when it betakes itself into a new embodiment. But he has yet to learn how the tie is formed, when the spirit comes into the physical world. And now we are shown in that remarkable scene, how, starting from the sense-world and touching the boundary of the supersense-world, the 'Homunculus' is produced in Wagner's laboratory. Mephistopheles himself has a hand in it, and we are told in spirited words that only the conditions of his creation are provided by Wagner. Thus this remarkable figure, the Homunculus comes into being, assisted as it were by the spiritual world. Much thought has been spent on this Homunculus. But thinking and speculating on such things lead nowhere. The problem who he is can be solved only by real creation out of Spiritual Science. To those who spoke of him in the Middle Ages he was no other than a definite form of the astral body.

This scene is not to be pictured in the sphere of sense — but in such a way that it must be thought of as quite removed into the spiritual world. You must follow all the events in Faust's condition of consciousness. The way in which the Homunculus is described in the subsequent scenes shows him to be really the representative of the astral body.

*'He has no lack of qualities ideal
But far too much of palpable and real.'*

That is the characteristic of the astral body, and he says of himself:

'Since I exist, then I must active be.'

an astral figure, which cannot stay still, compelled to live in continuous activity. He must be taken away to those spheres, where he can actually combine spirit and body.

And now we see the creation of man, which Faust experiences, represented to us in the 'Classical Walpurgis-Night.' There we are shown the sum of all the powers and beings which are active behind the physical-sense-world, and spirits from the physical world are continually being interspersed, which have trained their souls so far that they have grown together with the spiritual world, and that they are at the same time conscious in the spiritual world. The two great philosophers Anaxagoras and Thales are figures of this kind. The Homunculus wishes to find out from them how one can come to be, how one can proceed to a physical form, when one is spiritual. All the figures which we see in this 'Classical Walpurgis-Night' are there to assist — figures of the realization of the astral body which is ready to enter the material, physical world. If one could follow it all exactly, every detail would be a proof of its meaning. The Homunculus seeks information from Proteus and Nereus as to how he can enter the physical world. He is shown how he can wrap himself in the elements of matter, and how the spiritual qualities are in him — viz., how the soul gradually betakes itself into the physical-sense elements — through that which has played its part in the realms of nature kingdoms. We are shown how the soul has to traverse again the states of the mineral, the plant and the animal realms, in order to rise to human shape:

'On the broad ocean's breast must thou begin!'

that is, in the mineral realm; then you must go through the plant realm. Goethe, indeed, invents an expression for it, which does not otherwise exist. He makes the Homunculus say: 'Es grunelt so:' (*Dictionary: grows green.* – Ed.)

*'Here breathes and blows a tender air;
And I delight me in the fragrance rare.'*

It is pointed out to him what road he has to take till a physical body is formed by degrees round him. Finally comes the moment of love. Eros will complete the whole. Thales gives the advice:

*'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.'*

Then, when the Homunculus has entered upon the physical world, he loses his qualities, the ego becomes his master!

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

So says Proteus — i.e., at an end with the astral body which has not yet penetrated into the human realm.

Goethe's whole theory of nature, with its relationship between all life, and its metamorphotic development from the incomplete to the complete appears here in the picture. The spirit can at first be only like a seed in the world. It must pour itself into matter, into the elements, and dive below in them, in order to assume from them a higher form. The Homunculus is shattered on Galatea's shell-chariot. He dissolves into the elements. It is a marvellous presentation of the moment when the astral body has enwrapped itself in a body of physical matter — and can now live as man.

These are experiences Faust goes through while he is in another state of consciousness, a condition outside the body. He is becoming gradually ready to behold the secrets lying behind physical-material existence. And now he is able to behold the spirit of Helena, from the realm of things 'long ere this dissipated' appearing in bodily shape before him. We have in Act 3 of Part II the re-embodiment of Helena. Goethe represents the idea of re-incarnation cryptically — as he had to in his day; how spirit, soul and body unite from the three realms, to form a human being — and before us stands the re-incarnated Helena.

We must of course remember that, since he is a poet, Goethe presents in pictorial form the experience of the clairvoyant consciousness. Wherefore we must not rush in with heavy-fisted criticism and ask: 'Is Helena now really re-incarnated?' We must keep in mind that a poet is speaking of what he has himself experienced in spiritual worlds.

In this way Faust, after having conquered a new stage of life, is able to experience harmony with what is 'long ere this dissipated,' the union with Helena. We see now how a being springs from the union of the human soul with the spiritual when the soul has raised itself up into higher worlds; a child of the spirit, subject not to the laws of the sense-world, but to the laws of the spiritual world: Euphorion. We shall understand what springs from the union of the raised spirit with the sense-world if we remember the previously-quoted passage from the proposed Epilogue of Mephistopheles-Phorkyas at the end of Act III, and if we realize that Goethe has in 'Euphorion' put in traits which belong to Byron, whom he much honoured. In doing so he may, after all, apply the laws of the spiritual world to it, since he is concerned with events in the spiritual world. And so Euphorion, though scarce conceived, may be already born and at once jump about and stir himself and say spirited things. Once more we see how strictly and conscientiously Goethe takes the entry into the spiritual world. In his aspiration for supernatural worlds, Faust is far beyond his present experiences. But even so he is not free from those powers from which he must liberate himself, if his soul is to unite completely with the spiritual world. He is not free from what Mephistopheles mixes into these spiritual experiences. Faust is what one calls a mystic, who — in the Helena-Euphorion scene — lives and moves completely in the spiritual world. But because he has not yet scaled the necessary step which makes him capable of being absorbed entirely by the spiritual world, so, once more, what he can experience in it escapes him: viz., Helena and Euphorion. What he had brought by his experience from the spiritual world eludes him yet again. He has become capable of living in the spiritual world, of experiencing Euphorion, the child of the spirit, who springs from the marriage between the human soul and the world-spirit — but it escapes him again and vanishes. Now there sounds from the depths a remarkable call. He is now like a mystic, stumbling for a time, one who has had a glimpse into the spiritual world and knows what it is like, but could not remain, and sees himself suddenly cast out again into the material world: he feels his soul to be the mother of what was born from the spiritual world, but what he has born sinks again into the spiritual world, and it is as if it were to call out to the soul itself:

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

as if the human soul had to follow into the realm which has once more disappeared. Faust retains nothing more than Helena's robe and veil. The man who goes deeper into the meaning of such things, knows what Goethe meant with the 'robe and veil;' it is so exactly what remains when one has once peeped into the spiritual world and has then had to withdraw. There remains with one what is nothing else but the abstraction, the ideas, which stretch from epoch to epoch — nothing else but robe and veil of spiritual powers which endure from age to age.

So the mystic is again thrust out for a time and confined to his thoughts, like the intelligent historian, with everywhere robe and veil which carry him from age to age. These ideas are not unfruitful; for him who is limited to the sense-world, they are very much of a necessity. For him, who has already a feeling and an experience of the spiritual world, they contain another importance. They stand out dry and abstract for the man who in any case is an abstractionist, but the man who has once been touched by the spiritual world — even if he grasps only these abstract ideas — is carried by them through the world into quite another age, in which he can again experience something of the effect of the powers throughout the great world.

Faust is transplanted again into the world he once before experienced at the Court. He sees again how the beings, in whose deeds man is only embedded, play the chief part. He sees again how supernatural threads are spun, and how the same power which he knows as Mephistopheles helps to spin them. So his life passes once more from the sense-world into the super-sense — he learns how powers worm themselves into our sense-world which we see out there in the world of nature, how Mephistopheles leads, as it were, the spirits behind the forces of nature on to the battlefield: 'Hill-folk,' he calls them. The powers behind the material world are represented as if the hills themselves bring their people into the war. But here is a life that stands on a subordinate plane. This participation of a world that lies below the realm of man, though directed by spiritual forces, is here plainly depicted. There follows, grandly shown, the description of the part played by the historical forces, which are real forces for the spiritual spectator. Out of the old armouries and storerooms where lie the

old helmets, come those beings of whom the abstractionist would say they are 'historical ideas' — of whom, however, he who can look into it knows that they live in the spiritual world. And we see how Faust in his higher state of consciousness is led to the great powers in history, we see these powers of history arise and being led into the field. Faust's consciousness is to be raised still higher. The whole world must appear to him spiritualized — all the events we see around us, which the ordinary abstractionist describes only with his understanding, for being limited to a physical brain, he imagines he has done everything when he describes the externals. But all this is connected, and is guided and directed by supernatural beings and forces.

When man's life is carried in this way to spiritual heights, he discovers the whole might of that which is to drag him down again into the material world. He gets to know in a remarkable manner him whom he has not quite got to know before. So it is now with Faust. He stands now at an important point in his inner development: he has to complete the journey: Mephistopheles is involved in everything he has seen up to now. He can be free from Mephistopheles — from those spiritual forces which bind man to the sense-world, and try to prevent his liberation — only when he accosts Mephistopheles as the Tempter. There where the world with its realms, nature and history with its spirituality confront Faust, he experiences something in which the man who understands these things can without difficulty recognize from what depths Goethe spoke. The 'Tempter,' who would drag man down when he has risen a certain way into the spiritual world, comes to man and tries to give him false feelings and sensations concerning what he sees in the supernatural world. The approach of the Tempter to man is presented in the grand manner. He is the same who came to the Christ and promised him all the kingdoms of the world and their glories.

Something like this happens to the man who has entered into the spiritual world. He is promised by the Tempter the world with all its glories.

What does this mean? Nothing else than that he may not believe that anything of this world could still belong to his narrow egoism. That all personality with its egoistic wishes and desires must be thrust away, that the 'Tempter' must be overcome, Goethe points out through Mephistopheles in such a way that it may be a touchstone for us of what his meaning is:

*'Yet now, with sober season to address thee,
Did nothing on our outside shell impress thee?
From this exceeding height thou saw'st unfurled
The glory of the Kingdoms of the World.'*

(Matt. 4.)

One might say that Goethe points out with these words, more than clearly enough for those who refuse to understand, what he really intends, in order to represent also this important stage in the spiritual growth of man. Then Faust succeeds in so far overcoming the egoism of personal wish and desire, that he dedicates all his activity to that piece of land with which he has been enfeoffed. He does not desire possession of this land — he does not desire fame — nothing of all that — he wants only to devote himself to work for other people:

'Stand on free soil among a people free!'

We must take these words to mean that personal egoism gradually departs from the human soul. For no one who has not overcome this personal egoism, can really reach the last stage, which Goethe still wants to depict. So he shows Faust at the point where the garments of human personal egoism fall away like scales, where Faust gives himself absolutely to the spiritual, where in fact all the frippery of fame and external honours in the world are nothing more to him. But one thing Faust has not even yet overcome. And again we see from a spiritual point of view deep, deep into Goethe's heart, as he now describes what happens next.

Faust has become a selfless man up to a point. He has learnt what it means to say: 'The act is all, the glory is nothing.' He has learnt to say: 'I desire to be active. My activity must flow out into the world — I will have nothing as reward for this activity!' But in one small incident it is revealed that his egoism has not completely disappeared. On his wide territories there stands an old cottage on rising ground, in which lives an old couple, Philemon and Baucis. In all things Faust's egoism has disappeared, except with regard to this cottage. Here there is a last remnant of egoism which speaks in his soul. What he could do with this rising ground! He could

stand up there and survey at a glance the fruits of his labour — and rejoice at what he had accomplished! That is a last bit of egoism, the enjoyment in a physical survey. Gratification in a commanding material view, that remains to him still. He must get beyond. Nothing of desire and comfort, i.e., of direct surrender to the outer world, with which egoism is connected, may remain in his soul. And once more we see Faust in touch with spiritual forces. In the 'Midnight' scene, enter four Grey Women. They come up near to him. Three of them, Want, Guilt and Necessity cannot do anything to him, but now something emerges which belongs to the experiences of the Way of Initiation. Along the Way of Initiation there is a secret connection between all that a man's egoism can make him do and that attitude of soul which is expressed by the word 'Care.' In that man who is far enough to look selflessly into the spiritual world, there is no care. Care is the companion of egoisms. And as little as some can perhaps believe that when Care is present, egoism has not disappeared, so true is it that on the long, self-denying path into the spiritual world, egoism must completely vanish. If man steps into the spiritual world and brings with him into it any trace of egoism, Care comes and reveals itself as a disturbing power. Here we have something of the dangers of initiation. In the material world, the kindly powers of the spiritual world take care to see that the power of Care cannot thus come near human beings. But the moment they grow together with the spiritual world, and learn to know powers which are at play there, such things as Care become disturbing forces. Some things may have been overcome by means of the keys which lead into the spiritual world, but Care slips through all key-holes. To be sure, if man is far enough, and faces Care bravely, Care becomes a power that can remove from him this last remnant of egoism. Faust goes blind. Why? He goes blind because the power of the last bit of egoism remaining in him is cancelled by the power of Care. The last possibility of personal enjoyment is removed. It gets darker and darker all round. Now his soul feels the last remnant of egoism when he has ordered the cottage to be pulled down, from whose site the selfish pleasure of satisfaction in his work could have been derived.

'But in my inmost spirit all is light!'

Now Faust's soul belongs to that world over which Care and all the disturbing elements which vex the body have no power, and he experiences what those about to be initiated into the spiritual world

experience. He takes part as an outside observer, in events which he does not experience in the physical world, his own death and burial. He looks down from the spiritual world upon the physical world and upon all that happens to him as if it were another. The events concern now only those powers which are in the physical world.

It would take us far to explain how Goethe now makes the 'Lemures' appear, which consist only of sinews and bones, so that they have no soul; they represent man at the stage before he has received a soul. But Faust himself is carried into the spiritual world. We see Mephistopheles fighting a last battle for Faust's soul — a significant and remarkable battle. If one were to divide this battle up into its details one would see what a deep knowledge of the spiritual world Goethe had.

There lies the dying Faust. Mephistopheles fights for the soul. He knows that this soul can leave the body at several places. Here there is much to be learnt by those who read in one or other handbook how the soul leaves the body. Goethe is further. He knows that it is not always the same place, but that the soul's departure from the body in death depends entirely on the state of development of the person. He knows that the soul, while in the body, receives a shape corresponding to the body only because of the elastic power of love. Mephistopheles believes Faust's soul to be ready for the Kingdom of darkness. In that case it could have only the shape he describes as a 'hideous worm.' When a soul has given itself to its own powers, it can have only a shape expressing its virtues or vices. If Faust's soul were ripe for the Kingdom of darkness, its shape would have been as Mephistopheles thought. But now it is developed and is carried away, because its virtues are such as correspond to the spiritual world and spiritual worlds take possession of it.

Next we meet those people who are, so to speak, the connecting units between the physical and the spiritual world, who stand as initiates in the physical world and range with their spirit into the spiritual world: supernatural men of experience and observers — so they are introduced to us. Goethe tells in his poem that he has inscribed as 'Symbolum' how two voices resound out of the spiritual world:

*'Still call from beyond
The voices of spirits,
The voices of masters:*

*To exercise fail not
The powers of goodness.'*

Here also Goethe is consistent with his knowledge. He represents the spirits which are not incarnate in the material world. But first he represents those to whom the name 'Masters' is often applied, who *are* incarnate in the material world. He represents them in the garb which was the handiest in his day, as 'Pater Ecstaticus,' 'Pater Seraphicus,' and 'Pater Profundus.' Concerning this he said to Eckermann: 'In any case you will allow that the ending, where the rescued soul rises to heaven, was very difficult to do, and that I might have easily lost myself in vagueness with such supernatural, scarcely guessable things, unless I gave my poetic intentions a delimiting form and firmness by means of the sharply-outlined, ecclesiastical figures and ideas.'

Whoever heard here the lectures on 'Christian Initiation' will recognize again to what extent Goethe was initiated into those things.

Thus Faust's soul rises through the regions, through which those souls have passed which have grown accustomed to the spiritual world and are active in it, and assist in bringing other souls into it. And then we see how Goethe lays down, so to speak, his 'credo' — that 'credo' which marks him as a member of that spiritual-scientific stream, which has also so often been spoken of here, especially in the lecture 'Where and how does one find the Spirit' (15th October, 1908, Berlin.) in which an example was given of how man 'lives' himself into the spiritual world. There was mentioned the 'black Cross with the red roses.' Powers are awakened in the soul when man yields himself to this 'Cross of roses,' which represents in the black cross the sinking down of the sense world and in the red roses the blossoming up of the spiritual world. It represents what the abstract words say:

*'And until thou this thing hast,
This death and birth,
Thou art but a sorry guest
On the dark earth.'*

What man attains through spiritual understanding, through the power of the red roses, Goethe was well aware, and he confesses it: the red roses fall down from the spiritual world, as the immortal part of Faust is taken up. And so we see how Goethe really shows us the path of the human soul into the spiritual world.

Some things could be presented only sketchily. For there is something peculiar about this 'Faust' of Goethe: it becomes deeper and even deeper, the more one grows into it, and only then one learns what Goethe can become for humanity. One learns to recognize what he will one day become, if Spiritual Science or Anthroposophy will illuminate Goethe's esoteric poetry, where he speaks of the spiritual world from his own experiences. Goethe depicts realistically what he knows to be facts of the spiritual world. This second Part of Faust is a realistic Poem — closed of course to those who do not know that the spiritual worlds are realities. (See Rudolf Steiner's *Spiritual Scientific Elucidation of Goethe's Faust*, Vols. I and II, in course of translation (1933).) What we have are not 'symbols,' but only a poetic clothing up of quite realistic, albeit supernatural events, such as the soul experiences when it becomes one with the world that is its original home; when it feels itself possessed, not of knowledge which is only an abstraction, a growing together with sense observation or abstract understanding, but of knowledge which is a real fact of the spiritual world. Certainly one will for a long time yet be far from an understanding of Goethe's 'Faust;' for one will first have to learn the language of 'Faust' if one wants to get inside it. One can take up commentary after commentary: not only once are the words explained by otherwise quite clever people. As Wagner sees the 'Homunculus' sprouting in the retort, he says — (you can read in commentaries what his words are supposed to mean):

*"Twill be! the mass is working clearer!
Conviction (Uberzeugung.) gathers, truer, nearer!"*

I say it as wrongly as all those since Goethe have said, who make it mean that Wagner has the conviction that the Homunculus will come into being: 'The conviction in Wagner is working clearer!' And the explainers of 'Faust' imagine they can ladle out the whole of its depth with such trivialities! Certainly our age, which has also another word coined by Goethe in its mouth, viz. 'superman,' without grasping its deeper meaning, could not explain these words otherwise. Their true meaning, however, is this: that

which is conceived in the physical world is a 'conception' ('*Zeugung* '); that which is conceived here in the astral world is a 'super-conception,' (*Überzeugung* — conviction). One has first to learn how to read Goethe, when like all great minds, he makes his own words. Then one will be able to measure the whole earnestness, out of which the Faust arose. Then one will, above all, not commit the triviality of understanding the final words of Faust to mean by 'eternal-feminine,' something which has to do with the feminine in the sense-world.

The 'eternal-feminine' is that power in the soul which lets itself be fertilized by the spiritual world, and thereby grows together in its clairvoyant and magical deeds with the spiritual world. What can be fertilized there is this 'eternal-feminine' in every human being, which draws him up to the spheres of the eternal; and Goethe has depicted in Faust this course of growth of the eternal feminine into spiritual worlds.

Look round in the physical world: we really see everything properly for the first time, when we see in it, not the true reality, but a symbol of eternity. This eternity is experienced by the soul when it passes the gates into the spiritual world. There it experiences what can be explained in matter-of-fact sense terms, if they are used in a quite special way. On this point Goethe has also expressed himself — and as a great warning for all who of set opinion insist in abstractions concerning something or other. In two successive poems Goethe has expressed, like a great exhortation to mankind, that when someone speaks of a thing in the spiritual world, he can express it in diametrically opposite views. In the first poem he says:

*'The eternal must persist through all:
For into nothing all must fall
If it insists in being.'*

While he here gives utterance to the thought of his 'eternal flux' philosophy, he says immediately afterwards in the next poem:

*'No being can to nothing fall,
Eternity persists in all,
Rejoice in that thou art.'*

While the opposite thoughts of the sense-world are used as the contrasted reflexions of the super-sense world, the latter cannot be described in terms of the former. Material words are always insufficient when used in a special sense.

So we see how Goethe, while representing the 'indescribable' from the most diverse sides, causes it to be done before the eyes of the spirit. What is 'unattainable' for the material world is within the reach of spiritual vision, if the soul schools itself in that part which can be developed by means of the powers which Spiritual Science can give it. It is not for nothing that Goethe makes that work in which he has exposed the most exquisite and richest of his experiences, ring forth in a 'Chorus Mysticus,' which of course must contain nothing trivial. For in this Chorus Mysticus he points out to us how that which is indescribable in material words is done, when the language of imagery is used: how the soul, by means of the eternal womanhood in it is drawn into the spiritual world.

*'All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
There grows to Event:
The Indescribable,
Here it is done:
The Woman-Soul (Ewig-Weibliche; the Eternal Feminine.)
leadeth us
Upward and on!'*

In such words could Goethe speak of the way to the spiritual world. In such words could he speak of the powers of the soul, which when developed, lead mankind step by step into the spiritual world.



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